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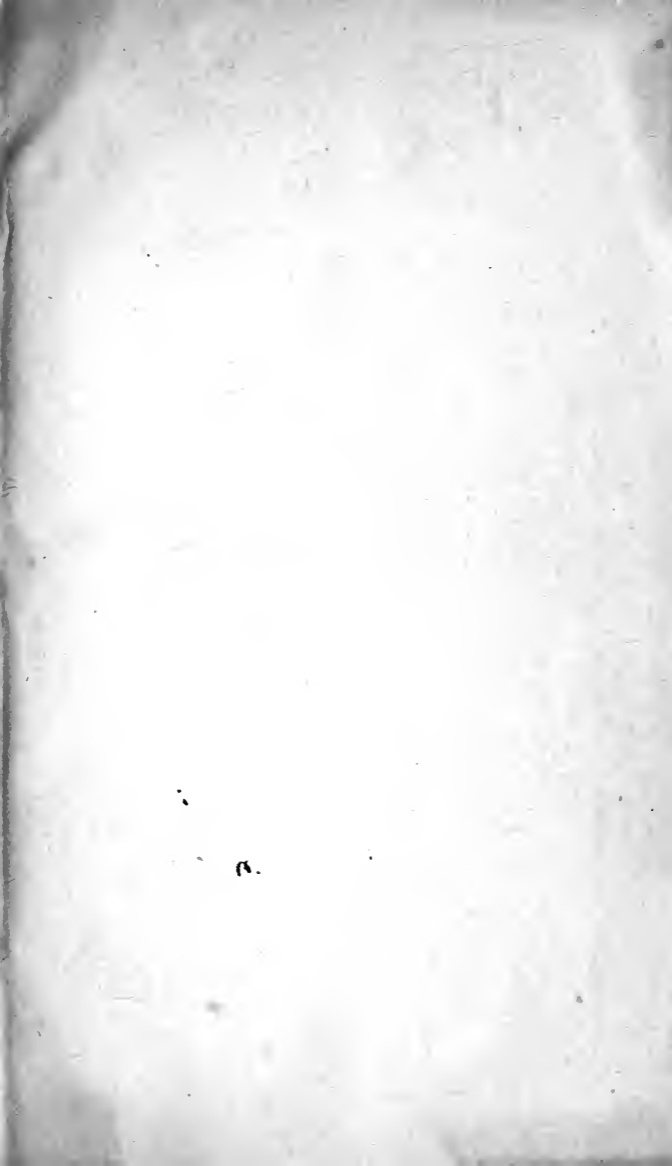
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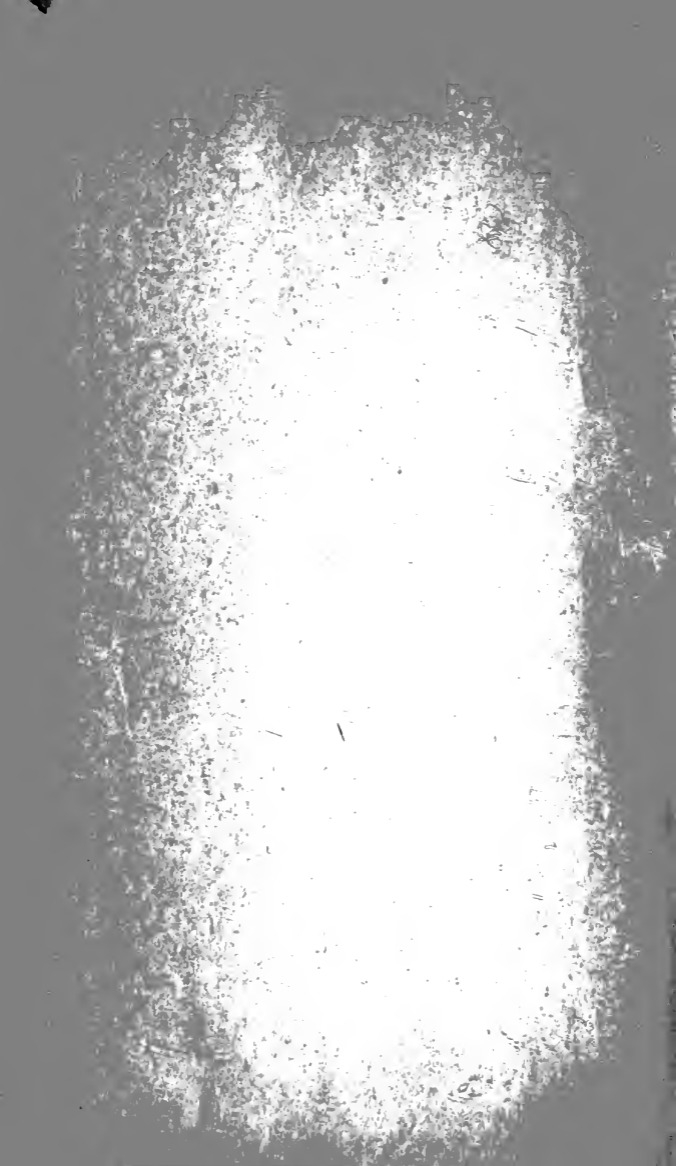
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A
T R E A T I S E
OF
C O N V E R S I O N,

F A I T H and J U S T I F I C A T I O N, &c.

Being an E X T R A C T of fundry D I S C O U R S E S ON
ROM. V. 5. Delivered at OXFORD in the latter
End of the Year 1741, and beginning of 1742.

By John Campbell, V. D. M.
And Pastor of the Church there.

Now publish'd at the desire of his constant hearers, & others.

ISA. viii. 20. *To the Law and to the Testimony; if
they speak not according to this Word, it is because
there is no Light in them.*

II. COR. xiii. 8. *For we can do nothing against the
Truth, but for the Truth.*

De Deo est judicandum tantum ex verbo pate-
facto, non autem ex cerebro Hæreticorum.

De cælo quærendus est Judex, sed quid ut pulsamus
ad cælum, cum habeamus hic in evangelio testamen-
tum. Optat milevit contra parmen. Lib. 5.

BOSTON, Printed and Sold by ROGERS & FOWLE
next to the Prison in Queen-street. 1743.

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* * * * *
DEDICATION.

To my well-beloved Congregation,
and much desired in our LORD
JESUS CHRIST.

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Dear Friends and Brethren;

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T is an unalterable Rule, well grounded
in the Word, a Maxim in which good
Men are agreed; viz. The Covenant of
Grace is the Key of Scripture. Agree-
ably, as soon as the Doctrine of the Decrees, and the
free Grace of God, were attack'd and ridicul'd by
Sectaries, and Adversaries to these divine Truths, I
took the Hint, and endeavour'd with full Purpose of
Heart, and unfeigned Dependance on the Help of
Almighty God, to establish you in these very com-
fortable and important Points; Particularly when of
late, treating with great Care and Labour on Rom.
5. 5. in the several Discourses prosecuted therefrom;
An Extract whereof, at your Desire, is now pub-
lished in the following Treatise.

You then gave me good Reason to hope, that you
heard these Things with great Respect and proper
Dispositions of Heart. Nor am I without Hope,
that you'll read them with a new Advantage and
Satisfaction. Dearly Beloved, Whatever Treat-
ment this Work may meet with from the wicked E-
nemies of these divine Truths, never to be slighted,
nor rejected, as the whole Venture is immediately

for your Sakes, you are more especially obliged to answer the Ends of it. You may perhaps, shew some Candor & Regard to me, but this is not enough for yourselves. If you go no further than a Commendation of what you read in this or any other Treatise of sacred Things, and take no Care to have the Truth fixed in your Hearts, and reduced into Practice, our Gospel is hid, and you are lost. But Beloved, I am perswaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation, tho' I thus speak.

I willingly offer you this small Treatise as a Pledge of my Love, and as a Witness of my Thankfulness unto God for his Graces in you. I pray God in Christ to keep you by his mighty Power thro' Faith unto Salvation. Now Brethren, ye know from the first Day that I came among you, after what Manner I have been with you at all Seasons serving the Lord, testifying to both Young & Old, Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 20. 18, 19, 21. So, wishing to you all, that your private reading may confirm your publick hearing, and that both seasoned with Prayer, may help you on by Faith and Obedience in your Travels for and to the heavenly Canaan, and that in the End of your Pilgrimage in these your earthly Tabernacles, you may all (thro' infinite Grace and Compassion) be put into full and everlasting Possession thereof, shall be my daily Prayer to the Father of Mercies, and God of all Grace, who am your faithful Friend in Jesus Christ our Lord, ever ready to do the best Services for your Souls and Bodies.

JOHN CAMPBELL.



TO THE

Judicious and Candid Reader.

IT hath been the common Folly and Error of the World in all Ages, for the generality of Men to esteem Custom and Fashion a sufficient Warrant for any Course which themselves affect or undertake; and this more especially in Matters of Religion. If Men can say as in Ages past, the best, the greatest Number, the wisest amongst us, thus they think, thus they say, thus they do; From hence they imagine they fetch a strong Reason which cannot be gainsaid. And thus many are like the Froth, Jam. 1. 6. Which is carried up and down with the Wind and the Tide, sometimes to this Shore, and sometimes to the other, following that detestable Example of Hushai, 2 Sam. 16. 18. Whom this People and all the Men of Israel chuse, his will I be, and with him will I dwell, saith Hushai to Absalom: even so is the Religion of many; they will not be singular, they look

which

which Way the Multitude goes, and that Way will they go. And the Reason of this so common a Folly, is this, that it is an hard Matter to judge, but an easy Thing to believe. This being too much the Error of this Day gave Occasion to the Composure of the following Treatise, in which some of the most important Points in the Christian Religion are proposed, cleared, and proved by Authority of sacred Scripture; which is the best, the only Standard of Faith and Practice. I hope, we all abhor that Saying of a blasphemous Papist, That it was the Invention of the Devil, to permit the People to read the Bible: But I will urge you with that of the Apostle, Col. 3. 16. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom.

The following Work is offered to the World with all due Deference and Respect to the many excellent Performances of this Kind we are already blessed with, done by far better Hands than mine. The Things are not new, and by me first discovered, as if no Man's Writings could afford them for your Use but mine. No, blessed be God, these be Subjects profitably taught by divers others. But every Book cometh not to each Man's Hand; and as in Meats, the differing kind of dressing helps the Appetite, the same Meat prepared one Way, may content the Stomach, which in some other Fashion would not please; so in Books the very self same Subject may better satisfy in one special Way of handling it than another.

ther. If any Thing of reading occur in the following Sheets, I very willingly embrace this Opportunity to present my humble Thanks to our generous Benefactors *, who have made a Collection of Books for the Use of the incumbent Minister of this Parish, which were of great Help to me in composing this Work. It is to be wished that other good Gentlemen would follow their good Example in making a Collection of this Kind for other poor Parishes.

This Work hath been undertaken, and is now published, with a just Sense of my own Unworthiness and Unfitness to bear the Vessels of the Lord, and to do any Service in his Sanctuary. I send it under the Protection and Blessing of Heaven, with a hearty Prayer to God to forgive whatsoever is amiss and defective in the Performance, and graciously accept whatsoever is good and profitable therein; to whose gracious Blessing I leave it, and

* The Honourable Judge Dudley devised this liberal Thing, and sedulously promotes it among Gentlemen. The Donors Names are in a Catalogue of the Books, in perpetuam Doni memoriam: I hope their Names will be in everlasting Remembrance with the Lord.

viii To the Judicious and Candid Reader.

to his Grace I commend you all ; desiring in my daily Prayer to be and continue your Fellow-Soldier, in seeking the Glory of God's Grace, defending the Truth of the Gospel, and fighting against the Spreading Errors of this Age.

JOHN CAMPBELL.

Geo. Allen's

Feb. 1. 1869.

both Jews and Gentiles ; as the Apostle *Paul* explains it : *Acts* 26. 23. This glorious Light began to be opposed, very early by Satan, and no Wonder, for it begets those for Heaven, whom he had begotten for Hell. It pulls down his Image and sets up God's : it pulls Men out of the Kingdom of Darknes, and translates them into a Kingdom of Light. *Col.* 1. 13.

Just before our blessed Lord, the bright and morning Star of his Church, entered upon his publick Ministry, the Princes of the Powers of Darknes attacked the Prince of Life and Peace to obscure his Light, by perverting the true Intent and Meaning of sacred Scripture. He came to our Lord probably in some visible Shape, he forming an audible Voice of the Air, said, *If thou be the Son of God*, not that he doubted it, which shewed his horrible Impudence. This the Tempter did three Times successively, *Mat.* 4. putting God upon working of Miracles to declare Christ to be his Son, when there was no Need, and of which there was no Use, mocking our Saviour's true Use of Scripture, with Scripture abused, and many other Ways, but he had to do with One not ignorant of his Devices.

Some Time before the holy Apostles accomplished their Warfare, and finished their extraordinary Mission in propagating the Doctrines of Christ to the World, many monstrous Hereticks, Instruments of Satan arose, who presumptuously perverted and opposed the Christian Faith and Doctrine, as is manifest from their Epistles. The Apostle *John*, in his first Epistle, (called by some, the Epistle to the *Parthians*)

labours

labours to confirm the Christians in those Parts, in the great fundamental Doctrine of Christianity; namely, that our Lord Jesus was the Messiah, against diverse apostate Christians; particularly the *Gnosticks*, who presumed they knew more than all others, whose Followers have ever since vexed the Church of God, even unto this Day: The same Apostle in the Revelations made to him by Christ the Angel of the Covenant, and Head of his Church, mentions the *Nicolaitans* with Abhorrence and great Detestation. The Apostle *Peter* in his first Epistle directed to the Jewish Christians, scattered throughout *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythinia*, sharply reproves the Folly and Perverseness of some of those Times in separating *Faith* from *Holiness*, and their doubting whether *Peter & Paul* taught the same Doctrine. He endeavours to confirm the Saints in the Belief of the Gospel; and exhorts them to be always ready to defend and justify their Faith against all Objectors, and to shew how reasonable their Hope of Salvation is, and on how sure a Foundation it is built, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. And the Apostle *Paul* intimates, that there were many Hereticks, Obscurers of the Light of the Gospel in his Day; since in his Letter to the *Romans* he hath furnished the Church of God with so great a Treasure of scriptural convincing Arguments against Hereticks, that it may be truly said, there are few either heretical Positions, or more lately broached Errors, which if they be propounded plainly, may not be confuted out of this Epistle. It is so excellent a Piece of sacred Canon for

Matter, and Manner of handling it, that it may justly be esteemed a compleat Body of Divinity. For we have the principal Points of *Election*, *Reprobation*, *Redemption*, *Faith*, and *Justification* by *Faith* so admirably herein handled, that it is deservedly call'd by some (*Clavis Theologiæ*) the Key of Divinity, and (*Methodus Scripturæ*) the Method of Scripture. This is abundantly manifest to any that will duly consider the Scope of this Epistle, especially the Chapter which contains my Text: In the first Part whereof is recorded the glorious Effects and sweetest Privileges of *Justification* by *Faith*, viz. *Peace with God*, which no Tribulation can hinder. Then in the second Part there is *Rejoicing in God*, as reconciled thro' Jesus Christ the second *Adam*, who doth abundantly transcend the first *Adam*, in many Particulars; as is inserted in this Chapter from Verse 11 to the End thereof, Again, the Apostle in the first Verse of this Chapter, declares what it is whereby Men are justified, viz. by true Faith alone in Jesus Christ according to the Grace of God, as the only instrumental Means whereby Jew and Gentile can be justified. There are also herein three important Points held forth by the Apostle, viz. The Grace of God the Motive, or Impulsive, Christ's Blood the Material, Faith the instrumental Cause of Justification. Next justifying Faith is explained by the Fruits or Effects ensuing thereupon; viz. *Peace with God*, *Joy in Hope of the Glory of God*, which Affliction and Tribulation cannot prevent, but rather indeed promote. Believers find and feel that God hath delivered them

them and doth deliver them, and in him they hope and trust, that he will still deliver them, *knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, and Hope maketh not ashamed*; that is, it doth not disappoint or deceive us. *They cried unto thee and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.* Psal. 22. 5.

My Text is either rendered as a Reason of all that went before, therefore the justified by Faith have Peace with God, Access to him by Faith, Hope of Glory, Joy in Tribulation, &c. *Because the Love of God is shed abroad in their Hearts.* Or else it is a Reason of what immediately preceded; therefore *Hope maketh not ashamed, because the Love of God is shed abroad, &c.* Understand it either actively of our Love to God, or rather passively of his Love to us; of which he speaks Verse 8, *Shed abroad*, i. e. is greatly manifested, or abundantly poured forth: A frequent Metaphor both in the Old and New-Testament, vid. *Isa. 44. 3. Acts 2. 17, &c.* By the Holy Ghost which doth not exclude the Father and the Son, it is the more peculiar Work of the Spirit, both to make us feel the Love of God, and to fill our Hearts with Love to him. Love referred to God, signifieth his divine Essence infinitely delighting himself in his Son Christ, who is his Wisdom, and in his Spirit which is his Power; Also in his Creatures. It signifieth also his Purpose and Decree to choose some unto Salvation by Christ, *Rom. 9. 18. Jacob have I loved.* This Love is called the good Pleasure of his Will, and Fore-knowlege of God,

God, *Rom. 8. 26.* It signifies the Fruits and Effects of that loving Purpose in the Regeneration of the Elect, their Sanctification in the Grace of Perseverance, in the Hope of Glorification, as in the Text. *He hath shed abroad his Love in our Hearts*; that is, abundantly witnessed. To shed, signifieth to impart. * Our merciful God and Father from his own Bowels freely yearning upon us in our miserable Condition by Nature, hath put us into a State of and given us a Right to eternal Salvation, washing us in Regeneration as in a Laver, the Pledge and Sign of which is in Baptism: the Holy Spirit changing and renewing our Nature, which he shed on us abundantly thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour †. Which Holy Spirit, as well for the renewing of us, as for the Collation of more common or extraordinary Gifts, God poured upon us abundantly, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour. The Heart is the fleshly Part of Man's Body which is the Seat of the Affections; but it is to be understood in a more extensive Sense in our Text, viz. The Soul with all the Faculties of the Understanding, Reason, Judgment, Will, &c: Because the Soul keeps Residence in the Heart, and there shews itself most present, (as it were, in her Chair of State. Hence it is that the Heart is put for the Soul with her Faculties, *Prov. 23. 26. My Son give me thy Heart.* *Psal. 51. 10. Create in me a clean Heart.* *1 Pet. 3. 15. Sanctify the Lord in your Hearts,* and give

* *D Annot.* † *Tit. 3. 6.*

him the Honour of all his glorious Perfections, Power and Wisdom, Goodness, Faithfulness, &c. by believing them & depending upon his Promises for Defence and Assistance against all the Evils your Enemies may threaten you with. Now the Sanctification of the Heart, and all the saving Fruits and Benefits ensuing thereupon, is not for our own Worth nor by our Strength, but is the Gift of God, and is free, and purely by Grace, it is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. O! admirable Power and Grace which is put forth in the whole of our Salvation, from first to last, which the mighty God will work, not only in raising us up at last, and finally saving us, but hath wrought in begetting Faith in us, and doth work, in still preserving that Faith, and carrying us on in the Way of Salvation. Suitable Reflections hereon would naturally and easily lead us to say with *Paul*, Eph. i. 19. *And what is the exceeding Greatness of his Power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power.*

The Terms in the Text being thus somewhat opened, the Doctrine need not vary much from them: It may be framed and propounded in this Manner, namely,

DOCTRINE.

That the bringing of Men from a State of Nature into a State of Grace, is the Effect of the Love of God, wrought in their Hearts by the Holy Ghost.

I need not tell you, that Conversion, and the Reports made of the extraordinary Effusions of the

the blessed Spirit of God, both abroad and at home, is now become the Subject of most Men's Conversation: Nor are we ignorant of the various Shapes in which that important Point is now held forth to the World. I have therefore esteemed it my Duty, (for Necessity is laid upon me, yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel) and necessary for you also, to lay before you the Nature of that grand Subject, as I find it delineated in the sacred Pages; maintained by the Confessions of Faith of the best reformed Churches: and the Writings of the ablest, and most learned Protestant Divines; that such as are real Converts might enjoy the Comfort of that happy State, & by the Blessing of Almighty God, be the more established therein: and that others that are in a wavering and unsettled State as to their spiritual Condition, might be prevented from yielding to the Delusions of a false Spirit, and kept from imbibing and following after the common Errors of the Times. And as I hope in this Day of great Commotion, and Convulsion in the Church of God, as well as in the Christian World, some are, and more may be savingly brought home, and ingrafted into the Head Jesus Christ the true Vine: And fearing many are captivated under the Delusions of Satan, and led by a Spirit of Error, I must excite you to a most earnest Care over your selves, lest any Person among you should fail of Grace offered in the Gospel, or apostatize from the steady and regular Profession of it. *Looking diligently, lest any Man fail of the Grace of God, lest any Root of Bitterness springing*

springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled, Heb. 12. 15. the Apostle intending hereby the hindring the springing up, and growing of Errors, Heresies or Immoralities, which are apt to infect Churches, and as they spread, to molest, trouble and disturb them, and to keep them from pursuing Holiness, lest by but one such poisonous Root, a whole Church of Christians may be infected and poisoned, their Sin being as apt to spread and diffuse itself as Leaven. And how early even in the Apostle's Time, for want of obeying this Caution, were the primitive Churches corrupted, both in Doctrines and Morals, by loose, filthy Hereticks among them; hath been already hinted.

Before I enter upon the handling of the Doctrine in its several Branches; I shall pave my Way to them by observing sundry Points of great Importance. Our most celebrated Divines tell us, that the Sum of all Christian Duties is briefly comprised under these two Heads, viz. *Agenda et credenda, doing and believing*: Some add a third, viz. *Petenda, i. e. asking*. The Apostle *Paul* makes these the main Parts of wholesome Doctrine, *Hold fast the Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. The Epitome of Love is the Moral Law contained in ten, more briefly in two Precepts. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*. The Sum of Faith more at large delivered in the Writings of the Apostles, is shortly drawn in that excellent Compendium, which is called,

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The Apostle's Creed, containing the Substance of evangelical Doctrine. Both these, viz. *Faith* and *Love* are continually assaulted by Satan; and corrupted and abused by his Instruments in the World. And when the Accuser of the Brethren is purposed to give a Shake to the Interest and Kingdom of Christ in the World, he had rather enter upon the Church by undermining the Faith with Heresie, than at open Breach upon good Manners; ill Manners are obnoxious to Punishments from the Law; they lie open to the Reproof and Hatred of all moral Honesty; they expose to Shame and Disgrace, and these for the most Part hinder the publick Allowance and Entertainment of them. But Heresie enters almost unobserv'd, and quickly spreads abroad; finds presently a great Number of Favourers and Friends; having Advantage of Men's common Infirmary, itching Ears, and Aptness to entertain Novelties; taking Pride to be singular; being painted over with Colour of Truth. Moreover, it aims at the surest Mark, the Leaders of the Flock whose Authority and Example speedily infects the rest. With this Weapon hath the Dragon made War with the Woman, raising up even of her own Children, such as have fought against her by destroying Heresies against all the Articles of Faith: which have their Spring in the Romish Synagogue, whereto all Heresies almost of former and later Times have made their Confluence: of which you have a Hint in the Sequel of this Discourse. As for our selves let it be our Care so to speak and judge of our Conversion and Faith,

Faith, as that most precious Grace which is freely given us to enrich and instrumentally save our Souls, not exercise our Wits in discerning and judging of others, (as the Manner of some is) the Knowledge whereof by Contemplation is most empty and vain, without the real Inhabitation of it within our selves. It shall be my best Endeavour by the Help of God's Assistance, to give you the Knowledge thereof, so far as the Word in manifold Precepts, with the Pains and Industry of the learned and most judicious Christians have discovered it to my poor Understanding. Thus you see I pretend not to new and extraordinary Light, or novel Discoveries; but intend to shew you the good old Way plainly held forth in the sacred Pages, to travel into those Mansions of Glory, which are already prepared for the Children of God above.

The Text and Doctrine will lead me naturally into the Examination of many important Points in Divinity; which are so interwoven and linked one with another, that without the Knowledge of all, we shall not clearly discern any alone; especially *Vocation, Faith and Justification*; all of them being plainly implied in the Text and Doctrine; as is explained by the Apostle *Paul* in that golden Chain of Salvation which he sets down, Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

In the Prosecution of our Doctrine, these following Points fall in naturally to be discoursed upon: viz.

First, *Conversion*.

Secondly, *Faith*.

Thirdly, *Justification*.

Fourthly and lastly, the *Application* of these briefly and plainly in their Order. And

First, Of Conversion. Many eminent Divines have treated accurately and favourably on this grand Subject in the last Century : I could fill up a whole Page with the Names of those Worthies of the Lord. Doubtless some of you have some of their excellent Treatises in your Hands, as Alleine's Alarm, Shepard's Sincere Convert, and others, who wrote of Conversion with becoming Candour and scriptural Skill ; but alas ! I find in Conversation and Print that the Occasion and Scope of these great Men, and their good Works, is much perverted and abused by the *Gnosticks* of this Age ; which (with many other Considerations) moved me (the least of all Saints) to employ my Pen and small Talent in Defence of sovereign Grace abundantly manifested in the Conversion and Sanctification of rebellious Sinners, which I fear hath suffered at this Day much Violence and Reproach from many who seem to boast of their great Preheminence in Grace above all others ; such Boasting is excluded, *Rom. 3. 27*. It is probable that the various Acceptations of Conversion in the sacred Texts is an Occasion of many's mistaking the true Notion of real Conversion, as seems of late ; I shall therefore endeavour to remove such Mistakes by shewing the different Meaning of it as it is applied in the holy Scriptures. Those of the ancient Church that are reformed in her
of

of their evil Courses, are termed Converts. *Zion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness*, Isa. 1. 27. Again, It signifieth a turning from some particular Sin or Sins, whereby we have offended God or Man. Luk. 22. 32. *When thou art converted strengthen thy Brethren.* Jer. 31. 18. *Convert thou me and I shall be converted*; this is an active Conversion performed by Men already regenerate, who being already renewed by Grace, do work together with his Grace; converting Grace Grace being accompanied with assisting and supporting Grace. God converteth a Sinner by putting Grace of Repentance into his Soul. A Sinner converteth himself, when he endeavoureth his own Conversion, diligently and constantly using all good Means, publick & private. Again, There is a Conversion when one that being out of the Church is bro't into the Church, *Eph. 2. 12, 14.* Or being in the Church is turned from sinful Ways, that he is a new Creature, *2 Cor. 5. 17.* Is changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory. *2 Cor. 5. 18.* Hath Christ formed in him. *Gal. 4. 18.* And is turned to serve the true and living God. *1 Thes. 1. 9.* Again, It signifies the turning or total Change of an elect Sinner from Sin to God: and in this Signification is comprehended both Faith and Repentance, even the whole Work of Grace. *And Sinners shall be converted unto thee*, Psal. 51. 13. This is a passive Conversion, wherein we suffer God to work upon us; but ourselves by our natural Power work nothing, unless it be to hinder the Work of Grace, what we may. This

is especially intended by the Apostle in our Text; and is the Meaning of the Point now under Consideration. For the more distinct Knowledge whereof, we shall briefly consider
 v Man in his threefold State, viz.

First, In the State of Innocency and Uprightness. Man was created upright. Eccl. 7. 29. *God made Man upright; but they have sought out many Inventions.* He was made very good, Gen. 1. ult. Other Creatures were his Footsteps, but Man was his Image. Gen. 1. 26. *Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness:* Which tho' it seems to imply no more in that Place, than an Image of his Dominion over the Creatures, yet the Apostle raises it a Degree higher, and gives us a larger Interpretation of it, Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him:* Making it to consist in a Resemblance to his Righteousness. Image (say some) notes the Form, as Man was a Spirit in Regard of his Soul. Likeness notes the Quality implanted in his spiritual Nature: The Image of God was drawn in him, both as he was a rational, and as he was a holy Creature. Man was endowed with such Strength and Integrity in all Parts, as did wholly dispose him to all Operations conformable to God's Will; his Understanding so far as was needful before his Translation, had a clear Apprehension of the Deity, in his Nature, Attributes and Worship; as also of the Creatures in their Essence and Qualities. His Will embraced and clave fast to God, whom *Adam* knew to be Author of his Keeping and Happiness. His
 Affections

Affections and all inferiour Faculties, obeyed without all Resistance the Rule of Reason, and Motions of the sanctified Will. This universal Holiness and Perfection in the whole Man, was that Image of God, or original Justice wherein *Adam* was created, but continued not. For in Second Place; After his Fall from his original Rectitude and Uprightness; for a Punishment of his wilful Transgression and Apostacy, his Maker removed his Image, and stript him naked of that Habit of Grace and Holiness wherewith he was universally qualified; having left him only some small Remainers of his excellent Character unblotted out. God himself gives us the Description of Man's Nature. *Gen.* 6. 5. That he hath not one good Imagination at any Time. And the Apostle from the Psalmist dilates and comments upon it: *There is none righteous, no not one; their Mouth is full of Cursing and Bitterness, their Feet are swift to shed Blood,* &c. *Rom.* 3. 10. &c. This Corruption is equal to all, natural to all; it is not more poysonous, or more fierce in one Man than in another. Man in his fallen Estate contracted an Alienation of his Understanding from knowing God, and of his Will from loving him: a Debauch of all his Faculties; a spiritual Adultery; in preferring not only one of God's Creatures, but one of his desperate Enemies before him; thinking him a wiser Counsellor than infinite Wisdom, and imagining him possessed with kinder Affections to him, than that God who had newly created him. Thus he joins in League with Hell against Heaven, with a fallen Spirit against his

his bountiful Benefactor, and enters into Society with Rebels, that just before commenced a War against his and their common Sovereign; he did not only falter in, but cast off the Obedience due to his Creator; endeavoured to purloin his Glory, and actually murdered all those that were virtually in his Loyns. Sin entred into the World by him, and Death by Sin, and passed upon all Men, *Rom. 5. 12.* And this universal Corruption of Man's Nature is that which we call the Image of Satan, to whom *Adam* by his Fall became like. And in Scripture it's term'd, *The Flesh, the old Man, the Sin that dwelleth in us, the Sin of the World, the Law of Sin, the Law in our Members, the Body of Death, Concupiscence or Lust*; also the first Death of the Soul, which *Adam* died immediately upon his Sin; in which Death and Separation of Grace from the Soul, all *Adam's* Posterity remain dead and rotten 'till they be quickned again by Christ. And the Soul being of a lively and active Substance, worketh altogether by and according to its inherent Qualities; where they are only good, all the Actions thereof are regular; where naught, all its Operations must needs be crooked and incongruous; as in Men unregenerate, of whom the Apostle saith, and sets it down as their peculiar Character, *They that are in the Flesh cannot please God, Rom. 8. 8.* And out of this Root groweth that Fruit which we properly call Man's Aversion or turning from God to himself, to Satan, to any Creature, yielding Service and Love to any but to God, to whom only he owes it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, There is a third Estate of Man, and that is the State of Grace. In this Condition there are Habits of Righteousness, and Sin mixed together; a Quality of Holiness implanted in the Soul, and the corrupt Quality in part done away: This is the Work of the Holy Ghost in the Heart of a Sinner: enlightening the Mind spiritually and savingly to understand the Things of God: taking away from them whom he effectually calls, the Heart of Stone, and giving unto them the Heart of Flesh, renewing their Wills, and by his almighty Power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ. And this Work of the Holy Ghost upon us, is set forth in Scripture by many Appellations; all signifying but divers Circumstances of one and the same Thing. It is called, *the Spirit, Vocation, our Conversion, the first Resurrection from the Dead, the Law of our Minds, viz. renewed, our Renovation, or renewing, our Renascentia, or new Birth, our Regeneration, the new Man, the new Creature*; and in one Word, *our Sanctification*, which comprehendeth and explaineth all the rest, which is nothing but that Image of God, which we had lost in *Adam*, restored to us again by the supernatural Work of God's Spirit, creating Holiness and Grace in our unholy and graceless Hearts. All the Faculties of the Soul are renewed. *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old Things are past away, behold, all Things are become new, 2 Cor. 5. 17.* Conversion is no less than to be born over again, *John 3. 3.* or from above; see the Margin, *Another* often signifieth from above, as V.

31. *James* 1. 17. &c. Which may teach us that the new Birth must be wrought in the Soul from above by the Power of God. 'Tis usual by the civil Laws of Countries, that none enters into the Possession of an earthly Kingdom but by the Right of Birth: And for the obtaining the Kingdom of Heaven, there must be a new Birth, a heavenly Renovation of the whole Man, Soul, Body and Spirit, to give him a Title by the wise and unchangeable Constitution of God in the Gospel, and to qualify him for the Enjoyment of it: And then only are we renewed, being made new Men, and new Creatures, then only begotten and born again by the Spirit, then raised to Life, especially called, and turned from Darknes to Light, when we are sanctified throughout by the new Quality of Grace brought into us, rectifying and repairing every Part of our whole Man. In which State the Operations of the Soul are mixt, neither simply good as in the State of Innocency, nor simply evil as in the State of Corruption and natural Depravity; but partaking of both Qualities, according to the different Habits of Corruption and Grace, whereby the Soul is depraved or rectified in her working. From which renewed Grace, as the proper Fruit thereof flows our Conversion, or returning unto the Lord. When once the Holy Ghost hath given us the spiritual Life and Grace, we begin again to own and pay Homage to our Creator, and forsake our Lusts, Satan, the World, and Self-righteousness, to fasten our Love upon the Lord that made our Souls, verily esteeming that he hath
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the best Right to, and best deserves our Service. In the new Birth, or Conversion, there are two Things to be a little more cleared, and distinguished, viz.

1. The Habit of Grace.

2. The Operations proceeding from that Habit.

1. The Habit of Grace. This is a supernatural Quality of Holiness, poured into all the Powers of the Soul at once. As no Part was left untainted by Corruption; so every Part and Faculty of the Soul is sanctified by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. They are washed, they are sanctified, they are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. *1 Cor. 6. 11.* Regeneration, and Sanctification, is the proper Effect of the Spirit, creating in the Soul new Habits and Dispositions, by which its enabled and inclined, as to die unto Sin, so to live unto God. For by the Grace of Regeneration, there is at once an habitual Renovation of every Part; to illustrate somewhat this Implantation of Grace, or the New-Birth; Divines draw one or two Similitudes, or Comparisons, as when Grace cometh into the Soul, it is like Light coming into the Air, which before dark, is in all Parts illuminated; or as Heat into cold Water, that spreads it self through the whole Substance. Or as the Soul into the Body of *Lazarus*, or the *Shunamite's* Child, not by Degrees, but all at once infused, and giving Life to every Part. So is our New-Man born at once, tho' he grow by Degrees: That is, the Soul in our Conversion is re-invested with the Image of God,

in all its Faculties ; and altho' the Actions of Grace do not presently appear in each one, yet the Habit, the Seed, the Root of all divine Virtues, is firmly re-implanted in them, and by the Strength of this Grace given, they are disposed to all sanctified Operation. Now the Operations flowing from this blessed Habit of Grace are many. Grace like the Ocean is one Element ; but takes diverse Names according to the several Regions and Parts of the Soul which it washeth and sanctifieth, according to the several Objects about which they are employed; and also according to the several Occasions that stir them up to Action. One Instance or two of this may easily be propounded ; as Grace in the Understanding is termed spiritual Wisdom in the Knowledge of heavenly Things ; Grace in the Will is a rectified Choice, and embracing its right Object, God and his Goodness ; Grace in the Affections are their pure and sanctified Motions towards their proper Objects ; Grace in the outward Man, is its proper and ready Obedience in doing the Commands of a sanctified Soul. Now in all these Parts, altho' the Seed of renewing Grace be so deeply sown and rooted, that as *1 John 3. 9.* it remains within us ; yet the actual Operations of this Grace appear neither perfectly nor equally in every Part, but shew themselves sooner or later, more strongly or weakly, according as the Strength of sinful Corruption abates, more or less, or as there is greater Occasion and Use of one Grace more than another. Some beloved Lust, some corrupt Custom, Company or Example inclining
some

some or other of the Affections of the Soul another Way. But yet notwithstanding hereof, Grace is intire in all the Powers of the Soul. For as the reasonable Soul in Infants hath all its Faculties intirely, tho' the Exercise of each of them appear not, but in Time by Degrees; so in Regeneration, Grace is intire even in its Infancy and first Birth, tho' the Operations of it are more or less according to our Growth in Christ. Now as our other Graces, so Faith is a Part of our Sanctification; Faith is wrought in the Soul then, when we are regenerated by the Infusion of the Habit of Grace into our whole Man. And this leads us naturally and necessarily unto that Distinction of the Grace of Faith, unto the Habit of Faith, and the Act of Faith. The Habit of Faith is the renewed Quality of the Soul, whereby it is made able to discern, yield Assent unto the Truth of God revealed in his Word. The Act of Faith is when the Understanding and Will do actually know and relie upon God's Truth and Goodness. Wherefore we are not to imagine that Faith is infused either before, or without other Graces, or that the Soul is not at the same Time, and as soon disposed to love and fear God, as to believe in him, or to Humility, to Patience, to Charity, to Repentance, as to Faith. The Seed of all these Graces is sown at once; and in their respective Habits they are co-equal Stems of one common Root of inherent Sanctity: Tho' yet some shoot up faster, and bear Fruit sooner than others. Those that do are the two principal Graces, of Faith and Repentance. From these

Premises

Premises, this Conclusion may very fairly be drawn, *viz.* that Faith properly is not the Root of all Graces, (as hath been said by some) † nor the first Degree of our Sanctification, and spiritual Life. It is the true and general Doctrine of all Divines, and it is a true Doctrine, that actual Faith is never wrought in the Soul, till besides the supernatural Illumination of the Understanding, the Will be also changed, and freed in Part from it's natural Perverseness; for 'till this be done it is utterly impossible it should ever embrace the Promise. And this is done by the Grace of Sanctification implanted in the Soul; by which 'tis sweetly and freely inclined to all heavenly Things. It is certain, to believe is an Action of a Man's living by Grace, not dead in Sin. And there can be no Reason given, why in our Regeneration it should be necessary first to have Faith before we can have any other Grace of Sanctification, no more than that it should be needful to have some other Grace, before we can have Faith: or why we are more fit being unconverted, to receive the Grace of Faith rather than any other Grace, as of Repentance, &c. Having thus briefly, and I think plainly shewed the Nature of our Conversion or Sanctification, there remaineth three material Things to be considered, which are manifestly held forth in our Text and Doctrine: And they are these, *viz.*

1. The Cause whereby.
2. The Manner how. And

† *Tilen Sinag.* Part 2. Disp. 45. Thef. 41.

3. The Subject wherein Conversion is wrought.

1. The Cause whereby: which may be thus distinguished. viz.

1. The impulsive or moving Cause.

2. The efficient or working Cause.

1. The impulsive or moving Cause; this is God's free and special Grace alone, and not any Thing at all foreseen in Man. There is not one good Action in all his Carriage that can plead for a Re-admission of him to his former, or better State. There is not one good Quality left in the natural Man that can be an Orator to perswade divine Goodness to such a gracious Procedure; there is no moral Goodness in Man, that can be an Object of divine Love: What is there in an un sanctified Man, but is rather a Provocation than an Allurement? Nay, it might well be expected that all the Perfections of the divine Nature should enter into an Association eternally to treat rebellious Man according to his Deserts; so that nothing in Man can be supposed to move God to bestow the Grace of Sanctification upon him, but his free Love to his Elect in Christ, which Love of God is from Eternity, before the Foundations of the World was laid; and tho' it be revealed unto the Elect in Time; or at their Conversion; yet doth it not then begin, when it begins to be manifested. When we yet lay in the Shadow of Death and Darkness, being alienated from the Life of God, that Life which God commands and approves, and whereby God lives in Believers, and they live in him: *Having the Understanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance*

Ignorance that is in them because of the Blindness of their Hearts, saith the Apostle of the *Ephesians*, Chap. 4. 18. When we were cast out, wallowing in our Blood, when there was none to pity us, yea, when we did not pity our selves; God lookt on us, with tender Compassions, he pitied us, he loved us as chosen Vessels prepared for Glory, as Heirs of Grace and Life; and because he thus loved us, he said to us, Live, he covered our Nakedness, and clothed us with Righteousness. God eternally loved, and is reconciled to the Elect before they are born, much more before they are regenerate, a full Atonement and Satisfaction for all Offences is made by Christ, and accepted on God's Part. Whereupon actual Reconciliation must needs follow, and this the Scriptures most evidently sheweth, *Christ being the Lamb slain from the Beginning of the World*; and God testifying of him at his Baptism, long before his Death, in that Speech of admirable Consolation, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; well pleased with him for the unspotted Holiness of his Person, well pleased with us in him for his invaluable Merits. Election, Conversion and Faith, all are Fruits and Consequents of God's actual Love unto the Elect. Which Graces and Favours he therefore bestows upon them, because he loves them. And therefore it is vain to say, *Deus eligit Homines diligendos, non dilectos*; or that Faith and Sanctity are bestowed on us, only to make us capable of God's Love, when indeed the bestowing of them is a Fruit of our God's great Mercy and Love unto us. And as his Purposes, so is his Love unchangeable

able from all Eternity; for God's Love to the Regenerate is not a Thing of yesterday, as themselves are; but one of those ancient Favours laid up for us in the Treasury of his everlasting Counsels. Our Justification, long before we were born, is purchased for us by Christ; and therefore 'tis vain to think with the Arminians, that Christ's Merits have made God only *placabilem*, not *placatum*, procured a Freedom that God may be reconciled if he will, and other Things concur, but not an actual Reconciliation. A silly Shift devised to uphold the Liberty of Man's Will, and Universality of Grace. It is not our Faith that works God's Reconciliation with us, but Christ believed on by Faith: And his Merits are not therefore accepted of God, because we do believe; but because they of themselves are of such Worth and Sufficiency as do deserve his most favourable Acceptance of them for us. And what Reason have we then to think why they have not always procured as well as deserved God's Love and actual Reconciliation for the Elect, not only before their Faith, as in all, but also without their Faith, as in Infants? I pass now to the

2d. Cause of our Conversion: viz. The efficient Cause which really produceth it, and that is the Holy Ghost, in whose Person (not excluding the Father and the Son, as noted in the Explication of our Text) this Work of Sanctification is peculiarly terminated. The Apostle *Paul* calls all the Graces of God the Fruits of the Spirit. Gal. 5. 22. *But the Fruit of the*
E
Spirit

Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith. So *Eph. 5. 9.* *For the Fruit of the Spirit is in all Goodness, and Righteousness, and Truth.* This is the Work of the Holy Ghost by whom we are made *Light in the Lord.* To walk as the Children of Light, is to manifest in the Course of our Christian Warfare, all Goodness and Righteousness and Truth, Meekness, Temperance, against such there is no Law. It is true, that many of these which the Apostle enumerates *Gal. 5.* are moral Virtues, as Forbearance of Passion, rash Anger, and Hastiness of Spirit, a sober Use of Meats and Drinks, Apparel, or any Thing wherein our Senses are delighted, and such as some have attained to by moral Discipline, the cultivating of their Natures by Education, and moral Philosophy: Yet they are also the Fruits of the Spirit of God; such as it doth always work in the Souls wherein it dwelleth, (tho' in different Measures and Degrees) only the moral Man, thus comporteth himself from Principles of Reason, shewing him the Beauty and Comeliness of such a Conversation, & aims no higher in it, than an Happiness of Converse in this Life, his own Honour and Reputation. But the spiritual Man doing the same Things, aimeth at an higher End: (The glorifying God, and saving his own Soul) and doth these Things from a Fear of God, out of Love to him, and out of Faith, (as seeing in them the Will of God) against such, saith the Apostle, there is no Law, no Law to accuse or condemn them: for these are Things which the Law commandeth

mandeth to be done, and are Acts of Obedience to the Law. So as those who do these Things are led by the Spirit, and are not under the condemning Power or Curse of the Law. The blessed Spirit are those two golden Pipes through which the two Olive-trees, or Branches empty out of themselves the golden Oyls of all precious Graces into the Candlestick the Church, as it is Zech. 4. 2, 3. which is opened Verse 6. saying, *Not by Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.* The Spirit of God garnished the Heavens, and can and doth only beautify the Church, which moved upon the Darknes in Creation, and brought forth a beautiful and mighty Structure, and can do as much now; the third Person in the Trinity is engaged in building the Church pure and precious as Gold, full of Knowledge in the Doctrines of God, as that Candlestick with seven Lamps, full of Holiness from abundant Measures of Grace, persevering in it by continual Supplies from the Spirit of Grace in Ordinances. In Regard of this Operation which the holy Ghost hath in sanctifying the Elect; he is in Scripture held forth under a double Similitude of Water and Fire; † which are Elements most apt to cleanse. The Similitude is from the Custom of the levitical Purifications which were done by the Use of both Elements. So whatever Filthiness cleaves unto us, or how deeply soever incorporated into our Natures, the holy Ghost by his most blessed Virtue, as by Water

† Heb. 10. 22.

washeth away, and as by Fire, consumeth. Then will I pour clean Water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your Filthiness, and from your Idols will I cleanse you, saith God unto the Church, Ezek. 36. 25. And what this Water is, the Lord shews us Ver. 27. And I will put my Spirit within you. For that other Appellation of Fire, we have it expressed in Matth. 3. 11. He will baptize you with the holy Ghost, and with Fire. With the Holy Ghost, inwardly washing away their Sins with his Blood, and sanctifying their Hearts, the Holy Ghost working in their Hearts like Fire, purging out their Lusts and Corruptions, warming and inflaming their Hearts with the Sense of his Love; changing and renewing the Hearts of those that believe in him, by the Operation of the Holy Ghost, and consuming and destroying others, that will not believe, as with Fire.

Thus Grace is of a divine Offspring, the immediate Effect of the powerful Vertue of God's Spirit, whereby he replants inherent Holiness in our Souls, fitting us thereby for the Service of God's Sanctuary. Now this Work of the Holy Spirit, is by Divines stiled *Donatio Spiritus Sancti*, the giving of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is said to be given two Ways, viz.

I. In his Essence and Graces both together. Thus he was given to Christ: *The Fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him bodily*; he was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with Power, above all his Brethren: he received the Spirit without Measure.

2. In his Graces and Vertues only; thus he is given to the Church the Body of Christ; His Sons and Daughters begotten by the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father, and the Son, unto a Life of Grace here, and of eternal Glory hereafter; enjoy his gracious replenishing them with all heavenly Vertues and Consolations. Now this Gift of the Spirit, in his Graces and Vertues is to be understood in a twofold Respect. As

1. In Respect of the public Good, when a more than ordinary Measure of Gifts and Graces bestowed upon some Men for the greater Benefit of the Church in common. This was more peculiar to the Time of the primitive Church. Of this the holy Scripture gives abundant Evidence: See *John* 7. 39. *Acts* 2. and *Acts* 19. 2, 6. *Ephes.* 4. 8, 11. &c. And ecclesiastick History affords us some Monuments hereof, in that we are assured, that there were many Things in the primitive Times, for the first two or three Centuries that did very much recommend Christianity to the World, and in divine Providence did tend to the happy Progress thereof: viz. the miraculous Powers bestowed upon the Members thereof, as appears from the first Christian Writers, which are yet extant, as *Justin*, *Ireneus*, *Tertullian* and others who tell us that very many who had been vexed and possessed with Dæmons throughout the World, whom Exorcists and Conjurers were not able to relieve, have been cured by Christians, through the Name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under *Pontius Pilate*. We know that

that Miracles are the credential Letters, to signify the divine Authority of any Person sent upon any new Dispensation by God : As when *Moses* was sent to deliver and give a new Law to the *Israelites*, he attended him with a miraculous Power, to testify it to be his Will, that what *Moses* deliver'd should be entertained. So it was with our Saviour, and in the primitive Times, at the first Promulgation of the Gospel in several Places ; but when and where the Gospel Doctrine is settled, and the Christian Churches are established, God forbears those extraordinary Works, as he did the raining down Manna after the *Israelites* Entrance into *Canaan*, where they might have Provision in an ordinary Way of Providence. So now in these last Days, God having revealed his Will to us, once and entirely ; no new Revelation of his Will is now to be looked for, or Miracles to confirm it ; Christ having settled in the Church that Religion which must remain unalterable to the End of the World. This the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* assures us of, in a very plain and positive Manner, Chap. 12. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with Reverence and godly Fear.*

3. In Respect of the private Good of every elect Child of God. Unto such the Holy Ghost is given, effectually to call, convert and sanctify them : And this only is the giving of the Spirit of God intended in our Text, and which we are now to consider ; by which the Seed of
Grace,

Grace, the Principle of new Life, is implanted in the Soul, which frames in us the New-Man; created according to God, in Righteousness, and Holiness. The manner how the new Life is created in us; is a very difficult Search; as is hinted in that Part of our Saviour's Discourse with *Nicodemus*, recorded John 3. 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* We can speak something philosophically to the Cause of the Wind, and can tell whither it bloweth, from the East, West, North or South; but the original of it's motion is to us imperceptible: We cannot tell the Particular where or from whence it riseth. So every one who is regenerated from the working of the Holy Spirit of God, is changed and renewed, so as we can give our selves or others no Account of it in all Points, as to the inward Operation, tho' in the Effects it be discernable. There are indeed certain Characters whereby to discern it; but to give a Definition or Description of it, is not so easy. The Scripture discovers it to us, under the Terms of the New Creature, a new Heart, a Law put into us, the Image of God, a divine Nature: These, tho' Scripture Terms, are difficult to explain. Again, it is difficult to describe it, because it is visible not in it self; but in its Effects. We know we have a Soul, yet it is hard to tell what the Soul is, and in what Part it doth principally reside. We know there are Angels, yet what Mortal can give a Description

of their glorious Nature? There is not, I suppose, any mortal Man not inspired with special-Revelation, that can declare unto us this Way of the heavenly Spirit, any more than the skilfullest Anatomist the Way of the earthly Spirit, *nor how the Bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child, as Solomon speaks, Eccl. 11. 5.* The Methods of Grace are obscure, as those of Nature. The Manner of the Formation of Christ in the Soul, is as undiscernable as the Formation of a Child, or the Manner of Christ's Conception in the Womb of the Virgin; both which are fearful and wonderful, as it is said of the first, *Psal. 139. 14. Who can declare his Generation?* *Isa. 53. 8. i. e. the Generation of Christ, either in his Person, or in his People.* It is therefore a Doctrine without Ground in the Scripture, Reason and Experience, for any to assert, that even one that is converted can, or that none is converted who cannot upon Examination, give an Account of the Time and Manner of their Conversion. For to tell the Month, Day, or Hour, wherein they are converted, is in most Converts impossible, in all of exceeding difficult Observation; but we shall freely acknowledge the Time may be in some of sensible Mark. But then, for them, or others, to shew by which Way the Spirit went out from God to speak unto their Hearts, how and in which Parts the sanctifying Virtue gave Life, and Heat unto them, is no small Peice of superstitious Curiosity to expect it from those who have not Power to observe it; but then this I hope, that through the Grac

of our Lord Jesus Christ you and I may say with the blind Man in the Gospel, Joh. 9. 25. *One Thing we know, that we were blind, but now we see; we were dead, but now we are alive; we were lost, but are now found; we were Darkness, but are now Light in the Lord.* Although how we were enlightened, how we were recovered from our straying in the Vale of Death, we are not able in every Particular exactly to describe. Happy is he that experienceth this blessed Change in himself, which is not a Spirit of Pride and Bitterness in quarrelling about the Time and Manner of the Holy Ghost's implanting a Principle of spiritual Life into the Soul, as is too much the Manner of many at this Day; with whom if I leave the Censure of the learned *Moulin* * I doubt not but the truly Judicious will excuse me, viz. Are themselves led by a reprobate Spirit, whilst captiously and carnally they enquire after the working of God's Spirit.

I shall here observe to you two Things especially in the Manner of Grace's Plantation in us, which the sacred Scriptures discover to us.

1. That the planting of Grace in our Hearts is meerly supernatural.

2. When once it is planted it is durable and cannot be rooted up again.

1. The planting of Grace in our Hearts is meerly supernatural. That is above the Strength, without the Concurrence of our corrupted Nature. This Doctrine we hold and maintain

† *Anat. Armin.*

against Pelagians, Semipelagians, Papists, Armi-
 nians, or other Sectaries however named: And
 assert that as the Efficient of Man's Sanctifi-
 cation is meerly supernatural, viz. the Holy
 Ghost, so is his Manner of working altogether
 divine, beyond the Power, and without the
 Help of any Thing in Man. The Scriptures
 and common Experience will easily shew us
 this Truth. Let us then without Pride, and
 with due Attention read, and impartially con-
 sider these Sayings of the Holy Ghost, viz.
*That every Imagination of the Thought of Man's
 Heart is only Evil continually. That of the
 Children of Men, There is none that understands
 and seeks after God, that they are become altogether
 filthy, none that doth Good no not one, That we
 are blind 'till God open our Eyes, that we are deaf,
 'till God bore our Ears; that we are Darkness, ut-
 terly destitute of all spiritual Light, it is God which
 worketh in us both the Will and the Deed of his
 good Pleasure: That in our Conversion we are new
 begotten, new born, new Creatures, created in Christ
 Jesus to good Works: In a Word, that we are
 all dead in Trespasses and Sins, and that our
 Sanctification is the first Resurrection from Death,
 wrought in us by the same almighty Power which
 God manifested in raising Christ from the Grave.*
 Did we gravely and seriously weigh these sa-
 cred Passages; and maturely consider our na-
 tural Inability and Weakness; and were not
 too much in Love with ourselves, we should
 with the utmost Readiness, Chearfulness and
 Alacrity, give God all the Praise of his redee-
 ming Love and Grace in our Salvation: say-
 ing,

ing, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name we give the Glory for thy loving Mercy, and for thy Truth Sake, Psalm 115. 1.* And if we do but impartially examine our own Hearts, and recollect our Experiences of the woful Effects of that Body of Death which we carry about us, what violent Opposition it makes against Grace ; with what Slackness and Cumber we prosecute a Motion from the Spirit of God to Action and full Accomplishment, and how passing slow our Course toward Heaven is, when we have all Helps of Nature and Grace to carry us forward. If we deal truly with our own Hearts, we shall find just Reason freely to confess, that if God had not done for us more than we could do for our selves, we had utterly perished in our Sins. Oh then let God have Glory, and every Man Shame ; and say with the Church, *Isa. 26. 12. Thou O Lord hast wrought all our Works in us.* In ourselves we are nothing, we have nothing, can bring forth nothing spiritually good and acceptable to God. In our natural Estate we are no better than a Heap of Enmity to Good, and Propensity to Evil ; every Way miserable unless infinite Compassion relieve us ; we are fast in our Chains like Galley Slaves, 'till Christ redeem us, and utterly destitute of all spiritual Strength 'till Christ raise us up. We cannot so much as rise up in one holy Thought without the Grace of God.

2. When once the special Grace of God is planted in the Heart, it is durable, and cannot be rooted up again. In Conversion the
Habit

Habit of Grace is so firmly wrought in us, as it shall never be abolished again. For those whom God hath accepted in his beloved Son, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, cannot either totally or finally fall away from the State of Grace. The Saints are built upon the Rock, and not upon the Sand: therefore when Temptations of any Kind assaults, they can never fall, nor can the Gates of Hell prevail against them. *Mat. 7. 24. & 16. 16, 18.* Tho' the Hope of a Child of Grace may be sometimes assaulted with Fears, Doubts, Temptations, which are like the Assaults of an House builded on a Rock, by Winds, Floods, and Storms, yet it shall not fail, because it is truly founded on Christ, according to the Revelation of his Will. He that hath begun a good Work in the Saints, will finish it, until the Day of Jesus Christ. *Phil. 1. 6.* The Apostle *Paul* seems to make a holy Boast and Triumph, in the Establishment of the Elect in the Love and Grace of Christ. Let Conscience, carnal Reason, Law, Sin, Hell, and Devils, bring forth all they can, it won't be sufficient to their Condemnation; and that because of Christ's Death and Satisfaction. The Apostle beats a Challenge, *Rom. 8. 35. Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?* Where the Spirit of God comes, he makes sure Work: What he hath built none shall pull down: Where he opens none can shut: His Gifts and Graces are without Repentance. Here is a sweet Cordial to refresh and comfort, and a sure Anchor for the Soul to ride upon; yea, it is a Nail fastned in a sure Place, for the gracious Soul to hang upon. The

The Work of the Spirit of God, in respect of Time, may be considered in a double Respect :

1. In Regard of the Quality of Holiness, and Principle of spiritual Life in the Soul: This Work is termed by Divines, preventing Grace; which without our Assistance works in us habitual Grace, herein we are passive, until being quickened, and renewed by the Holy Ghost, are thereby enabled to embrace the Grace offered, and conveyed in this powerful Operation; but it is to be observed, that when I say a Man is passive in his Conversion, I do not think he is physically passive, as a Stock or Stone, while an Artist is about to make a Statue of them; but morally, or rather spiritually, as a Man is spiritually dead, which is a true and real Death, though he be naturally living. This Truth might easily be cleared from many Scriptures, but I think sufficient only to observe what the Apostle saith to this Purpose, *Ephes. 2. 8, 9.* And especially the 10 Verse: *For we are his Workmanship created in Christ Jesus: &c.* We are God's Workmanship, not only as Men, but especially as Saints; we are formed by him e're we can do any good Work, and his forming us in our Regeneration is a Part of our Salvation by Christ, who as our Head enlivens us, as Members united to him by Faith. As the first Creation was by Christ, as the second Person in the Trinity; so the second Creation and by the same Christ as Mediator, the Lord and Head of the new Creation, in whom we live and move, and have

have our new Being, and not in ourselves. We receive our new Being that we may bring forth new Works, and have a Carriage futable to our new Principle: Enlightning our Minds to know God's Will, disposing and inclining our Wills, purging our Affections, that we should glorify God in an holy Conversation agreeable to that divine Nature whereof we are made Partakers in the new Creation.

2. The second is in the Concurrence and Help of the blessed Spirit in all Actions flowing from the Habit of Grace, by powerful and effectual Co-operation of his Virtue, together with the Strength of our renewed Faculties. This Work is called by Divines *Gratia subsequens co-operans*, or Assisters, and the Proceeds of it are all those holy Actions, which we exert & accomplish by its Help. And this second Work of the blessed Spirit must needs be thankfully acknowledged: For although he can and doth work without our Help in making us good Trees, yet we must co-operate and concur with him in bearing good Fruit: And this is beyond all Doubt, when we must needs grant an immediate Concourse of God's ordinary Power in all Actions natural, even to the moving of one Finger; it would therefore be absurd in Divinity, to deny the Aid of God's special Grace in every spiritual Action. Our Ability to do good Works is wholly from the Spirit of Christ, and not at all from ourselves. And that we may be enabled thereunto, besides the Graces already received, we need the actual Influences of the same Holy Spirit, to

work in us both to will and to do of his good Pleasure. Phil. 2. 13. The Lord worketh within his Children powerfully and effectually, carrying on the Work through all Difficulties and Obstacles with victorious Efficacy 'till it be wrought; he works not only by Suasion to gain Assent, but by special Energy effecting what he would have us to do. This Doctrine our Saviour himself taught his Disciples: *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much Fruit, for without me ye can do nothing,* John 15. 5. Christ is as the Vine, Believers are as the Branches; without the continual Influence of the Vine upon the Branches, they bring forth no Fruit; but that Influence continuing no Plant is more fruitful than a Vine is: So without the continual Influence of the Spirit of Grace upon us, we shall be altogether barren and unfruitful; but if you have that Influence, you will not be fruitful only, but very fruitful; and without the continuing Influence of Christ's Spirit, we shall not only be able to do little, but will be able to do nothing that is truly and spiritually good and acceptable in the Sight of God.

It is written in the Prophets (saith our Saviour) *And they shall be all taught of God, every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me,* John 6. 45. All they whom the Lord hath chosen, shall be taught of God. God by his Spirit doth open the Understandings of the Elect, to understand the holy Scriptures, the Types and Prophecies
of

of Christ, and what the holy Prophets have spoken of him, both as to his Person and Offices. God having in his Word revealed his Will, so far as he hath plainly revealed it, Men may know it; but there are deep Things of God, Mysteries in Scripture, which till the Spirit of God hath revealed unto Men, they know not, nor understand; for none knoweth them originally, but the Spirit of God, who is himself God, and searcheth the deep Things of God. This is asserted by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, &c. but his Scope and Meaning is very different from the abusive Interpretation of *Enthusiasts*, in this and former Ages, who monopolize to themselves, and their Spirit, the Sense of sacred Scripture. The Apostle explains the Scope of his subsequent Discourse in the 9th Verse; *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* This he quotes out of *Isai. 64. 4.* which is plainly the same with what the Apostle speaks in this Place; the greatest Difference is, the Apostle saith, *those that love him*; the Prophet, *those that wait for him*, which is the certain Product and Effect of Love. The whole 64th Chap. of *Isaiab*, and some Chapters following, treat concerning Christ, and so doth this Text, and many of those following. Christ and his Benefits are to be understood by the Things that God hath prepared for them that love him; which are set out as Things not obvious to Sense not to be comprehended by Reason. It could

could never have entred into the Heart of Men to conceive, that God should give his only begotten Son, out of his own Bosom, to take upon him our Nature, and to die upon the Cross; or that Christ should so far humble himself, and become obedient unto Death. This is the consentient Judgment of the best Expositors on these Passages of Scriptures. And they do not warrant any to expect new Revelations of God's Will now from Heaven, as some now do ignorantly dream of. I shall therefore next acquaint you how the second Aid, the subsequent Virtue of the Holy Ghost about all good Works which we do, is to be looked for.

1. It stirs us up to good Actions, by inspiring into our Souls, after a secret and unperceptible Manner, holy Thoughts, heavenly Motions, Desires, Purposes, and Resolutions tending to Godliness: And this Assistance of the Spirit of God, is called by Divines, *Gratia Excitans*, exciting Grace.

2. The Spirit of God guides and helps forward the Strength of each Faculty when it applies it self to the real Performance of any Action; and this is very properly called by the Learned, *Gratia adjuvans*, or *co-operans*, helping Grace.

We shall now examine wherein the Constancy of Grace consists, and wherein it seems changeable. As to the Habit of Grace in the Regenerate, we affirm and maintain that it is constant, and cannot be rooted up again: He who is once converted can never so shake off the first, as to undergo the second and third

Conversion: A Sinner once raised from Death, through the Infusion of spiritual Life, like unto Christ, he dies no more, but lives forever to the Glory of God. This is most strongly and convincingly argued by the Apostle *Peter* 1 Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.* It is impossible that the incorruptible Seed of Grace should perish in the Elect, not in Respect of the Will and Power of the Elect themselves, but in Respect of the Immutability of God's Decree concerning them, and of his Purpose of keeping them powerfully against Seduction, according to his Promises of which he cannot repent. See John 10.28. *And I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.* This is plain then, that this quickning Power of God's Spirit, whereby we be regenerate, lives forever, not only in itself but in us also, supporting and sustaining our Souls forever in their spiritual Life of Grace, once infused into them. And it is not to be thought that any shall in the least, cavil and go about to deny this Truth, when they have seriously read and considered that, 1 John 3. 9. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* Thus of the durable Nature of the Habit of Grace. Next a Word of the Operations of Grace, wherein it seems to be changeable. And here there is not such Constancy as in the former: the Operations performed by the Aid of the Spirit

Spirit often meet with Interruptions, and Pull-backs, and the Holy Ghost doth not at all Times alike, either stir up the Faculties of the Soul by holy Motions, or assist their Endeavours in Performance of good Desires. There are many Risings in the Heart contrary to the Interest of the new Creature, there are Stirrings of corruptive Buds growing on the old Stock from Season to Season : There are also those Evils of Pride, vain Glory, Ambition and speculative Wickedness, subject daily to the Assaults or Temptations of Satan, who incessantly, and outragiously envy's their Happiness. And sometimes Temptation breaks in upon the regenerate Soul, makes a Gap, yea masters it ; some presumptuous Sin against Conscience, some Pride in our own Strength, some neglect of pious Duties, especially Prayer and spiritual Meditation, some careless Entertainment of the blessed Motions of Grace, some Security thro' long enjoying of heavenly Comforts ; some such or other Offence, may quench the Spirit, and cause him to withdraw from our Souls all Sense of his comfortable Presence and Assistance for a Time.

This Interruption of the Operations of the Spirit of Grace in the regenerate, comes to pass three Ways.

I. The Devil who in general is a professed Enemy of Mankind, is more spitefully set against those who have believed thro' Grace. He seeks, as Christ said to *Peter*, to winnow them as *Wheat* ; and like a roaring Lion he hath them in continual Chase. He leaves no

Means

Means unattempted, by which he may work them to some Evil, thereby to hazard their Souls, impair their Comforts, and to bring Disgrace upon their holy Profession. He is continually laying Baits and Ginns in their Way, and in every Thing they undertake, or go about, he seeketh to ensnare them : In a Word, his main Business in which he is incessantly employed is to interrupt and destroy the Kingdom of Christ and his Grace in the World.

2. Those that are truly converted, are not yet wholly sanctified. They have Flesh as well as Spirit, and there is a continual Conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit, betwixt Nature and Grace. The Condition of the regenerate, is as in a State where there are two Claimers of the Crown, each of which striving to make his Party strong against the other, sometimes the one hath the upper Hand, sometimes the other ; so these two Flesh and Spirit, are at a perpetual Variance, sometimes the good Motions of the Spirit prevail, sometimes the fleshly Affections get the Ascendant. Satan is diligent to observe the Cause which Men take, and from hence he gathers what is their Disposition, and make his Advantage of those Things to which their natural Corruption seems most to incline, and draws them to Mischief and Reproach.

3. God in his Wisdom suffers them now and then to take a Foyl in their Combat with Satan, the World and the Flesh ; yea, in such a Measure, as that Satan may even seem to triumph in

in their Conquest, and the Instruments of Satan rejoice greatly in their Failings and Imperfections. Thus doth God often deal with his dear Children to humble them for their natural Pride, and for their greater Good, by bringing them to a better Understanding and Sense of their own Weaknesses. The Thorn in the Flesh of the Apostle *Paul*, whether it was an outward Temptation, or inward Corruption, kept him upon his Level from being lifted up above Measure. The very stirring of one Sin is sometimes the Ruin of another. The Devil tempted Christ, to conquer him, and God ordered it for fitting of our Saviour to relieve us with more Compassion from an experimental Sense of his Subtilty, and our Misery. *Joseph's* Slavery in *Egypt*, by his Brother's Sin is the Preservation of the Church in *Canaan*. And the crucifying the Son of God the Redemption of the World. An infinite wise God can use the Sins of Men to clear up the Way of Salvation, both to themselves and others. And while they are under Afflictions and Chastisements for their Sins, he continues his Love to them. He may chastise them with the Rod; but will not suffer his Faithfulness to fail. He will as a tender Mother raise them when they fall, but whip them for falling, to cause them to take more Heed. This is evident in the Case of *Asaph*, *Psal.* 73. Who after a strong Conflict with Sin, had an Assurance that God would guide him by his Counsel to Glory, V. 24. And he makes this Issue and Use of it, it quickens him to a Resolve, that it was good,

good, and good for him too to draw nigh to God. Ver. 28. The plain State of the Case is this, when the Soul is left destitute of the actual Concurrence of the good Spirit of Grace, it soon falls a languishing, presently discovers its natural Weakness, like hot Water taken off the Fire, begins to return to its first Coldness; and for a Time Corruption prevails against Grace, that which is natural, against that which was but accidental. Such Cessations as these are, all Men grant, and all good Men feel: Nevertheless albeit the Act fail, the Habit ceaseth not, nor is the Ground straightway barren because it misseth a Season or two; they are but Chastisements for Negligence past, and Admonitions to ensuing Care, Watchfulness, and Industry, which again will bring in an Increase of Comforts, when upon unfeigned Repentance and Submission the Lord is intreated to make the Light of his gracious Countenance and loving Favour shine upon them. I pass next to the

3. Third Circumstance to be considered in the Point of our Conversion, and that is, the Subject in which it is wrought: These are the Elect and they only; those whom he was pleased to approve of, and to pitch his free Love and Favour upon: and whom he severed from the common Lump and Mass of Mankind, these he appointed to be conformed to the Image of his Son; that is, to be conformed to him in Holiness and Sufferings here, and in Glory hereafter. There is Proof enough hereof in that golden Chain of Salvation recorded, Rom.

8. 3c. Moreover, whom he hath predestinated, them also hath he called; whom he called, them he also justified, &c. There is no Defect in the Chain of Salvation here set down by the Apostle; of which Sanctification (tho' not here expressed) is one special Link, and which is included in effectual Calling, and also hinted in the 29th Verse. The Links of this precious Chain are so surely knit together, that no Power of Hell, no Wit of Man is sufficient to break them. Whom the Lord hath chosen before all Time, those in due Time he calls, or converts, those he justifies, those he glorifies. Therefore Sanctification, Justification, and Glory are bounded within those Limits which God's Predestination or Election hath prescribed unto them, extending to no other Person, but such only as have their Names written in the Book of Life. The Elect in this Life are of two Sorts.

1. Infants, who have not the Knowledge of Good, or actual Practice of Evil.

2. Adult, who are of Age, who may both know and do, either Good or Evil. Infants and adult Persons are both the Subjects of Sanctification, but there is some Difference in the Manner of working it in them. Our Vocation unto the State of Grace is double.

1. Inward in the Work of the Spirit of Grace upon our Hearts, regenerating and sanctifying them by the Infusion of Holiness.

2. Outward, in the preaching of the Word, calling us to Faith and Repentance, whereto the Spirit joins his secret Vertue to make it effectual in whom he pleaseth. This Distincti-

on of inward and outward Vocation is as necessary, as it is ancient; and is a Truth so clear that I need not stand to justify it. Those of the Elect that die Infants are sanctified or converted before they are capable of external Vocation. Those of the Elect that live to ripe Age, are called both inwardly by the Work of the Spirit, and outwardly by the Voice of the Word. In both Sorts Conversion is the same, and Infants have it the same in Substance as others. And here we may lay down this sure Rule, namely, that the Graces of Sanctification may be, and are infused into many of the Elect in their very Infancy. Several Grounds may be alledged for the Justification of this Conclusion: As (1.) That Infants are as capable of the Habits of Sanctity as Men are. (2.) That their Souls may as well be now sanctified by infused Grace, as if *Adam* had not fell, they should have been holy even from the Womb, by original Justice propagated unto them, and inherent in them. (3.) That the Humanity of Christ was in this Manner holy even from the Conception, which was therein by special Privilege, like unto that Course which should have been ordinary in our Conceptions and Births, if we had not sinned. (4.) It must be acknowledged that *John the Baptist* was sanctified by the Holy Ghost, even from the Womb; which is convincingly evident from his extraordinary Motion upon the Salutation of *Mary* the Mother of our blessed Saviour, *Luke* 1. 41, 44. A pregnant Instance and Proof of this, is that which the Lord saith of *Jeremiah*, Chap. 1. 5.

Before

Before I formed thee in the Womb, I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the Womb, I sanctified thee, and ordained thee to be a Prophet unto the Nations. It is true, this may well be understood of his Designation unto the prophetic Function, no less than a Preparation of him thereto by the Infusion of such Qualities as might make him meet for the Discharge thereof; as excelling Wisdom, Courage, Patience, &c. in which Sense the Word sanctify is sometimes taken: As *Isa.* 13. 3. When God called the *Medes* and *Persians*, prepared and designed for the Destruction of the *Babylonians*, his *sanctified ones*: That is, set apart for his own Service in that Business. And to the same Purpose *Paul* speaks of himself, *Gal.* 1. 15. *That separated me to the Apostleship.*

There are two or three Things which naturally fall in here, and are worthy of due Notice and Consideration, viz.

1. A Resolution to those who have the Care of their Souls, and Salvation in highest Esteem, who frequently doubt of their Conversion because they know not the Time and Manner of their real Change from a State of Nature and Naughtiness, to a State of Sanctification and Vertue. They are satisfied in it, that their Birth hath been of religious Parents, they have also had a religious Education, they have been careful to attend upon religious Duties both in publick and private: They find some Goodness in themselves, and also love what is good: And yet know not how such Dispositions have been wro't in them: And there-

fore are apt to question the Truth and Goodness of their State, because they cannot find that in all their Lives they have observed such an Alteration wrought in them as they hear and see to be in some others. To these we say, that doubting doth not imply a Want of Grace and Faith, but a Weakness of Faith. Christ acknowledgeth the few Grains of *Peter's* Faith, when he reproves him for doubting, *Mat. 14. 31. O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ?* *Mary's* Question upon the Angel's Message to her of conceiving Jesus, who should be called the Son of the highest, *Luke 1. 34. How shall this be seeing I know not a Man ?* was not a Question of Unbelief, but of a Desire of clearer Information in the Manner how this should come to pass : Nor are strong Motions of questioning the Being of a God, the Truth of Redemption, and Faithfulness and Fulness of the Promise, Testimonies of Infidelity, provided they be abhorred, and repelled with an holy Indignation ; nor those which sometime assault strong Believers, as when *Asaph* doubted whether there were any Mercy left in God, when he imagin'd God had barred up any Motion of his Bowels towards him : This was a Start of Passion, it was his Infirmary as he acknowledged *Psal. 77. 10. This is my Infirmary.* It is also the Infirmary of such, if they are sorry that they have not been so bad as some others. They ought rather to rejoice, and be very thankful, that their good God did so early stop up in them the Course of sinful Nature, which hath shewed itself in many

ny others, in whom for many Years it seemed to be incurable. That he bowed their Hearts when they were young and tender, before they grew stiff and old in Sin, that he hath preserved their Youth from those Corruptions which others in their Age have dearly repented of. Let such who from their Infancy have, with *Isaac, Samuel* and *Timothy* and other the Children of God, been brought up and educated in Piety and Vertue, and grown as in Stature, so in Favour and Grace with God and good Men, let such not doubt to say, it was in my Mother's Womb, at my Birth, Baptism or non Age, that God hath dealt so graciously with me, sanctifying me with the Spirit of Grace which then was given me, and hath graciously afforded me from Time to Time those happy Dispositions to vertuous and religious Courses.

2. It is without any Ground to support it, that those of the romish Communion, deny the Salvation of Infants dying before Baptism. Elect Infants may be clean and holy before Baptism, whether we respect the Guilt of Sin, or the Corruption of it. They are clean from the Guilt of original Sin by the Death of Christ which God hath accepted to their perfect Justification long before they were born. They are likewise made clean in Part from the Corruption of original Sin, by the Infusion of habitual Sanctity into their Souls. For being justified by Christ from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, what should hinder why they may not be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, in Part while they live, and perfectly upon the separating
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of the Soul and Body, when original Corruption is in a Moment done away, and the Soul invested in the Robes of Righteousness fit for its Entrance into Happiness and Glory? The Work of Sanctification may be wrought in Infants Elect, before as well as after Baptism; for it is not Baptism, but the Holy Ghost is the Efficient thereof, whose Work is free, and not so to be tied to that Ordinance; but that he may sanctify the Elect sometime before, sometime after, and not always at the present Celebration of it. And the sacred Scriptures do abundantly testify, that elect Infants dying in Infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when and where, and how he pleaseth. *John the Baptist* was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his Mother's Womb; *Luke* 1. 19. The Prophet *Jeremiah* was sanctify'd from his Mother's Womb, *Jer.* 1. 5. The Promise is made to believing Parents, and to their Children conjunctly, *Gen.* 17. 7. *Acts* 2. 39. Christ saith, *Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mat.* 19. 14. The Apostle *Paul* calls Children, which are descended but of one Parent in Covenant with God, *holy.* 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. And God hath promised in the second Commandment, that *he will shew Mercy unto Thousands*, that are descended of believing Parents, *Exod.* 20. 6. It is true, that they are incapable of actual Faith, but it is as true they may have the Habits of Faith and Repentance, and of all other spiritual Graces infused into them, which if they lived would also appear by the actual Operations.

tions. The Case is extraordinary, and God as before they were, hath pardoned them of their original Unrighteousness by the Blood of Christ; so can he as well bestow Holiness and Happiness on them without any actual Faith of their own coming between as an Instrument to receive both. And as this may be said of Infants; so it may be applied to such as are deaf, or Fools, having such natural Defects as make them incapable of Discipline.

3. Children are to be baptized. That which is signified by Baptism, is our Justification by the Blood of Christ, our Sanctification by the Spirit of Christ. Baptism is the Seal of both unto us: and Infants may be Partakers of both, being washed from the Guilt of Sin, by the Blood of Christ, in whom they are reconciled to God, and actually justified before him; and also purified in Part from the Uncleaness of Sin by the Infusion of Grace from the Holy Ghost. What then should hinder, why the Infants of one or both believing Parents, be baptized, or washed with the Water in the Sacrament? The Scriptures afford many cogent Arguments for our Practice herein. This Seal of the New Testament belongs to covenanted Ones, (of which Number the Infants of Believers are no less than their Parents, *Gen. 17. 7, 22. Acts 2. 38, 39. Acts 3. 25. Rom. 11. 16. &c.*) And they being capable of this Seal of the Covenant, it is not to be denied to them. The outward Sacrament of Water cannot be denied to such as have received the Spirit of Christ, and to whom the Promises of the New-Testament

ment sealed up in Baptism do belong ; but to some Infants of Believers as well as to others come to Age, the Spirit of Christ hath been given ; both which have been already proved. Again, The Infants of Believers are Members of the Church, which is sanctified and cleansed with the washing of Water by the Word, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26. Again, the Children of Believers were by a divine Right circumcised under the Old Testament : therefore the Children of Believers under the New Testament ought to be baptized, because the one hath succeeded to the other. That Baptism succeeds to Circumcision is evident, because they both seal up the same very Thing. And as Circumcision was the initiating Seal under the Old Testament, so is Baptism under the New. And the Apostles did administer it so early to the Disciples as the first appearing of their new Birth, and Interest in the Covenant.

If it be objected (as we have heard more than once) that the Lord's Supper may be given to Infants as well as Baptism ; since Infants may make as much Use of one as of the other, being alike insensible of both : To this we answer, That our blessed Lord hath made a plain Difference in the Manner of their Institution ; namely of the Persons that are to partake of them ; the Ceremonies of Administration are diverse ; as in Baptism they require nothing but Passion in the baptized, and so may be administered to Infants ; but in the Lord's Supper they require such Actions as cannot be performed but by such as are of Years of Discretion,

viz.

viz. Self-Examination, discerning the Lord's Body, thankful Remembrance of his Death, &c: The full discussing of this Point, (which hath been often done by many abler Hands) belonging more properly to the Doctrine of the Sacraments; I shall no longer stand upon it; but pass to the

Next Sort of elect Persons, and they are those of Age, with whom the Lord deals according to the Counsels of infinite Wisdom, and Methods of sovereign Grace and Love, some he calls sooner, others later, some he suffers to go astray a great while, and at length are bro't home to the Obedience of Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of Souls. The Lord prevents many such without any Motion or Desire of their own. What is said of the *Remnant of Jacob, as a Dew from the Lord, as the Showers upon the Grass, that it tarrieth not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men*, Micah 5. 7. may be said of the Grace of God, it waits not for the Preparations and Dispositions of the Creature, but prevents them: 'Tis a pure Gift: tho' we are active with it, yet we are wholly indisposed for it. We can no more prepare our selves to shine as Stars in the World, than a Dunghill can to shine as a Sun in Heaven. The Apostle's Rule will hold true in the whole Compass of the Work, Rom. 6. 11. *If it be of Works, then it is no more Grace.* In the Regeneration of Persons come to Years of Discretion, some have a more gentle and sweet Passage from Morality to Grace, whose Lives have been under virtuous Education and stricter Discipline: Others

thers who have led dissolute Lives are converted with more bitter Plunges, and Terrors, and experience the Throws of the New-Birth with greater Anguish of Conscience : Some are surprisingly changed as in a Moment upon the reading of a Portion of Scripture, or hearing the Word preached, and deeply laid hold on, and others are wrought upon with more Labour, and longer Time ; in a Word, this Work is secret and therefore difficult to be described. The Methods of Grace are obscure as those of Nature, Eccles. 11. 5. *Who knows the Way of the Spirit, or how the Bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child ?* Even so thou knowest not the Works of God who makes all. So various is the Dispensation of God's Grace in our Conversion, that as Christ speaks of his coming in the Flesh, so may we of this in the Spirit ; *the Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation.* And it is that exceeds all human Skill to prescribe a general Rule that will hold in all Converts. But tho' the Manner is not within the Ken of any Man, yet the Means are ever uniform and constant ; viz. the Spirit of God the chief Worker. And the Word of God the subordinate Instrument by which it works our Conversion.

The whole of this mighty Work is most excellently and emphatically set down by the Apostle Paul, 2 Theff. 2. 13, 14. *But we ought to give Thanks always to God for you, Brethren, beloved of the Lord, because that God hath from the Beginning chosen you to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth :*
Whereunto

Whereunto he called you by our Gospel to obtain the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I must necessarily observe here, that there are two Things which are ordinarily wrought in Men living under the Ministry of the Word: Namely,

1. Illumination of the Understanding.

2. Motions of the Will and Affections?

These are the Fountain of all outward Actions: And each of them of two different Sorts.

I. Illumination. And this is either

I. Common and natural. Most Men know such and such Actions to be sinful, they know Unbelief to be a damning Sin, God to be a righteous God, Christ the only Saviour. A Man in hearing or reading conceives the literal Sense and Meaning of the Scripture in most Points of Christian Religion, so that he is able to discourse, dispute, and write of them; this Divines call Knowledge common, because it is bestowed on Reprobates as well as others. The Light which the Spirit affords to such a one, is but some more eminent Degree of that common Assistance which he gives to all that seek after Knowledge in any Learning, for the Good & Benefit of Mankind. It is a Point of common Experience, & granted by the Learned, that a learned Scholar unregenerate knows and studies Divinity in the same Manner and Method as he doth any other Art and Science. And as in the one, so in the other, he may obtain a superior Degree of Knowledge, by a special, but no sanctifying Gift of the Spirit; which doth much adorn his natural Reason, but not

make it spiritual. A Man may know an Artificer by the Excellency of his Workmanship, without any Affection to his Person, Rom. 1. 21. *They glorified him not as God, nor were thankful.* The Man that had a Spirit of an unclean Devil, did profess his Knowledge of Christ, when scarce any upon Earth well understood what he was. Luke 4. 34. *I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God*; but this was only a speculative Knowledge, without a spiritual Principle, which is necessary to a saving Knowledge. As

2. Illumination is spiritual, when a Man by a singular Gift of the Spirit of Grace is enabled to judge of heavenly Things, in a spiritual Manner, according to their Truth and Goodness; represented to the Understanding in their native Beauty and Excellency. 1 John 5. 20. *He hath given us an Understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true.* The Speculations of God may fill the Head, and the Heart be empty of a Sense of him, and the Life barren of an Imitation of God. This is *Wisdom entering into the Soul, Truth in the inward Parts*, Psal. 51. 6. That is the Teaching of God, when the Truth is learned as it is in Jesus *Ephes. 4. 21.* Powerfully directive, conforming the Soul as it did the human Nature of Christ to the Will and Mind of God. When the Will is conformed to the true Notions of an enlighten'd Understanding, such Illumination ravisheth their Mind, quickens the Prayers, seasons the Converse, and fortifies against Temptations. It gives a Relish

lish of good Things, and therefore one calls it well (*Gustus Spiritualis Judicii**) 'Tis a Witness of the Truth in us, 1 *John* 5. 10. Such Knowledge as this is belongs only to the Elect, and may well be called spiritual, because the sanctified Understanding judgeth spiritually of God, and heavenly Things.

2. Motions of the Will and Affections: These are likewise double: viz.

1. Natural: There is restraining Grace as well as renewing Grace, but they are two different Things. God told *Abimelech*, *I withheld thee from sinning against me*, Gen. 20. 6. *Abimelech* had some natural Integrity in his Conscience, not to meddle with another Man's Wife, which God acknowledges, *I know that thou didst this in the Integrity of thy Heart: for I also withheld thee*: Men may love that which they do not act, at least they may love it in others, tho' not in themselves, for some extrinick Considerations; and wish they had as fair a Way to commit it, as others have. They may hate what they practise. Do all that hear the Word love the Word, hide it in their Hearts, and let it sink down into the Bottom of their Souls? There is often in the unregenerate a transient Pang, and a sudden Affection, a working Imagination, a melancholly Vapour, a Flash of Joy and Love, which may quickly be removed. Such Affections may arise rather from the Constitution of the Body, than Alteration of the Soul, they are but a

* *Junius*.

Taste

Taste of the heavenly Gift, and the good Word of God. *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. A Taste and no more and it is but a transient Work. The Object about which the Affections are stirred may be divine ; yet the Operation but meerly natural. Natural Affections may sometimes be stirred up, even to a great Degree, at the hearing the Sufferings of our Saviour pathetically expressed, yet only out of a natural Compassion, from an agreeable Impression upon the Fancy : The Story of *Joseph* in the Pit, and Christ upon the Cross, may be heard with the same Workings of Passion, and all the while no other than the working of natural Spirits ; which quickly vanisheth away. Some Affections are as movable as Quick-Silver, upon the least Touch ; they sweat like Marble in moist Weather, but resemble it also in Hardness. Those in *Mat.* 13. 20, 21. that received the Word with a sudden Joy, were as suddenly offended for Want of a Root : anon with Joy receives it, by and by he is offended. Upon the Understanding of Threatnings or Promises, the unregenerate Will is often touched with some Kind of Affections towards those Things, as they which are naturally hurtful or beneficial to it ; as to Love, Hope, Desire, Fear, or Hatred, such or such a good or evil Thing spoken of in the Word : For when an unregenerate Man shall hear it plainly and amply declared, what Happiness belongs to the Saints, what Comfort is in God's Favour, what Glory in Heaven, what Horror in Hell, and a bad Conscience, he will be easily stirred

stirred up with many Desires of enjoying the one, and escaping the other. But this he doth in no other Manner than as every Man by Instinct of Nature will wish and seek for that Good which he knoweth to be proportionable to his Nature, and also shun the contrary.

2. *Spiritual*: The Motions of the Will, and the Affections of the Soul, rise according to the Elevation of their Knowledge of God in Christ more or less. There is futable Affections to whatsoever is known of God in Christ; a Trembling at that Justice which drank such Draughts of precious Blood in the Punishment of Sin, an Apprehension of every Transgression in its utmost Demerit. There are as strong Affections of Love and Joy, as the Devils by their Knowledge of God in Christ, have of Horror and Hatred. There is a beholding of God in Christ, a tender and condescending Father. There is an Excellency in the new Creature above that of the greatest Moralist under Heaven. All Life hath Motion proper to the Principle of it: Rational Life is attended with rational Actions. Sensitive Life with Acts proper to Sense. It is as impossible then that a spiritual Life should be without Acts consonant to it, as that the Sun should appear in the Firmament without darting forth its Beams. 'Tis as natural to this new Habit to produce new Actions, as for any Thing to engender according to its own Likeness, and Species, as for a living Tree to spring out in Leaves and Fruits. A renewed Man whose Seed is within him, brings forth Fruit after its Kind, as well as the Herbs and
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the Trees, *Gen. 1. 12.* Good Works are the End of God's new creating us, that we should walk in them, *Eph. 2. 10.* *We are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good Works.* There is both such a Nature, and such a Choice, that as the Apostle saith, *2 Cor. 13. 8.* *We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth.* The new Creature puts by the Temptations of the Flesh, and of the World, to make its Way into the Bosom of God, the Center of its Rest, and the boundless Limit of its Soul, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty,* *2 Cor. 3. 16, 17.* The Vail is taken away; it beholds as in Glass the Glory of the Lord. The new Nature hath a thorough Apprehension of both spiritual Good and Evil, known and believed by Faith; the Will is strongly inclined with all constant and vehement Affections of Love and Hatred, earnest to embrace the one, & detest the other, above all Things else whatsoever. Thus you may somewhat see the Difference there is between these Illuminations & Motions in the Regenerate and Unregenerate. As a State of Nature consists in the Prevalency of a corrupt Habit, which leavens the whole Man, so the State of Grace in a Predominancy of a gracious Habit, which spreads it self over the whole Soul, striving with the powerful Opposite, which in Part resides there still: 'Tis a Habit put in to match and destroy that Habit of Sin which was there before; the Soul by it is made alive from the Dead, *Rom. 6. 13.* *Yield your selves to God, as those that are alive from the Dead.* No Man then is to conclude himself a new Creature, because

of his moral Honesty; Men may have some Virtues, and yet not true Grace; but if they are new Creatures, and have Faith and Love, they have all Graces in the Root; and they will appear in Time, tho' they may lie hid a while in their seminal Principle. The Certainty hereof the Apostle Paul asserts, Rom. 8. 38, 39. *I am perswaded that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, &c. nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Now from what hath been said above, these two certain Conclusions may very fairly be drawn: Namely,

1. That the common Illuminations and the natural Movings of the Will consequent thereupon, are Fruits of the ordinary Grace of the Spirit, in the Ministry of the Word preached.
2. That proper and spiritual Illumination with the spiritual Affections flowing therefrom, are the Effects of the special Vertue and Influence of the Spirit of God in the Ministry of the Word renewing the Soul. The principal Agent in the Work is the Spirit of God. the Word is the Instrument only; and that passive, not moving and working on the Soul by any inward Force of it self: The quickning, changing and renewing Vertue comes properly and only from the sanctifying Power of the Holy Ghost; yet, by a common Metonymy it is ascribed also to the Word: And therefore we are said *to be born again by the Word*, 1 Pet. 1. 23. It is said *to be Fire and a Hammer to break the Rock*, Jer. 23. 29. *To get Faith by hearing*, Rom. 10. 17. *To be sanctified*

sanctified by the Truth i. e. the Word, John 17. 17. And hence such Properties as these are ascribed to the Word, that it is the Power of God to Salvation, Rom. 1. 16. That it is mighty in Operation, *sharp as a two-edged Sword*, Heb. 4. 12. And in many other Places : but the Word works nothing of itself ; but hath its Effect and Efficacy by the only Power of God working upon the Heart. And in this Case the Word is truly the Voice of God, not of Man ; which is not a bare Sound but effectuates that which it commands to be done. It raises us, when it bids us arise ; it awakens us, when it bids us awake ; it makes us holy, when it commands us to be so. See the apt Character given of it, 2 Cor. 10. 4. *The Weapons of our Warfare are mighty, &c.* Thus I have given you the Sentiments of the best reformed Churches, and the most celebrated Divines, touching the Nature and Distinction of the two Callings, inward by the Work of the Spirit, outward by the Voice of the Word.

Next I shall offer to your serious and impartial Consideration the proper Signs and distinguishing Marks of true and real Conversion ; in the Enumeration of which, I shall not trouble you with negative Signs, and external Evidences, as (of late) have been the Manner of some Writers, *scribunt docti indoctique*, they indeed might easily fill up Volumes with such, from daily Observation, and perhaps Experience : But I will venture to say, that Thousands of them are little to the Purpose, in the present Case ; unless there could be the Effects

fects, and Issues of a Principle of spiritual Life in the Soul. Let us therefore attend to the more proper Indications and Evidences of the Work of God upon the Heart, in its Conversion and Sanctification, in the Habit and native spiritual Exercises thereof. Take them as follows ; and Oh that each of you may find some, at least of them, in himself.

1. Love to God above all Persons and Things, is a Sign of true Grace in the Soul. If any Man love God the same is known of him. It is of much more Advantage and Comfort to a Soul to be known of God, owned and acknowledged and approved, than to comprehend much of the Things of God in his Notion : Some Boast of their Knowledge, some of their outward Deportment, and external Devotion ; that they know much of God, and exceed in outward Acts, to many such God will one Day say, *Depart from me, I know you not, you Workers of Iniquity* : But if any Man love God, that Man is beloved of God. No Man can be such a Stranger to his own Soul, if he look into it, but he may know the Object of his Inclinations. It is an easy Task to tell, whether you are the same Man as before ; whether you love what before you hated, and hate that which before you loved : You may know if God be the chief Object of your Love or no ; a true Child of God will be able to appeal to him for the Truth of his Love, as *Peter* to our Saviour, *Joh. 21. 17. Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.*

2. What Operations there are superior to a Life of Nature ? Where there is a saving

Change, the old Building is not only in some Measure taken down, but also one of a new Mould struck up. The new Creation hath its Effects and Properties: Old Principles, Aims, Customs, Affections are dislodged; & new Principles, Aims & Affections are settled in their Room. The inward Acts are the surest Evidences, the proper Acts of the new Creature are to be sought for in the proper Seats of them; which are chiefly and principally, the Mind, the Heart, the Will, the Conscience, the Affections. Outward Acts are no Sign at all; i. e. no certain distinguishing Mark of the Work of the Spirit of God upon the Heart; no Man can perfectly judge of another by them; nor any Man of himself. As the Strength of Sin, so the Strength of Grace, the new Creature lies at the Heart. And from hence is the true Passage Way and Mean to Life and Happiness; agreeably *Solomon* exhorts to the Sanctification thereof, and the Preservation of its spiritual Integrity, as a sure Evidence of real Sanctity: *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy Heart with all Diligence, i. e. (as in the Margin) above all keeping; for out of it are the Issues of Life.*

3. Where real Conversion is wrought, there is a Contrariety in the Heart to what it was before. The new Man, the Image of God is his Law in the Heart, and it must principally be discerned in its Motion to God, in its Respect and Reverence of God: The gracious Habit is directly contrary to the sinful Habit. None can pretend to be more expert in the Knowledge of a Resurrection from a spiritual Death,

to a spiritual Life, than *Paul* was : None speak^s so much of the New-Creature as he doth : and he was quite another Man after his being in Christ, than he was before : even while he was in a State of Nature, it seems in the external Observation of those Things which the ceremonial or moral Law did prescribe, he was in the Eye of Man of a blameless Conversation, resembling *Zecharias* and *Elizabeth*, Luk. 1. 6. Men could not tax him, he had behaved himself so conscientiously, *Acts* 23. 1. Yet when he had his Eyes opened, he found here was no such Matter of Confidence for him before God ; this external Performance he found when enlightened, was far short of internal and perfect Obedience : *Rom.* 7. 7. When the Scales fell off his Eyes that he could discern the Truth, he was so far from accounting them profitable, that indeed he accounted them prejudicial, so far from an Advantage, that they were a Damage to him, looking for Salvation from Christ alone. He was before an Admirer of his own Righteousness, a Persecutor of Christ and his Members. But after his effectual Calling and Regeneration, he lay down all his Righteousness at the Feet of Christ, he abhors that which before he delighted in, and his whole Bent and Dialect is, *Now, Lord what wilt thou have me to do ?* Observe in him now a quite contrary Strain ; be careful to try yourselves by this.

4. The Soul with all her Powers and Faculties, is engaged in every inward and spiritual Duty.

Duty. The Heart is without Reserve in every Piece of secret Service. The new Creature is base in his own Eyes because of Sin; and mourns for the least Miscarriage. If Pride be dying daily, and Humility reviving and strengthening it is an excellent Sign. Nothing upholds the old Man like Pride, and nothing so helpful and assisting to the new, as Humility. Daily converse with God in secret Prayer and Meditation is a most sure Evidence of the Truth of Grace in the Heart. The Spirit of Grace there can never be a dumb Spirit. The Spirit of Grace is a Spirit of Supplications, and this is promised to, and prophesied especially of Gospel Converts, *Zech. 12. 10.* This is an early, inseparable Fruit of the Spirit of Grace; by the Spirit we cry *Abba Father*, *Gal. 4. 6.* *God hath sent forth the Spirit into your Hearts, crying Abba Father.* What was the convincing Argument our Saviour made Use of, to assure *Ananias* that *Paul* was changed, and become another Sort of Man than he had been before, it was this, *Behold he prayeth.* And *Paul* from his own Experience, declares it as the Fruit of a pure Heart, *2 Tim. 2. 22.* *Peace be with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart;* he also gives it as a distinguishing Badge of the Saint, *1 Cor. 1. 2.* *Called to be Saints, with all that in every Place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

5. A Relish and Sweetness in the Word and Institutions of Christ. A spiritual Appetite desires and relishes spiritual Food. Both the cleansing of the Heart and the progressive Sanctification

Sanctification of it, is wrought by the Word, Eph. 5. 26. *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water by the Word.* The spiritual Palate proves, and approves what is good, what is the good, acceptable and perfect Will of God, Rom. 12. 2. The Preaching of the Gospel is counted Foolishness by the World; but the Sincerity of the new Man accounts it Wisdom, 1 Cor. 2. 6. *Howbeit we speak Wisdom amongst them that are perfect; not absolutely; for so there is no Man perfect, but comparatively, that is Persons who have their Senses exercised to discern betwixt Good and Evil,* Heb. 5. 14. Such as are of a sound Judgment, and are able to discern what is true Wisdom. To such faith the Apostle, *we speak Wisdom:* And it needs must be so; for Wisdom being an Habit directing Men to use the best Means in order to the best End, the Salvation of Men's Souls, being the best End, that Doctrine which directs the best Means in order to it; must necessarily be Wisdom, and the purest and highest Wisdom. And here we should frequently try ourselves thus; ask our own Hearts what Conformity and Agreement, is there between them and the Word. What Excitements of Grace in the Exercises thereof? What Use we make of it, and what Good we get by it? Do you desire it that you might be in the Society or Fashion of those that attend upon it? that you might be better furnished for Discourse or Dispute? Or that you might make further Proficiency in Grace, and Holiness: Agreeable to that Exhortation of
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the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 2, *As new-born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.* How do you find it operate upon your Hearts? What Impression doth it make there? And are there ardent, and still more earnest Desire of more familiar Acquaintance with it? In a Word, Is it to thy Judgment more excellent than Gold? *Psal. 19. 10. and to thy Taste sweeter than Honey,* Psalm 119. 103. If so it is a good Sign of a good Heart. Therefore,

6. Try the Holiness of your Heart and Life, there is a certain Connexion between a Heart of Flesh, and walking in God's Statutes Ezek. 36. 26, 27. *And I will give you an Heart of Flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments and do them.* Where God takes away the stony Heart, and gives an Heart of Flesh in the Room of it, this now hearkens to God's Law, trembles at his Threats, and by gentlest Providences is framed to a Compliance with his Will; to forbear, do, be or suffer what God will, receiving the Impress of God, as softned Wax receiveth the Impress of the Seal; For our Spirits framed by God's Spirit to a Disposition suitable to the Spirit's Holiness, readily concurrereth, and so worketh. The Principle of new Life springs up in holy Motions; Holiness is the constant Companion of the divine Nature; and this consists in *escaping the Pollutions that are in the World through Lust.* 2 Pet. 1. 4. Escaping this Corruption agrees well with being Partakers of the divine Nature,

ture, which rejoiceth to have the blessed Spirit point him to those Ways that are most conformable to the divine Will. This Holiness is not strained, but natural, and ariseth from the Fear of God in the Heart, *Jer.* 32. 40. There is great Carefulness both to make our Peace with God for our former Violation of his Law, using all Means he hath prescribed, and directed thereunto, and also to preserve our Peace, by avoiding the like Breaches for the Time to come. *Behold*, saith the Apostle, *What Carefulness it wrought in you*, *2 Cor.* 7. 11. Purity of Heart is ordinarily joined with a Zeal for Goodness. *Tit.* 2. 14. Purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works, i. e. studious to do, and warmly pursuing all such Works as are acceptable to God, and profitable to ourselves and others. Purity and Zeal in good Works go Hand in Hand, as being both the Ends of our Saviour's Death, and both the Works of the Spirit.

7. A continual Struggle and Combat between the new Man, and the old ; the Flesh and the Spirit are two contrary Principles, and work contrarily in their Notions and Inclinations. The rational as well as the sensitive Appetite, opposeth it self to the divine Rule ; and to the Dictates and Motions of the Spirit of God : And the Holy Ghost dwelling in the Saints, moveth as potently against the Propensions and Inclinations of the Flesh. *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other*, *Gal.* 5. 17. Observe carefully how the Conflict goes on, is there

there a friendly Compliance with the Dictates of the old Nature ; or a lively Abhorrence and Detestation of them, issuing from the new ? It is impossible there can be a friendly Neighbourhood between these two irreconcilable Opposites. Grace cannot endure the least Motion of Sin without Opposition, where there is a Sense of the stirring of the sinful Habit, it is a Sign of spiritual Life in the Soul ; Sensibility is a Sign of Life, a dead Man complains not of Blows, or Tossings and Cutting, you may take out his Bowels, sever him Limb from Limb, and there is no Complaint : but a living Man will start at the Prick of a Pin or a Pinch : Lay what Lead you will on a dead Man, and there is no Resistance, or Murmuring ; there is neither feeling nor sense, and nothing is noisome to him : There is a mute Compliance with the Motions of Sin until they have bro't forth Fruit unto Death. Rom. 7. 5. *For when we were in the Flesh, the Motions of Sin which were by the Law, did work in our Members to bring forth Fruit unto Death.* But those who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, are in Arms at the Motions of Sin, and studious to stifle its cursed Brood, and hinder its further Progress. For they with holy David, esteem all the Precepts of God to be right, and hate every false Way, Psal. 119. 128. Where there is then no Antipathy to that which is contrary to the Life and Being of a Christian, 'tis a sure Sign that there is nothing of a divine Life.

8. Watchfulness against spiritual Sins : Some Sins are of a more refined Nature than others.

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There are spiritual Sins, and more fleshly, and sensual Iniquities; the one and the other is to be watched against, and opposed: *We wrestle not*, saith the Apostle, *against Flesh and Blood, but against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against spiritual Wickednesses in high Places*: Ephes. 6. 12. The Seat of those Sins is the Heart, and for the most Part escape the Observation, and Resistance of natural Conscience. How many seem to live the Lives of Saints, while their Hearts are the Hearts of Devils, and have no Spots of the Flesh upon their Garments; but a World of them upon their Souls. The Apostle concludes many positive Duties which he prescribed to the *Thessalonians* with a general Precept which he leaves with them at the Close of his Epistle, having exhorted them from many Evils, now he exhorts them *to shun the Appearance of them.* 1 Thess. 5. 22. The regenerate Soul starts at the Appearance of a Temptation, it opposes Enticements to a Departure from the Lord, and gives them no civiller Entertainment, than *get you behind me, Satan.* Christ in the Flesh did so, and Christ formed in the Heart will do so likewise. And if at any Time, he come in the Way of evil Men, he is careful to practise the Advice of the wise Man, he will *avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.* Prov. 4. 14, 15.

9. Examine what Delight you find in God, and his Ways. This is one of the surest Evidences of a sanctified Heart. For if the Law of Grace be in the Heart it will delight to do

the Will of God : Psa. 40. 8. *Thy Law is within my Heart, I delight to do thy Will, O my God.* There is a Consent to the Holiness and Goodness of the Law : A voting with it and for it, as the only Rule of Righteousness ; Rom. 7. 16. *I consent unto the Law that it is good.* Certainly to delight in the Law of God is an inseparable Property of the New-Creature ; the Apostle expressly sheweth it speaking in the Person of a regenerate Man, or of himself as regenerate. Ver. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man.* 'Tis then when we have God's Light and Truth sent forth into us, we can go to the Altar of God with exceeding Joy, Psalm 43. 3, 4. This only gives a warm Frame in evangelical Duties. A Spirit of Adoption, and Regeneration, only can make us delight to come to our Father, and to cry *Abba* to him. Solomon saith, that it is a Joy to a just Man to do Judgment, Prov. 21. 15. The Delight of an Heart seasoned with Grace are more ravishing than all the Pleasures of Sense, because they arise from an Habit planted in the Soul by that Spirit which is a Spirit of Joy as well as of Grace : The Services of God's House, are his Delight ; and he is refreshed with a River of Pleasure in every Act of Worship. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy Pleasures.* Psalm 36. 8. *In keeping thy Commandments there is great Reward.* Psal. 19. 11. The Duties of Religion, Communion with God in them is the sanctified Soul's delightful Element. As it is an Argument

ment that *Seneca* gives of the divine Original of the Soul, that it is most pleased with divine Speculations : So it is a very cogent Argument of the new Creation, when it is delighted not only with the speculative, but with the practical Contemplation of God, when the Soul that triumph'd before in the Pleasures of Sin, can burn with an ardent Love to God, and solace itself in Communion with him : And in the several Periods of Duty, be ready to pronounce of divine Grace, as *Solomon* doth of Wisdom, *Her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace*, Prov. 3. 17. These are all of them spiritual Evidences : And such only are the distinguishing Marks of a real Convert, and of the spiritual Man. And this will abundantly appear, if we take a short Survey of what the Scriptures testify of a State of Nature before Conversion ; and of a State of Grace by Conversion. In a State of Nature, we are dead in Sins, *Ephes.* 1. 2. *Col.* 2. 13. *Ephes.* 5. 14. That we are blind and very Darkness in Regard of spiritual Knowledge, *Acts* 26. 18. *1 Cor.* 2. 14. *Eph.* 4. 17. *Rev.* 3. 18. That our Hearts are stony, destitute of all Sense and Motions of Goodness, *Ezek.* 11. 19. and 36. 26. Again, that God's Work in our Conversion is a raising from the Dead, *Joh.* 5. 2, 25. *Ephes.* 2. 5. *Col.* 2. 12. *Rev.* 20. 6. A restoring of Sight to the blind, *Luke* 4. 18. A new Generation and Birth of a Man, *John* 1. 13. *John* 3. 3. Another Creation of him, *Psal.* 51. 12. *2 Cor.* 5. 17. *Gal.* 6. 15. The giving of a new Heart of Flesh, and taking away

away of the old stony Heart. *Ezek. 11. 19.* Being thus made free from Sin, i. e. The Servitude of Sin, we become the Servants of Righteousness, *Rom. 6. 18.* The Grace and Comforts of the Spirit of God in this Life are Pledges to us of that Abundance and Fulness of Joy which we shall partake of in the Life to come, as the first Fruits of the *Jews* were an Evidence to them of the ensuing Crop. Let us while we here mourn under the Burden of the Sins that do so easily beset us, send up frequent Wishes and Prayers to the God of all Grace, for the full Accomplishment of our Redemption: waiting to be delivered from the Bondage of the Remainder of Corruption in us, into that glorious Freedom of the Sons of God; and be possessed of his everlasting Favour, and never-failing Inheritance which he hath prepared for his Children. I come now to treat of the

2. Second Point proposed, viz. Faith. The Grace of Faith is a Work of the Spirit of Christ in the Hearts of the Elect, whereby they are enabled to believe to the saving of their Souls. Faith is a Part of our Sanctification, being an inherent gracious Quality infused into the Soul at our effectual Calling or Conversion: Therefore as to its Original it is divine, being wrought in us by an immediate Action of the Spirit of Grace, and not any Way springing from the Liberty of our Wills or Strength of our corrupted Nature. I take this to be included in the Words of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, *John 6. 44.* *No Man can come unto me except*
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the Father which hath sent me, draw him. Which I think signifies a divine Power put forth upon the Soul of Man, by which it is made obedient to the heavenly Call, and willing to close with the Offer of Christ in the Gospel, for tho' no such can necessarily be concluded from the Word, *draw*, yet it is easily concluded from the Nature of the Motion, in *coming to Christ*, which is the Soul's Motion to a sublime spiritual Object, to which no Soul hath any Power of it self; such is the Darknes of the human Mind, the Obstinacy of the Will, the Depravation of the Affections, unless it be illuminated and drawn by the Spirit of God. No Soul is able of it self to discern spiritual Things, so as to see that Goodness and Excellency that is in them, much less to move towards the Participation of them. No Man hath evangelical Faith by Vertue of his own Strength, that any believe Christ, and believe on him, is not from any Power of their own but of God's free Gift: And as the Grace itself is given so also is the Exercise: Phil. 1. 29. *For unto you it is given in the Behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his Sake.* An Instance of this the *Philippians* had among them in *Lydia* and others, unto whom was this victorious Grace of Faith freely given by hearing of the Word, which was not unto many others that heard: Our blessed Saviour himself makes a manifest Difference between the News of Salvation reaching the Ear, and touching the Heart, Mat. 13. 11. *Because it is given to you to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is*

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not given. God, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, giveth to some Persons to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God more than to others. There is a more general and confused Knowledge of a Thing: And there is a more distinct, clear, particular Knowledge. There is a meer notional Knowledge, and there is a more affective, experimental Knowledge. To them who are Heirs of eternal Life, their heavenly Father gives to know, more clearly, distinctly, particularly the Things that concern the Kingdom of God, to know and believe in Christ who is the Saviour of the World; he hath no such special and particular Kindness for the Generality of People, and therefore he hath not given to them the same Aids and Assurances. Many Men have Civility, Sobriety, external Devotion and Profession; that have not evangelical Faith which purifies the Heart, and worketh by Love, and brings forth the Acts of Obedience to all God's Commandments; and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked Men; *for all Men have not Faith*, 2 Thess. 3. 2. Faith is reckoned up among the Fruits of the Spirit of God, Gal. 5. 22. *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith.* The very Desire of believing is from God, and not from ourselves, in *working out our own Salvation*, the very beginning in the Will, as well as the Perfection is ascribed to the Efficacy of God: His good Pleasure is the procreating and helping Cause of this Work on the Will, and not the Will's good Pleasure. *Phil. 2. 13.* The Lord Jesus is the
great

great Instructor of, and chief Leader in the Christian Race, and Perfecter of them in running it. The Disposition, Grace, Ability and Success, which they have for running, it is all from him ; from the Beginning of the Work of Faith unto the End of it, to the finishing of the Course, he doth infuse, assist, strengthen and accomplish the Work of it to the last, *Heb. 12. 2. Looking unto Jesus the Author, or Beginner, and Finisher of our Faith.*

These are some Scripture Descriptions of Faith, freely given from the Father, through the Son to the Heirs of eternal Salvation : but for the better Understanding of the Meaning of the Word *Faith*, we must necessarily consider it.

1. First, As the Word is taken in its largest, and most extensive Sense in Reference to all civil or natural Things.

2. Secondly, In its more limited Sense in Relation to divine and supernatural Things declared to us in the Scripture.

1. First, As the Word Faith is taken in its largest and most extensive Sense in Reference to all civil or natural Things.

Integrity of Life, Faithfulness and Constancy in Word and Deed, is intended by the Word Faith, 2 Tim. 2. 22. *But follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, &c.* It is also sometimes taken for that Faith which is common to all, not proper to the Elect, being either extraordinary or ordinary : Extraordinary (commonly called a miraculous Faith) which is a Belief that some extraordinary and miraculous Thing shall fall

fall out; given but at some special Times, to some special Persons, on some special Occasions. Such a Faith the Centurion had, coming to Jesus on his Entrance to *Capernaum*, and addressing him in those Words, *Mat. 8. 8. Speak the Word only and my Servant shall be healed*: Hereby intimating that he believed, Diseases were as much at Christ's Command, as his Servants were at his Command. That they came at God's Command, wrought according to their Commission from God, and went off when God commanded them off. Hence it is most certain that the Centurion had a true Notion of the Power of the true God, and it looks very probable, that he had a Revelation of Christ, as the true Messiah and Son of God. Which our Saviour's Words pronounced concerning him doth most illustriously evince: When he said to those that followed him, *Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great Faith, no not in Israel. Ver. 10.* That is in the Generality of the *Israelites*, for as to particular Persons, both *Joseph* and *Mary*, had shewed a greater Faith. And under this Head the Faith of the Disciples, by which they believed Christ so far, as that by his delegated Power, they were able to do the like Miracles, *Mat. 17. 20. and 21, 22.* And we read *John 6. 24.* That the People came to *Capernaum* seeking Jesus, not out of any Love to his Person or Doctrine, but out of Curiosity to see further Miracles wrought by him.

Ordinary, being either that which resteth only in the Mind of Man, or else draweth and moveth the Will also. Sometimes it is taken
for

for Fidelity and Trustiness, as when a Thing is done or spoken *bona fide*, faithfully or trustily; sometimes for Arguments, or Proofs from Reason, or Authority brought to creed Belief in another, which Acceptions is usual in *Rhetoricians*. Sometimes for the sincere, diligent and careful Discharge of the Duties of Men's Callings for the Good of others, as Judges, Ambassadors, Witnesses, Stewards: And so others, as Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, &c. ought to be right honest, true, trusty, faithful each to other; One which doth in every Point according to the Trust and Charge which God in his Providence invests him with, neglecting nothing which God commandeth him. In a Word, one which standeth to his Word, keeping Truth, without Failing or Falshood.

To lead us further into the distinct Meaning of the Word *Faith*, we must distinguish between three Sorts of Knowledge: The

1. First, is Knowledge properly so called, which is bred in us by the evident Certainty of Things presented unto our Reason or Sense: When we know such Particulars as come under our Senses when they are rightly disposed.

2. The second is Opinion, which is an imperfect Knowledge of Things not clearly presented to our Reason or Sense, when we apprehend Things in Part and obscurely, so that we cannot absolutely say it is this, or it is that.

3. The third is Belief, which is a Knowledge grounded upon Testimony and Authority of others, when we assent to those Things where-

of by our own Sense and Reason we have no Certainty nor Evidence, only we believe them, because such and such hath told us they are so. These three diverse Apprehensions of Things we express in Forms of Speech agreeable: The first, when we say, I know this to be: The second Thing, I think it is so: The last in this, I believe it is so. A great Difference there is between these three Apprehensions of the Understanding as every one may easily discern. It is proper to mention here the four Kinds unto which Faith is divided by learned Men, viz. of Miracles, historical, temporary, and justifying Faith. That of Miracles hath been explained above. Historical, or dogmatical Faith, is so termed, because thereby Evidence is yielded to the History of God's Word, that is all Things which are written therein are believed to be true, *Jam. 2. 14. 19.*

Temporary Faith is that whereby such an Assent of the Mind is given to the Gospel, and to the gracious Promises thereof, as the Heart is affected with them, and rejoiceth in them, for a Season, *2 Tim. 2. 18.* Such was that of *Simon Magus, Acts 8. 13.* This is hypocritical and deceitful. Tho' it may appear both to him that hath it, and others to be sound and good, yet it is Nought, as by the Unprofitableness thereof will in the End most manifestly appear, to the great Discomfort of him that hath relied thereon. Justifying Faith (of which we shall treat somewhat more largely in the Sequel of this Discourse) its principal Acts are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone,

alone, for Justification, Sanctification, and eternal Life, by Vertue of the Covenant of Grace. Thus much briefly of the Meaning of the Word Faith, in its largest and most extensive Sense. Pass we next to the Consideration of the Word Faith in its more limited Meaning, as it is Christian, and relates unto divine and supernatural Matters revealed in the Scripture, and here the Word Faith hath a double Acception: viz. improper and proper.

1. Improper, and so it is taken in the Scripture Stile three Ways. As,

1. For the Object of Faith the Things believed, either

1. Generally for the whole Doctrine of Faith delivered in the Scriptures, as 1 Tim. 4. 1. *Some shall depart from the Faith, and shall give Heed to Spirits of Error, and Doctrines of Devils.* See many other Places. 1 Tim. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 2. Acts 6. 7.

2. Specially, for Christ himself the chief Object of Faith: Gal. 3. 23. Before Faith came, that is Christ: Compare with V. 19, 24, 25.

2. For the external Profession of Faith and Religion, as Rom. 1. 8. Your Faith is published throughout the whole World. See Acts 14. 22.

3. For that Vertue which we call Fidelity or Faithfulness in Words or Deed, whether it be in God, Rom. 3. 3. *Shall their Unbelief make the Faith of God of none Effect,* or in Men that they may shew all good Faith, *Pistin agatbeen.*

This of the Word, taken improperly: the next Acception of it is

2. Proper,

2. Proper, and here the Description of it, may be this; i. e. a Belief of all that God hath revealed; or an Assent given by the reasonable Creature to the Truth and Goodness of all divine Revelations. Herein are observable, at least three Things, viz.

1. What is to be believed, viz. divine Revelations?

2. Who are they which believe, the reasonable Creature?

3. The Kind or Nature of Belief, viz. Assent.

1. What is to be believed, divine Revelations? Whatsoever the Lord is pleased to make known unto the reasonable Creature. These Revelations are of two Sorts, viz. Some immediate from God himself, by Vision, Dream, or other Secret, but infallible Suggestion. Such Revelations of divine Things were made unto the Prophets, Apostles, and other holy Men of God: Who as they believed certainly the Thing revealed, so they knew infallibly the Truth of the Revelation itself that it was from God, and not an Illusion of Satan or their own Brain: To describe the Manner of such Revelations is altogether above the Power of any mortal Man, unless himself had been acquainted with the like Revelations; and it would be needless to attempt it, since in these Times, this special Direction ceaseth and also the Use of Miracles (unless for Conversion of a Country where the Gospel hath never been preached) is also ceased.

2. Some mediate, delivered from God by others unto us. Such were the Discourses, and
Answers,

Answers which the Prophets and Apostles made by Word of Mouth unto the People : Such is now unto us the whole written Word of God, which is now the only ordinary Object of our Faith. The holy Scriptures are given of God, to be the Rule of Faith and Life. For the whole Counsel of God, concerning all Things necessary for his own Glory, Man's Salvation, Faith and Life is either expressly set down in Scripture or by good and necessary Consequence may be deduced from it. For the rich Treasury of the holy Scriptures contain Precepts and Declarations of the Doctrines of Religion whether in higher Mysteries thereof, as of the Trinity, Incarnation of Christ, &c. or in other inferior Points of Sanctification, Piety, and moral Practice. Histories of Matters of Fact past and gone, as of the Creation, Fall of Man, Flood, &c. Predictions of Things to come hereafter, whether they be merely prophetical, or withal, do contain some special Promise or Threatning concerning those to whom the Prediction is made.

2. The Subject of Faith, or they which believe viz. the reasonable Creature, in them only this Quality of Faith is inherent. And here we include all created Understanding, whether of Men or of Angels. Of living Men there is no Question, not of the best of Men that ever were, *Adam* in his Innocency and Christ. Who can doubt that *Adam* had Faith, if we consider that the Cause of his Fall, was his not continuing stedfast in the Belief of that Threatning, *In the Day that thou eatest thou shalt die.*

As for the Humanity of Christ, what was in innocent *Adam*, was also in him, as is apparent by those Prayers and Supplications, which in the Days of his Flesh he *offered up with strong Crying and Tears unto him that was able to save him from Death*, Heb. 5. 7. And that Complaint upon the Cross in his greatest Agony. *My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?* Mat. 27. 46. Those Prayers were made in Faith; and so he was heard in that which he feared: And though Christ, as the Son of Man, was ignorant of the Time of the End of the World, yet no Question, but he did perfectly believe the Article of the last Judgment. As to Angels, we have the Apostle *James's* Testimony of evil Spirits, *Jam. 2. 19.* They believe that Chains and everlasting Torments will be increased at the Judgment of that great Day. And there are many other Particulars which by Revelation of Scriptures they know will fall out. And they believe the Truth of the Scriptures which they know well enough to be of God. This is clear enough, because of their Spite and Hatred against them. If cursed, much more the blessed Angels have Faith: For as their Knowledge of many Things is more clear and exact than it is in the Devils, so is their Faith unto others much more firm and resolved. Hence it is that though they know not the Day and Hour of the End of the World, *Mar. 13. 52.* Yet they believe it with Joy, longing for the Addition of Happiness in the Accomplishment of the Church's Glory. Nor do the Spirits of just Men who lived by Faith

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in this Life, utterly cease to live by Faith after their Translation into Heaven, for even there they yet still believe, many Things, both past and to come, as the Resurrection of their Bodies, and everlasting Life, &c. And that Prayer which the Saints in Heaven make for the Punishment of their Blood shed upon the Earth, (*How long, Lord, holy and true, dost not thou judge and revenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth*) Rev. 6. 10. Here is most certainly a Prayer made in Faith. Wherefore you see that every Part of the World hath Faith in it, Faith on Earth, Faith in Heaven, and Faith in Hell too. As the Creatures knows but in Part; therefore it must in Part be always bound to believe whatsoever the Creator shall reveal unto it. And in which Faculty of the reasonable Creature, Faith is resident, is next to be examined. In every intellectual Nature there are usually made too distinct Faculties: (1) The Understanding. (2) The Will. We must see in which of those Faculties Faith is Resident, or whether in both. We affirm the Assent of Faith is an Act of the Understanding and of the Will, both together approving and allowing the Truth, and Goodness of divine Things: but then it is to be remarked, that we do not make the Habit of Faith to be inherent in two diverse Subjects, nor this Act of Assent to come from two diverse Principles, or two several Faculties of the Mind: but we say the Subject is but one, the intellectual Nature; and this according to the Judgment of most of the Divines of the Protestant Communion;

nion ; it is also according to the Sentence of the Scriptures, that seat Faith in the whole Heart ; as Rom. 10. 10. *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness.* And Acts 8. 37. *If thou believest with all thine Heart.* Now it is a Thing manifest, that in the Scripture the Heart is taken for the whole Soul with all it's Powers and Operations, as of Understanding, 1 Kings 3. 9. *Solomon* asketh of God an understanding Heart, of willing and chusing, Acts 7. 39. *In their Hearts they went back to Egypt,* 1 Cor. 7. 37. He that standeth firm in his Heart. i. e. in his Purpose and Resolution. Again, of the Affections, Mat. 6. 21. *Where the Treasure is, there is the Heart also,* i. e. Love for Lust. Rom. 1. 24. Of the Memory, Luk. 1. 16. *They hid those Words in their Hearts,* so Luk. 21. 14. Thus you see the Scriptures speak of the whole Soul as that in which the Grace of Faith is resident. Here two Questions may be put and briefly answered, viz.

1. First, What is the Ground of the Certainty of this Assent of Faith ?

2. What are the Degrees, and, wherein is the distinguishing Differences of the Assent of Faith in God's Elect, from all other Faith ?

1. What is the Ground of the Certainty of this Assent of Faith ? The Ground of it lies in this, in that it is built on the infallible Truth and Authority of divine Revelations. God is the Author of them, and he is so infinitely good, holy & just, that no Lie can come of this Truth, as *John* speaketh, 1 *John* 2. 21. *Wisdom itself cannot be deceived, Truth itself cannot deceive*

deceive

deceive, and God is both. But then you'll ask me, how is it known certainly, that the Scriptures are the very Word of God? To this I answer, that in old Times, they knew the Writing and Preaching of *Moses* and the Prophets to be of divine Inspiration, partly by the Holiness of the Doctrine which they taught, the lively Power and Work whereof the Godly then felt: partly by the Miracles which they wrought for Confirmation of their prophetic Office: Partly by the certain and infallible Accomplishments of all their Prophecies. By the same Means also were the Preaching of Christ, and the Preaching and Writing of the Apostles known in their Time. And as to the whole Scripture written in the Bible how do they appear to be the Oracles of God? I answer the Scriptures are known to be of God by themselves. We approve not, but abhor that Tenet of the Romish Church, and her Abettors who maintain that we cannot be certain of the Scriptures Divinity by any other Argument than the Testimony of the Church, which, say they, doth infallibly propose unto us, what is to be believed, and what is not to be believed. To which we oppose a better Rule than any they can give, or ever have given; and it is that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 5. *Our Faith may not stand in the Wisdom of Man, but in the Power of God.* I shall not insist any longer on this Enquiry; since the infallible Certainty of Scriptures is at large handled and maintained by many learned, and judicious Writers of the Protestant Communion.

2. The second Ground of the Certainty of this Assent of Faith, is the Greatness and excellent Worth of the Things revealed. They are not Things of little Value and Concern, which God proposeth to us in his Word to be embraced and believed, but they are the great Things of his Law that he hath written unto us, *Hos. 8. 12. A Law that is perfect converting the Soul, a Testimony that is sure, making wise the simple, Statutes that are right, rejoicing the Heart; Commandments that are pure, enlightning the Eyes; Judgments that are true and righteous altogether, more to be desired, than what Men desire most, than Gold, yea than much fine Gold, sweeter than the Honey that droppeth from the best Honey Comb. As Psal. 19. 7. &c.* In which the holy Prophet *David* most emphatically amplifies the Dignity and Worth of that Part of Scriptures, which was in his Time given unto the Church of God: And since then, there is a large Addition of heavenly Treasure, the Gospel fully revealed, and written for our Benefit, containing in it the Wisdom of God and that in a Mystery, hid from the Princes of this World, *1 Cor. 2. 7. The deep Things of God, Ver. 10. The Riches of his glorious Mystery, Col. 1. 27. The unsearchable Riches of Christ, Ephes. 3. 8.* All, both Law and Gospel, old and new Testament are stored with excellent Perfection, Goodness, and Amiability in themselves, and to us they contain Matters of the greatest Importance and Concern. *He that believeth, shall be saved: he that believeth not, shall be damned, Mark 16. 16.* The Matters that are set

set forth to us in the Scriptures are no less than Blessing and Cursing, Salvation and Damnation, Grace and Sin, God's Favour and Displeasure, Heaven and Hell. What is there then of so great Worth, and Moment as these Things? And how strong a Ground is there herein, for the Assent of Faith to divine Revelations contained in his written Word?

3. A third Ground of the Certainty of the Assent of Faith, may be taken from the Proof and Experience we have had of some Part of the Truth of those Things we believe. We read that *Abraham believed* strongly the Promises, when for a long Time, he had but small Performances, as is to be seen in the History of his Life. But generally, Faith is but weak, 'till it be confirmed by Experience: This gives it Life and Vigour, making the Heart strong in Consideration and Resolution. Thus it was with *David*, as I shall mention in two Instances, viz. (1) His Confidence in combating with the *Philistine*, *1 Sam. 17*. Where from Experience of God's Help in Time past, defending him in his lawful Calling, against the Bear and the Lion, he confidently assures himself of the like Assistance and Victory in that his righteous Quarrel against the uncircumcised *Philistine*, *V. 36*. (2) He takes the same Course in *Psal. 77*. Where as it seems he was in great Affliction and Distress; and then he strengthens himself in Expectation of Relief, Deliverance, and Comfort by the Consideration of God's Works of old; and all his Mercies and loving Favours heretofore manifested to his People. Thus
Experience

Experience breeds Confidence, and we readily trust him, whom we have once thoroughly tryed. Usually the experimental Observation of Things past, will fill the Heart with Boldness, and confident Expectation of the like Success for the Time to come : And strongly engageth to assert with the Psalmist, as Psal. 58. 11. *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth.*

I come now to the

2. Second Point proposed, touching this Assent : Namely, what are the Degrees ; and wherein is the distinguishing Differences of the Assent of Faith in God's Elect, from all other Faith. It hath been proved already that Faith may be in all reasonable Creatures, and declared that the Scripture testify that there is some Kind of Faith in the Devils, and wicked Men : We must therefore examine a little, what their Faith is, and what the Faith of God's Elect is, and wherein lies the Difference ? Herein lies a substantial Difference of this Assent of Faith ; there being a great Diversity between an Assent unto the Truth, and Goodness of Things taken in the general, and Assent unto the Truth and Goodness of the same Things particularly applied ; the first of these is commonly called by two Names, as (1) *Historical Faith*, because it believes the Letter of the Scriptures, whether Histories or Doctrines that are expressed therein. (2) *Temporary Faith* ; from the Event and Issue of it, because it perseveres not to the End, but fails in Time of Trouble, and Temptation. The one and the other, are

one and the same Degree of Faith assenting to Things in gross, from which it flies, and of which it disallows when it comes to particular Application. Such a general Assent there is in the Devils, who know the Scriptures to be of God, and acknowledge the Things contained in them, to be in themselves true and good because from God ; tho' they hate both the one and the other bitterly ; and reflect on them, with great Horror. According as *James* saith, *They believe and tremble*, Jam. 2. 19. Many Hypocrites and Reprobates have the like Degree of Faith ; who being enlighten'd and convinced of the Truth of the Word, give a general Assent to it for the Time, as in those Luk. 8. 13. *Who receive the Word with Joy, but they have no Root : Which for a while believe, but in Time of Temptation go away.* In those Heb. 6. 4, 5. *Which were enlightened, tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost : and have tasted of the good Word of God, and of the Powers of the World to come, are fallen away.* In those many that believed in Christ's Name, but yet Christ would not trust them, because he knew them all, that they were not sound at Heart. *John* 2. 23, 24. In those many again that at another Time believed in him, but the Lord cautions them to look to it, that they be sound. *If ye continue in my Word, ye are verily my Disciples.* *John* 8. 30. 31. Such a Faith was in *Simon Magus*, *Acts* 8. 13. Who believed the Apostle's Preaching, and was baptized, even whilst yet he remained in the Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity, that is, a

cruel

cruel and out-ragious Enemy to that Truth which he seemed to believe and profess, and unmoveably in Love with those Sins that he seemed willing to leave and abandon, Ver. 23. The like Sort of Faith there was in *Felix* who was so stirred that he trembled when he heard *Paul* dispute of *Righteousness, Temperance and the Judgment to come*, Acts 24. 25. He believed, and like the Devils trembled; But nevertheless he retained another Man's Wife, was unrighteous, and covetous, and expected a Bribe: And puts *Paul* off, and his Religion to a more convenient Season, which he would take at his own Leisure, & Pleasure. Such a Sort of Faith there was in King *Agrippa*, who when he heard *Paul's* Reasoning and Apology, could have found in his Heart to have been a Christian, Acts 26. 28. And it is also recorded that *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly, and revered him as a just Man and holy, and did many Things willingly, Mark 6. 20. But when the Messenger of the Lord deals plainly with *Herod* concerning his Incest, he must then go to Prison. And the Hypocrite would put him (though accounted a Prophet) to Death, but that he feared the People more than he revered *John Baptist*, Mat. 14. 5. And thus it is with many Men still, as long as they can dally with their *Delilahs*, keep to their favourite Sins, and carry on their main Desires and Delights without Controul, they assent to the Truth of Scriptures, approve and allow of what is contained in them in gross as good and excellent without any special and proper Application

cation to their Practise. I could here assign many Causes of this Kind of Faith in many Men. As,

1. First the common Grace of the Spirit by which some are enlighten'd in the Knowledge of heavenly Things. God is pleased to bestow of the common Graces of his Spirit, even upon the unregenerate for the common Benefit of his Church, and for the Use and Instruction of others. We read that *Solomon* in the Building the material Temple, employed not the natural *Israelites*, but the Remainder of the *Canaanites* and Strangers that lived in the Land, to be Bearers of Burdens, and Hewers of Stones, and Overseers of the Work, *2 Chron.* 2. 17. So doth Christ in the Building of his Church, use the Help and Ministry even of some un sanctified Men, who do not heartily esteem and affect that which they know, yet in the General they believe it : And willingly teach it for the Good and Benefit of others.

2. The Authority and Influence of Men in high Esteem and Repute for Wisdom and Knowledge. How many have been the Followers, from Time to Time, of those who have been accounted the Oracles of the Age wherein they lived ? Was it not the Esteem that the People had of *John the Baptist*, to be a great Prophet, that induced *Herod* to reverence him the more ? And the high Fame that went of Christ, drew many to hearken to his Doctrine. Thus it hath been, and thus it is even unto this Day ; that many Hundreds take up, and drop their Faith in Matters of Religion,

Religion, according to the high Esteem, or Disesteem they have of Men's Persons. And the Custom and Consent of the Times and Policies wherein Men live have much the same Effect.

3. A third Cause is, some extraordinary Event of Providence confirming the Truth of Religion. So it was in the Day of Christ and his Apostles, the Miracles perswaded many to believe, who yet were not true Believers, but Counterfeits: It is said, John 2. 23. *That many believed in his Name when they saw the Miracles which he did*; but their Faith was not good, who believed only upon Miracles. Wherefore our Lord *would not commit himself to them*, as V. 24. So it was with *Simon the Witch*, when he beheld the Signs and great Wonders which were done by the Apostles, he believed, yea, he wondred, when at the same Time his wicked Heart was not right in the Sight of God. *Acts 8. 13. 21.* Thus you easily see, that by such Means as are above related, and the like; Men are perswaded unto an imperfect and general Faith, who yet have not a Spark of inward Grace and Holiness, nor the Root in themselves, whence their Faith springeth, as saith our Saviour, *Mat. 13. 21.* Such ill grounded Faith standeth only while the Sun shines on Religion; but when Trouble and Temptation ariseth on the Account thereof, or that such formal Professors must forsake their beloved Sins, peculiar Pleasures and Delights. Then they with the young Man in the Gospel shrink away sorrowful that they cannot have Heaven at the Rate they themselves set upon it, and
instead

instead of conducting their much admired Formality in Religion unto a particular Application and Practice ; their hypocritical temporary Faith, dwindles away to a meer Nullity. Which notwithstanding, we find that the Writers and School-Men of the Church of *Rome*, affirm to be the justifying Faith of which the Scripture speak. *Becanus*, in the Name of the rest of his Fellow-Sophisters declares, that the Doctrine of the Catholicks is this, that Faith belongs to the Understanding, and is nothing else, but (*credere sive assentiri eis quæ et Deo revelata sunt*†) that is to believe, or assent to those Things which are revealed by God. It is easy then to see how much Faith is slighted by these Men, when they maintain that the Faith whereby a Sinner is justified, is nothing else, but an Assent to Articles of Religion, because of God's Authority. They indeed pretend some Places of Scripture to justify this their Notion of justifying Faith, in which there is not the least Ground to support it. And the Weakness, and Inconsequence of their Arguments built thereupon, have been sufficiently discovered and exposed by eminent Men in the Protestant Churches, of undoubted Integrity, and known Abilities. I pass now from that Faith which is general unto that other which is special and particular. This particular Assent of Faith is, when we believe whatsoever God hath revealed as most true and excellent in Respect of ourselves, when they are particularly applied to our particular Cir-

† Theol. Schol. Tom. 3. Cap. 8. Q. 1.

cumstances and Condition ; and compared with what we wish for, and desire to escape ; endeavouring to reduce our Practice to that unerring Standard. As it appears in many Circumstances, that *Job's* Friends were too rash and censorious in fundry of the Charges exhibited by them against him : So it is also evident, that yet they were skilled in the Nature of this particular Assent of Faith, as their Advice shews, *Job* 5. 27. In which there is a very singular Description given thereof. *Lo this, we have searched it, so it is ; bear it, and know thou it for thy Good.* (Margent) For thyself. Two Things come in here necessarily to be considered, viz.

1. First, the Fountain whence this Assent of Faith floweth.

2. Secondly, that to which it tends, or the Object whereto it is directed.

1. First, The Fountain whence this Assent of Faith floweth. The Root and Cause thereof is the Grace of Sanctification wrought in the Heart by the Holy Ghost, renewing the Soul in all the Powers thereof. The new Creature being begotten by the Seed of the Word, and having thereby an evangelical Frame, hath therefore the prime, evangelical Grace conatural to it, from which springs Faith and all other Acts of the new Creature. It is not the Effect of common Illumination ; for many under that know and despise the Truth, or believe it but in the Heap, and in general. If this was the Fruit of common Illumination great and good Men both Prophets, Apostles and Ministers,

sters, zealous and powerful in their Doctrine, would not have spent so much Labour and Travel in dispensing the Truths of God to so little Purpose with most Men. Nor is this Assent wrought by Miracles and strange Accidents, these were frequent among the *Jews*, but yet they continued in Unbelief. 'Tis only the sanctifying Grace of God's Spirit that accomplishes this Work. The Heart not washed by the holy Ghost in the Laver of Regeneration, but abiding in its natural Corruption, is not, nor can be subject to the Law of God: But proves either impudent and atheistical to deny his Truth, or strangely subtile to shift it off from itself, when it is pressed with it in particular. But when the Spirit of Grace is shed abroad in the Soul, sanctifying all the Powers thereof thro' out, it is wonderful to see how it stoops to the Command of God's Word. Regeneration restoreth Health unto the Soul, whereby it recovereth a true Taste of the Lord's Bounty and Goodness: And from hence there a constant Appetite to this spiritual Food, as much as unto any corporal Nourishment. To this Purpose is the Apostle's Reasoning, 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. *As new-born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming as unto a living Stone, disallowed indeed of Men, but chosen of God and precious.* Now the Soul hath real Apprehensions of divine Things, and conceives of Religion, as a Work to be done, not as a Business to be talked of. Now he sees himself under an indispensable

Obligation to please God by obeying him if all the World is displeas'd : And that the Concerns of the Soul are principally to be mind-ed, and looked unto. He closes without any Limitation or Restriction to the whole Truth of God revealed in his written Word. And entertains all Events of Providence with a *Blessed be the Lord* ; and willingly resigns himself and all to the disposing of his Creator, now believing certainly that in all Things it is best to follow his Counsel ; taking his holy Word, (as *David* did) for his sure Guide and Adviser in the Course of his frail Life. Psalm 119. 24. *Thy Testimonies also are my Delight, and my Counsellors.* Thus of the Root and Fountain whence this Assent of Faith floweth. Next follows

2. Secondly, that to which it tends, or the Object to which it is directed ; this is to be considered in the next Place. And it comprehends in it

1. The whole Will of God revealed to us in his Word, containing all Histories, Doctrines, Commands, Threatnings, Promises of what Kind soever.

2. The particular Promise of Remission and everlasting Life by the Death of Christ, which in one Word we call the Gospel. For the former, viz. Belief of the Revelations of God, it is a Dictate of Nature ; though Nature cannot ascend to many Truths before a Revelation from God, yet when the Revelation is made and Reason sees the Characters of divine Authority upon it, or hath no forcible Arguments against it, to deny it to be the Mind and Promise of God, not to believe it is a Violation of

of the Law of Nature ; because the poorest Reason dictates this, that supposing God hath made a Declaration of his Will in any Promise, or Precept or Threatning, Man is to believe what God promises or commands : Because Reason will tell him, that God cannot deceive, that Truth is a necessary Perfection of the divine Nature, that is powerful to perform what he promiseth : And consequently Man is obliged to believe what he promiseth. Again, the Law of Nature tells us, our Creator is to be credited in any Proposition he makes ; that our Belief of him is a Carriage due to him ; that it is infinite Goodness, he will condescend to reveal himself in Ways of Mercy to his Creatures ; and that this divine Goodness requires a suitable Return ; that whatsoever is revealed ought to be entertain'd by all the Faculties of the Soul, believed in the Understanding, embraced by the Will, and welcomed by the Affections ; for all the Faculties of the Soul, being created by God, ought by the Law of their Creation, to rise up in due Respect to every Thing that flows from him. In a Word, the Law of Nature prescribes a resting in, and Respect of any Thing, which we have Ground to think is of divine Authority.

2. The particular Promise of Remission of Sins, and everlasting Life by the Death of Christ, which in one Word we call the Gospel. It is proper to observe here that Faith is distinguished unto legal and evangelical Faith, as it assents to the whole Will of God in what Kind soever, is called legal, because it is such a Virtue

as is immediately required by the moral Law, in the same Manner as other Duties of the moral Law are. If any should be minded to dispute whether justifying Faith be commanded in the moral Law, let them consider that it is incontestibly manifest, that it is enjoined, and that in the first Commandment, as a singular Part of the inward Worship due unto the Creator, consisting principally in those three Graces of Faith, Love and Fear. Faith, as it assents to the Gospel-Promise of Grace, we call evangelical, because it is such an Act as is expressly commanded in the Gospel, the Object thereof being not revealed by the moral Law. But then this Promise of Grace was the Object of the Faith of the Ancients as well as ours. The Object of their Hope and Trust under all the former Dispensation was the Messiah, and their Faith was exprest by waiting and trusting; as may be seen in some Instances. *Jacob*, upon his Death-bed, breathes out his Soul in longing for God's Salvation, or God's Jesus, Gen. 49. 18. *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.* The good Patriarch kept the Promise of the Seed of the Woman, and Salvation by him as a Depositum in his Heart, fed upon it all his Days; and makes a solemn Confession of his Faith in his dying Posture. How fervent and earnest is the holy Psalmist in his Expectation of the Promise of Grace and Salvation by the Messiah, as those that watch for the Morning, tired with a gloomy and tedious Night? Psal. 130. 6. *My Soul waits for the Lord, more than they that watch for the Morning, I say, more than they that*
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watch for the Morning. In his Word do I hope, saith he, Ver. 5. That is, in that first Promise of the Messiah, and all the Promises of Pardon, and Propitiation built upon that Foundation. My Soul waits for that Messiah who is to bring forth a plenteous Redemption, that Lord who is to redeem *Israel* from all his Iniquities. The Object of their waiting was the same with that of *Simeon*, Luke 2. 25. *The Consolation of Israel*; and that Consolation was the Lord Christ, Ver. 26. It was the Promise made to the Fathers that they hoped in; that Hope of the Promise, for which *Paul* was accused and set before a Tribunal, which was his Hope in Christ, *Acts* 26. 6, 7. Waiting and Hope are the Terms whereby Faith is expressed in the old Testament. As Christ was the Object of the Ancients Hope; so also was he the Object of their Faith. Faith is the Spring of Hope, for nothing can be waited for but what is believed to be certainly, and infallibly to come to pass. All Believers from the beginning of the World, had the same Foundation of their Faith, it was in all of the same Tenor, upon the promised Seed it was pitched, and the bruising of the Serpent, and the removing of the Curse by it was longed for. The Church held the Messiah perpetually under all the Corruptions of Ages, and the Abuses of the Watchmen, and would not let him go. *Cant.* 3. 4. They had the same Fruits of Faith under the Law, and therefore the same substantial Object of Faith as we have under the Gospel; all that were justified and saved, had the Sentence of Justification pronounced

pronounced upon them, on no other Account, than we have, which the Apostle *Paul* labours to shew in many Places ; especially *Rom.* 4, throughout the whole Chapter, in the Examples of *Abraham* and *David*. Their Justification was by Faith, which Faith was imputed to them for Righteousness ; and what that Faith was the Apostle plainly describes ; *V.* 23, 24. *It was written for us, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the Dead.* Agreeably, Christ as crucified, was in all their Preaching proposed by the Apostles, as the Object of Faith, Security from Punishment, and Way to Happiness. Now the essential Difference between the Faith of God's Elect & of Hypocrites lies here ; viz. Hypocrites have always their Limitations & Reserves ; they believe something, but not all, if all, it is but in the Gross. But when it comes to a Trial ; and that they must give Proof of it, then they shrink and bid Farewell to Faith : But the Faith of God's Elect is sincere, fair, open, universal, without Distinctions, Equivocations, mental Reservations, or other hypocritical Turns and Shifts. And although it may be ignorant in some Particulars, and weak in the Application of others, yet in the habitual Resolution and Disposition of the Heart, it yields universal and uniform Assent to the whole revealed Will of God. It is true indeed that *David* in Passion may call *Samuel* a lying Prophet, for telling him he should be King ; and *Peter* in bodily Fear deny his Lord and Master, in whom he truly believes : And so in others a violent Temptation may push
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their Buckler of Faith aside, but yet it cannot strike it out of their Hands : If they give, yet will they not wholly leave the Field ; but will again rally, return to the Battle and maintain their Standing. But the Hypocrites partial and ill-directed Faith, is the bitter Root of Men's Apostacy and Backsliding ; and is the principal Instrument whereby the Devil causes the Downfall of many who yet seem Saints and zealous Professors of Religion. Thus have we briefly given a Description of Faith as it regards the whole Course of Religion, and the whole Counsel of God revealed in his Word. Next we shall offer a Word of true Faith as it respects the particular Promise of Grace in Christ Jesus : Which is a Grace of Sanctification, wrought by the Holy Ghost in every regenerate Man, whereby for his own particular he trusteth entirely unto the Promise of Remission of Sins, and Salvation by Christ's Righteousness, seeking for Help & Security nowhere else but only in the Fountain of his precious Blood ; all other Things are broken Reeds under the most splendid Appearances : And therefore true Faith in the Child of God, addresseth itself only to the Lord Jesus to find Medicine for his Miseries, & Counsel for his Troubles. He lives a Life of Faith only in him as *Paul* did, Gal. 2.20. *And the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* A gracious Soul lays hold on every Word, on every Promise, on every Particle of Christ for the Conduct and Direction of his whole Course : He believes not for a

Time and Spurt, by Fits and Starts, but constantly ; upon all Occasions when Storms arise in the World, he embraces Christ as his Protector and Conductor ; when Racks appear to be set up in his Conscience, he believes in him as his Peace-maker, when Corruptions creep and defiles him, he believes in him as a Refiner ; he considers and applies him in his Person, in his Promises, in his Offices, in his Mediation, in his Sacrifice, and in the Righteousness of all. You know the Promise of Grace in Christ is made unto us in particular Terms, both in the Word preached and Sacraments : To assent unto this Promise, is not barely to acknowledge there is such a Thing in the World as Remission of Sins by Christ to be bestowed upon some we know not who ; for this is to believe the Promise, not as a Promise, but as a Piece of History ; but this Assent is an Act of the whole Heart, in Trust, Reliance, Dependance, Adherence, Affiance, or if there be any other Word expressing that Action of the regenerate Soul, whereby it resteth and reposeth it self only upon God's Promise in Christ, for the obtaining eternal Happiness. He committeth himself to God, and is out of Doubt concerning God's Ability to keep until the Day of Judgment his Soul, and his whole Concerns both for this Life and another, which he hath by Faith committed to him, knowing he is able to secure them. He copies after that happy Pattern set him by the Apostle *Paul* thus, *I know whom I have believed,* (or trusted, as the Margent) *and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that*
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which I have committed unto him against that Day. 2 Tim. 1. 12. Thus of the second main Point, viz. *Faith*. The

3. Third follows, namely *Justification*. This is a Concomitant of the former : Justification in short is the making of a Person just, or righteous in this Sense, at least, it is to be understood in the Point now under Consideration : Which may very justly be thus described ; that is to say, it is an Act of God's free Grace whereby he freely justifieth those, whom he effectually calleth, not by infusing Righteousness into them, but by pardoning their Sins, and by accounting and accepting their Persons as righteous, not for any Thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's Sake alone, who hath interposed himself as Surety for them, and in their Stead and Name to make that Satisfaction for them which is required : And he that pleads this Satisfaction is justified evangelically by Grace, through the Righteousness of the blessed Jesus the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace imputed to him; and accepted for a his. By him every one that believeth is justified; he that believeth in Christ with the Heart, by his Merit and Mediation shall be absolved, and shall not come unto Condemnation. *Through this Man is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all Things, from what ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.* Acts 13. 38, 39. I shall not need to trouble my Reader with a Multitude of Scripture Quotations to shew the Nature of a Believer's Justification before God ; it may

may be sufficient to direct him to a careful Perusal of the second and fourth Chapters of the Epistle to the *Romans*, and third of that to the *Galatians*, where the Doctrine thereof is directly handled by the Apostle *Paul*; from which we may easily learn, that by Justification, nothing else is meant, but the gracious Act of Almighty God, whereby he absolves a believing Sinner, accused at the Tribunal of his Justice, pronouncing him just, and acquitting him of all Punishment for Christ's Sake.

Now the Question is, in what Manner God makes a Sinner just, whom he in Judgment so to be? The Solution of this Question is necessary at this Day when so many of those who pretend to superior Light and Graces, so grossly wander from the true Ground of Justification; with which I am surprized in daily Conversation with those that call themselves Converts! The Papists and their Followers say that God makes a Sinner just, whom he in Judgment pronounceth so to be, by bestowing on him the Grace of Sanctification, & perfect Righteousness inherent in his own Person. We with the best reformed Churches, and Divines, assert and maintain, that the Manner of a Sinner's Justification is by imputing unto him the perfect Righteousness of Christ, accepting Christ's Obedience for his. Now to shew how near we and our Adversaries come together in this Matter, to shew also the Difference there is between us in it; and to fix the Point in its orthodox or true Situation; we are to consider briefly that there is inherent Righteousness bestowed upon a Sinner, whereby

whereby of unholy, impure, unjust, he is made holy, clean and just. We all confess the Work of the Holy Ghost, renewing Man in the Spirit of his Mind, restoring in him the Image of God. *Eph. 4. 24.* In Knowledge, Righteousness, and Holiness. *Col. 3. 9.* That the Holy Ghost dwells in the Elect, as in Temples dedicated to his Service. *1 Cor. 3. 16.* which he adorns by communicating unto them his heavenly Graces. That he makes them living Members of Christ's Body, and fruitful Branches of that true Vine, *John 15. 4.* That this Grace infused is a Fountain of living Water, springing up to eternal Life. *John 4. 14.* These Things we believe and teach.

Yet notwithstanding popish Doctors and their Followers, asperse the reformed Writers, charging *Calvin* and others with denying all inherent Righteousness in Believers, and maintaining only an imputed Righteousness without them: but this is gross Calumny; and the Produce of their perverse Imaginations perverting the plain Writings of our reformed Divines. For neither *Calvin* nor any that ever maintained the Truth with him, ever denied the Truth of Sanctification. See * but *Calvin*, and we hold upon solid Grounds of Scripture, that the righteousness which justifies us in God's Sight and Judgment is not in ourselves, but all in Christ. We also assert and maintain, that inherent Righteousness, or Sanctification, is the constant Companion of Justification; they are inseparable

* *Calvin Instit. Lib. 3. Cap. 11.*

in their common Subject, viz. A true Believer, as appears, *Rom. 8. 30.* But then they must not be confounded for one and the same Grace of God; no more than as that in the Sun, Light and Heat are all one, because always joined together. Moreover, orthodox Writers affirm, that by this Grace of inherent Righteousness, a Man is in some Sort justified before God; namely, so far as a Man by the Grace of God is become truly holy and good, so far God esteems him holy and good. Our gracious Father observes, and takes Notice of his own Graces in his Children. He approves of them and gives Testimony of them in Case it be needful, as appears by the Righteousness of *Job, David, Zechariah* and other holy Men, who were Good and did Good in God's Sight. And in the Life to come when all their Corruptions shall be perfectly done away, the Saints shall be invested with Perfection of inherent Holiness. By a Righteousness of their own, and not by any other shall they then appear in God's Sight. So far is our Concord with them. But then we differ widely in this, that albeit by the Grace of Sanctification infused, God doth make the Believer righteous and holy in some Measure, that was before unholy and wicked; nevertheless, we say, and maintain, that by and for this Holiness, the best and most eminent of Saints living, never were nor shall be justified in God's Sight, i. e. pronounced just and innocent before the Tribunal of his Justice. For no Man in this Life is made perfectly just by any such inherent Holiness in him, as is able

to outstand the severe and exact Trial of God's Judgment, is a Truth witnessed by the Scripture in many Places; and confessed always by the most holy Saints of God. And therefore when the Sinner is drawn before the Bar of God's Judgment, accused by the Law, Satan, his Conscience, convicted by the Evidence of the Fact, and to be now sentenced and delivered to Punishment by the impartial Judgment of God; in this Case he hath to alledge for himself the All-sufficient Righteousness of a mighty Redeemer, who only hath done and suffered for him that which he could never do nor suffer for himself. This Plea alone and no other in the World, can stop the Mouth of Hell, confute the Accusations of Satan, chase away the Terrors that haunt or disquiet a guilty Conscience, and appease the infinite Indignation of an angry Judge. This alone, this alone will procure Favour and Absolution in the Presence of that Judge of the whole Earth. This and nothing else brings down from Heaven into our Consciences that solid and happy Peace, which passeth all Understanding, but of him that hath it. By this only we rest ourselves secure from Fear of Condemnation, having in Christ the All-sufficient Saviour, a sure Protection and Defence that will not fail us, when after Death we appear before the high and sovereign Tribunal of Almighty God.

For a further Illustration of this Subject we shall next consider two Things, namely,

1. First, The Condition required in them that shall be justified.

2. Secondly,

2. Secondly. The Matter of their Justification.

1. The Condition required in them that will be justified ; or are made Partakers of the Grace of Justification: And that is true Faith ; that it is so, the holy Scriptures abundantly witness, in a very direct, and express Manner : The Apostle *Paul*, after much solid Reasoning on this Subject, saith, Rom. 3. 28. *We conclude a Man is justified by Faith without the Works of the Law,* And Rom. 4. 9. *For we say, that Faith was imputed unto Abraham for Righteousness.* And, Rom. 5. 1. *Then being justified by Faith, we have Peace towards God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.* From these and many other Places that might be added ; it is agreed on all Hands, that a Sinner is justified by Faith ; but concerning the Manner, or how he is justified is much controverted between the orthodox Divines of the reformed Churches, and their Adversaries : Especially the *Papists*, and *Arminians* : But I shall not now examine the Merit and Weight of the Arguments of either, but instantly propound the Judgment of the reformed Churches concerning this Point, which with them we hold forth and maintain in these two Branches, viz.

1. First, That a Sinner is justified by Faith, not properly as it is a Quality or Action, which by its own Dignity and Merit deserves at God's Hands, Remission of Sins, or is by God's favourable Acceptance taken for the whole & perfect Righteousness of the Law, which is otherwise required of a Sinner, but only in Relati-
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on to the Object of it, viz. the Righteousness of Christ which it embraceth and resteth upon.

2. Secondly, That a Sinner is justified by Faith, in Opposition to the Righteousness of Works in the fulfilling of the Law : whereby no Man can be justified.

In this Relative and Inclusive Sense, do the reformed Churches take this Proposition, a Man is justified by Faith, & they deliver their Meaning in the following Manner : That is to say, there are two Covenants that God hath made with Man, by one of which, and by no other Means in the World, Salvation is to be obtained ; the one is the Covenant of Works, the Tenor whereof is, (*do this and live*) This Covenant in Respect of us is utterly void, who by Reason of the Weakness of our sinful Flesh, cannot possibly perform the compleat Obedience required thereby : And how then can we expect Justification and Life by this Means? The other is the Covenant of Grace, the Tenor whereof is, (*believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.*) The Condition of this Covenant is Faith ; the Performance whereof differs from the Performance of the Condition of that other Covenant.

It will not be improper (I think) here to shew briefly ; what is to be understood by the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Works. By the Covenant of Works, we understand that we call in one Word, the Law : Namely, that Means of bringing Man to Salvation, which is by perfect Obedience to the Will of God. Of this there were two several Administrations.

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(1) The first is with *Adam* before his Fall. When Immortality and Happiness was promised to Man, and confirmed by an external Symbol of the Tree of Life ; upon Condition that he continued obedient to God, as well in all other Things, as in that particular Commandment of not *eating of the Tree of Knowledge, of Good and Evil.* (2) The second Administration of this Covenant was the renewing thereof with the *Israelites* at Mount *Sinai* : Where (after that the Light of Nature began to grow darker, and Corruption had in Time worn out the Character of Religion and Vertue, first engraven in Man's Heart) God revived the Law, by a compendious and full Declaration of all Duties required of Man, towards God and his Neighbour, expressed in the Decalogue, according to the Tenor of which God entered into Covenant with the *Israelites*, promising to be their God, in bestowing upon them all Blessings of Life and Happiness, upon Condition that they would be his People, obeying all Things, that he had commanded : Which Condition they accepted of, promising an absolute Obedience. *All Things which the Lord hath said, we will do,* Exod. 19. 24. And also submitting themselves to all Punishment in Case they disobeyed ; Saying *Amen* to the Curse of the Law. *Cursed be every one that confirmeth not all the Words of this Law to do them ; and all the People shall say Amen,* Deut. 27. 26. By the Covenant of Grace we understand in one Word, the Gospel ; that is, the gracious Appointment of God to bring Man to Salvation by Jesus Christ. Now
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in Regard of the Administration of this gracious Purpose of our good God, there are four main Periods especially to be observed, wherein God hath diversly ordered this Means of Man's Salvation and Happiness.

1. The first Period of Time commences from *Adam* to *Abraham*. In this God made the Promise to *Adam* after his woful Apostacy and Fall, and renewed it to the Patriarchs and holy Men of that first Age of the World; namely that, (*that the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head*) This was truly a very full and compleat Promise; for it contains the whole Substance of Man's Redemption by Christ, which was religiously entertained and improved by the Saints of God in those Times; who gave Testimony of their Belief of and in the Promise by their offering Sacrifices, as God had instructed them, expressing their Thankfulness for it, and conforming their Obedience and Conversation thereunto.

2. The second Period of Time commenced from *Abraham* to *Moses*. In this Tract of Time Men seemed to have almost forgot God's Promise, and their own Obedience and Duty: And as Idolatry had crept into those Families in which the Church of God was settled, and by Succession continued, the Lord our God pitches upon *Abraham*, and calls him forth from among his idolatrous Kindred; and renews with him the former Promise in Form of a Covenant, which he confirmed by Word and solemn Ceremonies. On the one Side God promises, *to be the God of Abraham and his Seed, and that in*
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his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed. Abraham for his Part believed the Promise, accepted the Condition of Obedience to walk before God in Uprightness. The external Ceremonies of this Covenant with Abraham were especially two: One of a Fire Brand passing between the Pieces of the Heifer and other Beasts, which Abraham according to the Custom of making Leagues had divided in Twain, Gen. 15. the other the Sacrament of Circumcision upon the Flesh of Abraham and his Posterity, Gen. 17.

3. The third Period of Time is commenced from the Time of Moses until Christ. Forasmuch as the Church multiplied unto a Nation, and in Process of Time, and Continuance in the midst of the idolatrous Egyptians, it began to be much corrupted both in Religion and Manners, now God revives and renews his Promise and Covenant made with Abraham, and puts the Jews in Mind of the Covenant of Grace in Christ. And now he adds to the Sacrament of Circumcision another of the Passover, prefiguring to the Jews, the Author of their Deliverance; from the spiritual Slavery of Sin and its Punishment, as well as setting forth their Freedom from the bodily Bondage of Egypt. There were also divers Rites and Ceremonies instituted, touching the Priests, Sacrifices, &c. All which were Shadows of good Things to come; & were also of Necessity, and good Use, as Schoolmasters and Tutors to the Church in her Minority to guide and direct the People of God in that obscurer Dispensation of the

the Covenant of Grace ; to Christ the Kernel and Substance of all.

4. The fourth and last Period of Time is long since commenced from Christ's Death to the End of the World. Who in the Fulness of Time appear'd in our Flesh, and most exactly fulfilled all the Prophecies and Promises, that went before of him ; and by the perfect Sacrifice of himself, established and confirmed the Covenant of Grace anew, which so long before had been stipulated with the Church of God in him. And now the Church is replenished with Abundance of Knowledge and Grace still to continue 'till the Consummation of all Things. But then it is to be well noticed, that in all these Periods of Time, the Grace of God that brings Salvation to Man was ever one and the same : The Covenant of Grace was always the same for Substance ; and this Discovery of it truly was attended with variety of Circumstances, as God saw it agreeable to every Season. The Substance of the Gospel, or Covenant of Grace, is but one and the same thro'out all Ages ; viz. *Jesus Christ Yesterday, and to Day, and the same forever.*

To make the Matter now in Hand, viz. the Condition of our Justification more plain, we may consider the Law of Works, either as given to *Adam* before the Promise : Or as after the Promise it remained in some Force with *Adam* and all his Posterity. As to the Time before Man's Fall, it is clear enough that perfect Obedience was the Condition required for the establishing *Adam* in perpetual Bliss. Other Means

Means there was not, nor needed any be proposed to him : But when Man had broken the Covenant of Works, and failed in the Condition ; God to repair Man's ruined Estate, now rendred incapable of ever attaining Happiness by the first Means ; a merciful and compassionate God ordains a second, offering unto *Adam* a Saviour, that by Faith in him, and not by his own unspotted Obedience, he might recover Justification, and Life which he had lost. So that what *Adam* should have obtained by Works without Christ ; now he shall receive by Faith in Christ without Works. So that it is easy to see that the Law hath not the same Use to us which it had in Man's Innocency. It was not God's Intention in this legal Covenant with the Jews, that any of them should ever attain Justification, and Life by that Means ; as at first the Promise need not to have been made unto *Adam*, if the Law could have sufficed for the attaining of Life : So after the Promise was once made, the Law was not renewed with the Jews, to the End that Righteousness, and Life should be had by the Observation of it. This is the plain Doctrine taught by the Apostle in his Epistle to the *Galatians* in that very accurate and excellent Dispute of his, against Justification by the Law. The Matter in doubt and dispute with the *Galatians* was this ; God had made a Gospel Covenant with *Abraham*, Gal. 3. 8. *And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all Nations be blessed.* That is justified. After four Hundred and thirty Years he made

a legal Covenant with *Abraham's* Posterity, that they should live, that is, be justified and saved, if they did fulfil all Things written in the Law. The Matter in Debate now was, which of these two Covenants should stand in Force, or whether both could stand together? The Apostle answers that the former Covenant should stand in Force, and that the latter did not abrogate the former, nor yet could stand in Force together with the former. This he expresseth Ver. 17, 18. *And this I say, that the Covenant that was confirmed afore of God in Respect of Christ, the Law which was four Hundred and Thirty Years after, cannot disannull that it should make the Promise of none Effect. For if the Inheritance (viz. of Righteousness and Life) be by the Law; it is not by the Promise; but God gave it to Abraham by Promise.* Here now they object, *Wherefore then serveth the Law?* If Men cannot be justified by keeping the Law, to what End was it given so long after the Promise was made? To this the Apostle answers; *It was added to the Promise, because of Transgressions.* Here is the true Use of the moral Law since the Fall of Man; not to justify him, and give Life; but to prove him to be unjust and worthy of Death. It was added (because of Transgressions) that is, (1) To convince Man of Sin, that he might be put in Remembrance what was his Duty of old; and what is his present Infirmity in doing of it, and what was God's Wrath against him, for not doing it: That seeing how impossible it was for him to attain unto Life, by the old Way of the Law, first appointed in Paradise, he might be hum-

bled, and look after the new Way ; that is, seek to Christ, *who is the End of the Law, unto every one that believes in him.* (2) To restrain Man from Sin, that the Law might be, not the Covenant of God's People, but their perpetual and standing Rule of Holiness, and Obedience whereby Man should walk and glorify God, to the utmost of his Power. God gave no such Law as could be kept by the Jews as the Apostle most elegantly proves, *Because all were Sinners* against it ; and therefore we may safely conclude, that notwithstanding the giving of the Law, the Promise stands good forever, and *Righteousness is to be obtained only by the Faith of Jesus Christ.* I come now to consider in the

2. Second Place, The Matter of the Sinner's Justification. The Righteousness for which a Man can be justified before God is of Necessity one of these two, viz. A Righteousness of his own, or of another.

1. Either inherent in his own Person and done by himself. Or

2. Inherent in the Person of Christ, but imputed unto him. What a Man hath, and doth perform by himself, or is in another, and performed for him is the Matter of his Justification : The Wisdom of Men and Angels have not been able to discover unto us a third Means. It hath been an ancient and modern Error, and is become modish, & too common in the Mouths of many of pretended superior Light, namely, is God limited, might not he have reconciled Mankind unto himself, absolutely pardoned their Sins, without the Intervention of any Righteousness

ousness either in themselves, or in Christ, to procure it? Are these unusual Operations of the Holy Ghost to be sought within the Rule of God's Word? Why not new and extraordinary Revelations of God's Will now as in the Day of Christ, and his Apostles? Why may not God now celebrate the Funeral of some of his Saints in a Way hid from Man as he did *Moses*; and translate others as he did *Enoch* and *Elijah*? Such Questions as these are indeed very vain and curious, and are the Projections of the Brains of idle and unthankful Men, who not being truly sensible of the Riches of God's Wisdom and Grace, in the Course of their Redemption which God hath followed, would accuse him of Indiscretion; and would teach him a more compendious Way, than by *sending his own Son to die for us*. These gross Reflections cast on the Wisdom of God, and his wonderful Proceeding in Man's Redemption, we leave unto *Socinus* and *Arminius* with their Followers; our Duty is, *sapere ad sobrietatem*, and to understand what God hath, not tell him what he might or should have done; so that whatever may be imagined of Possibility of other Means to bring Man to Life, yet now we know that, *thus Christ ought to suffer*, Luke 24. 26. And that *it behoved him to be like us, that being a faithful high Priest, he might make Reconciliation for our Sins*. Heb. 2. 17. Leaving then their new fangled Way to Heaven, never frequented but by Imagination; let us proceed in the good old Ways of Justification which the sacred Scriptures hold forth to us;

which are two & no more: Namely, either by our own Righteousness and Works, or by the Righteousness and Works of another, viz. the Lord Jesus Christ. In the former of these, Man might have obtained Justification and Life, had he not been a Sinner. But now Man that is a Sinner cannot be justified and saved, but only by the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace. And here two Points are to be considered and stated. Namely,

1. First, Our own Righteousness is not the Matter of our Justification. And

2. Secondly, That the Righteousness and Merit of Christ is the sole Ground of it.

1. First, Our own Righteousness is not the Matter of our Justification. There is no Righteousness of our own, no Services we can do, are equal in every Circumstance, to the Demands of the Law. The Apostle doth more than once complain of the Seducers that crept into the *Galatian* Church, and would sow the Tares of Justification by the Law, and their own Works; so that they made the Death of Christ in vain, *Gal. 2. 2.* And he tells them plainly, *Gal. 5. 4.* That the Expectation of Justification upon such an Account was a falling from Grace. *Christ* (saith the Apostle) *is become of no Effect unto you; whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.* Here we are told, that if any Man still look for Justification by Performance of the Law, as such he makes the Death of Christ in vain, because if such a Thing could have been done that Way, there had been

no Need of Christ's dying: So they also made it, which was not in vain in itself, yet in vain, and of no Effect to their Souls; because Christ will not be a partial Cause in the Justification of a Soul. Whosoever expecteth Justification by the Law and Works renounceth the Grace of God, exhibited in the Gospel, and fall away from the Grace of it: Not from a State of Grace, from which none can fall totally and finally, but the Grace of the Gospel, viz. The free Love of God in it exhibited, offering Christ to Sinners for Righteousness. As Works before Grace are insufficient for our Justification; so all Sorts of Works after Grace are also excluded by the Apostle from having any Share or Part in the Justification of a Sinner before God, *Eph. 2. 8. By Grace you are saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, not of Works, lest any should boast.* What Works are these? Works after Regeneration; for they are those Works to which they were created in Jesus Christ, which God ordained that we should walk in them, not that we should be saved or justified by them. *Paul* did not renounce the Privilege of his Birth, or strip himself of Love to holy Works, but of the Opinion of any Value they had with God of themselves to Justification. So *Abraham* was not justified by his Works after believing, no more than by those before, *Rom. 4. 3. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness.* For those Words cited out of *Gen. 15. 6.* were spoken of *Abraham* several Years after his Call and Compliance with it by Faith, and here singled out

out as the Cause of his Justification, without any Respect to his own Works, issuing from that Faith ; or any Consideration of them by God, in this justifying Act. And the holy Psalmist *David*, though a great Prophet, had no Confidence in his own Works wrought, even as God's Servant, out of Love to him, Fear of him, trust in him, but would not venture his Soul upon them before the Tribunal of God. Psal. 143. 2. *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy Sight, shall no Man living be justified.* If our Duties after Grace be so corrupt that they need something to render them acceptable, and accepted in the Sight of God ; they can never then be of that Worth, as to render our Persons righteous ; for that which needs something to make itself suitable and sufficient, can never make any other Thing so. No Flesh can be justified in the Sight of God ; and nothing that comes from Flesh can be our Righteousness. And this will appear very plain to us, if we carefully observe two Things.

1. First, That Men's own Consciences cannot but accuse them of coming short of the Glory of God in every Thing they do. Who upon Earth can say, that ever he did any perfect Action ? And who dare venture his Soul upon such Actions, in the Presence of the great God ? Who is there but his own Conscience must needs accuse him of Sin ? The Apostle *John* is positive in it that none can, 1 John 1. 8. *He that saith, he hath no Sin, hath nothing of the Truth in him.* *Job*, a Man of excelling Integrity, who had not his Match (according to God, the best

best Judge, his Verdict) in all the Country round about him, for the Uprightness of his Heart, and the Unblameableness of his Manners ; freely declares that a Self-Justification in this, would be a Self-Condemnation, Job 9. 20. *If I justify myself, my own Mouth shall condemn me ; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*

2. Secondly, If it should happen that we are free from Accusations of Conscience, who dare stand before the Bar of God, for a thorough Examination of his Works ? Our Knowledge of ourselves, and our Works is very defective. The all-seeing Eye of Omniscieny pierceth deeper than our imperfect Knowledge. *David* saith, *He had more Understanding than all his Teachers ; and understood more than the Ancients : Psal. 119. 99, 100.* Yet he proclaims his own and others Inability to *understand the Errors of his Ways.* Psal. 19. 12. If any of our Actions seem perfect in our own Account, shall we think they are so in the Account of God's unspotted Holiness who is greater than our Hearts ? Who can stand before so holy a God ? *1 Sam. 6. 20.* It is certain, that however Men may boast of superior Light and Knowledge, they may be ignorant of something in their own Spirit which never yet reach'd their Notice, nevertheless is it known to God who knoweth all Things, And therefore we read, *Job 9. 21.* *Job* would not know his own Soul, tho' he were perfect, he would not approve or boast of himself in the Presence of God. He would despise his Life, i. e. overlook all his upright Course, and
bury

bury it in Silence, when he comes to be tried at God's Bar. Surely if any can compare, yet can none pretend to be more excellent in good Works than this holy Man; see then what Lesson he reads to us, in Chapter 9. 30, 31, 32. Verses. *If I wash my self with Snow Water, and make my Hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own Cloaths shall abhor me. For he is not Man as I am that I should answer him, and we should come together in Judgment.* The holy Psalmist confesseth also, that if God should be strict to observe wherein he and all Men do amiss, neither himself or any other could be able to stand in his Presence: Psalm 130. 3. *If thou Lord, shouldest mark Iniquities, O Lord who shall stand?* Add to these the Confession of the Church, she submits herself to God in the Acknowledgment of her Sins, and Justness of his Anger against her: The Confession is every Way general; both for Persons, not one excluded, we all are as an unclean Thing, and likewise for Works, all our Righteousnesses (in the plural Number, see the Original) are as filthy Rags. Isa. 64. 6. *But we are all as an unclean Thing, and all our Righteousness as filthy Rags, and we all do fade as a Leaf, and our Iniquities like the Wind have driven us away.* I pass to the

2. Second Point, viz. That the Righteousness and Merit of Christ is the sole Ground of the Sinner's Justification. All Sin whatsoever original, and actual, is remitted unto Sinners wholly in the Fault and Punishment, as well temporal, as eternal for the only Satisfaction of

of Jesus Christ ; and not by any or all good Works and Satisfaction made by the most holy Man upon Earth to the Justice of God. This very comfortable and most sacred Truth is undeniably held to us in the holy Scriptures ; and it is also embraced and maintained by the best reformed Churches, as by the Churches of Christ in this Land, as I could easily shew from their respective Confessions of Faith : Which would be needless at this Time, since a venerable Synod of the Pastors and Delegates of these Churches have long since declared their Harmony and Communion in Doctrine and Sacraments with the reformed Churches of *France, Germany, Holland, South, and North Britain, &c.* And this Doctrine of Justification of the Sinner by and through the alone Righteousness and Merit of Jesus Christ is embraced by many of its Opposites and Enemies themselves when the Agonies of Conscience, the Apprehension of Death, and God's Judgment, clear up their Eyes a little to behold the Vanity and Weakness of their own poor Satisfaction. We can produce a Cloud of Witnesses from the sacred Pages, in Vindication of this pure Scripture Doctrine. The Spirit of God by *Isaiah* the evangelic Prophet predicting the coming Victory, and Satisfaction by the Messiah declareth himself, not in a very obscure Manner ; but Terms significantly importing this Truth, *Isa. 63. 3. I have troden the Wine-press alone, and of the People there was none with me. And Verse 5. And I looked and there was none to help ; and I wondered that there was none to uphold : Therefore mine own Arm brought*

brought Salvation unto me, and my Fury it upheld me. There are indeed innumerable Testimonies of Scripture ascribing the Remission of Sin only to the Mercy of God in Christ crucified : As that Christ hath born our Sin, *1 Pet.* 2. 24. His Blood hath purged us of all Sin, *Heb.* 1. 3. His Death redeemed us from all Iniquity. *Tit.* 2. 24. His Stripes healed us, *Isa.* 53. 5. That he hath paid the Price of our Ransom, *1 Pet.* 2. 24. That God for his Sake hath forgiven us our Trespases, *Col.* 2. 13. Blotted out our Sins, *Ver.* 14. Cast them behind his Back, *Isa.* 38. 7. Forgotten them. *Jer.* 31. 34. with many more such Places, ascribing the doing away of all Sins, to the Grace of God through the Satisfaction of Christ, without limiting it to any Sin, or mentioning any satisfactory Works of ours.

For the further clearing of this Truth from those Mists and Aspersions cast upon it by it's Enemies ; we need consider two Things only, Namely,

1. That we are justified by a Righteousness imputed to us.

2. How this Righteousness imputed, doth justify ?

1. We are justified by a Righteousness imputed to us. Christ's Blood only cleanseth from Sin. God the Father doth actually and efficiently justify ; Christ's Blood doth meritoriously justify. God the Father is to be considered as a Judge, Christ is considered as Priest and Sacrifice. He was and is a Priest in Things pertaining to God, *Heb.* 2. 17. To make Reconciliation

conciliation for the Sins of the People. *He is the Fountain set open for Sin, and for Uncleanness,* Zech. 13. 1. Christ is to Sinners a Fountain opened; under the Law he was as the Waters of the Temple, for the *Jews*; but now he is opened to us *Gentiles*, free to all, and of easy Access, and of sovereign Vertue to heal. The Blood of Christ is the true *Siloam* which never failed any that rightly used it; for therein only they had Pardon and Peace; because Forgiveness of Sin is a Fruit of Redemption thro' his Blood, Col. 1. 14. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood even the Forgiveness of Sins.* In the Person of Christ alone God-Man, deputed of his Father to die for our Salvation, as we are in him made meet, we have eternal Deliverance effected by a full Ransom paid. The Righteousness which justifieth us is not inherent in ourselves, but runs in the Veins of Christ, the God-Man. 'Tis not physically or corporally applied to us, but juridically, in a judicial Way, and therefore imputed to us, and that for Justification. Our Iniquities were never inherent in Christ, but imputed to him: So his Blood never was inherent in us, but imputed to us for the Satisfaction of the Law; and so for our Justification from the Penalty and Curse of it. The Object of Justification is an ungodly Person, one that hath no Righteousness of his own. But since there must be a compleat Righteousness to justify him, it must be the Righteousness of another; for being ungodly, it cannot be his own. 'Tis therefore by the Righteousness of one Man

Christ, Rom. 5. 19. *As we are made Sinners by one Man's Disobedience, so we are made righteous by one Man's Obedience.* The Apostle here informs us of that which all Philosophy was ignorant of, viz. The Imputation of *Adam's Sin*, and our natural Pollution flowing from it. Yea this was more than the naked History of Man's Fall by *Moses* did discover; there indeed we see the Cause of Death, how that came upon all Mankind; but that *Adam's Sin* was accounted to us, that by his Disobedience we are involved in Sin and Misery, that is not clearly revealed in the Books of *Moses*. We are beholding to the Gospel, and particularly for this Text and Context, for the more full Discovery hereof. Our being made Sinners by one Man's Disobedience, was no personal Act of our own, but a personal Act of *Adam's*; some are made righteous not by a personal Obedience of our own, but by the perpetual Obedience of Christ, which cannot be of Advantage to us unless some Way or other accounted ours. Thus *Adam* and Christ are as two common Roots or Fountains, the one of Sin and Death, the other of Righteousness and Life. I pass to shew,

2. How this Righteousness imputed doth justify? The Answer to this Question, is double: for it is done

1. By Christ's taking Sin upon himself. The Lord Jehovah hath gathered together and accumulated into a Heap all the Sins from all Parts of the World, in all Ages of the World, yea bound them up together, and laid them upon Christ's Shoulders,

Shoulders, Isa. 53. 6. *And the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all, or hath made the Iniquities of us all to meet on him, as in the Margin, q. d.* Here seems to be an Allusion to the Manner of transferring the Sins of the People, by *Aaron's* laying his Hands upon the Head of the Sacrifice : Shewing that as the *Scape-Goat* purged the People, CHRIST cleanseth or justifies Men by bearing their Iniquities, Isa. 53. 11. *By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many : for he shall bear their Iniquities.* Not by bearing of the Pollutions of them inherently, but the Guilt of them, or the Curse which the Sinner had merited : For our Sins could no more be transmitted to him in their Guilt and Defilement than the Iniquities of the *Israelites* could be infused into the *Scape-Goat*, but only in their Curse and Guilt. Christ took our Sins upon him, not thereby to become sinful ; but to become devoted in a judicial Manner, as a Curse ; and therefore his being said *to be made Sin in one Place, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. is to be interpreted by Gal. 3. 13. in which he is said *to be made a Curse to redeem us from the Curse of the Law*, that is, a Person exposed to the Vengeance of God, to procure Impunity for the Offenders, that they might be absolved and treated as if they had never been criminal. He is *the Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World*. John 1. 29. He was made Sin, as if he had sinned all the Sins of Men, and we are made Righteous, as if we had not sinned at all.

2. By accounting and esteeming the Righteousness and Sufficiency of Christ's Sufferings to us : If we have no other Ground and Bottom to stand upon, but our own, we are lost and undone ; our own filthy Rags cannot cover us, nor our own Weakness and Imperfections relieve and support us. *The whole World*, saith the Apostle, *lies in Wickedness*, 1 John 5. 19. i. e. The Generality of Men were under the Power of Wickedness, or in the midst of all Impurity and Malignity. *God is a consuming Fire*, and we are combustible Matter ; divine Holiness cannot but hate us, divine Justice cannot but consume us, if we have no other Righteousness than our own imperfect one to please the one and be a Bar to the other. God intended Christ's Suffering as the Way of bearing Iniquity for us, and accepted him as one that bore our Iniquities, and made this bearing Iniquity the Ground of the Justification of many. Isa. 53. 11. *By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many : for he shall bear their Iniquities.* The Righteousness whereby we are justified, and which covers our Iniquities from the Sight of God, is inherent in Christ but transferred to us. This Man, God the Son, took of the Virgin *Mary*, the Offspring of *Abraham*, and united him to his Person, and of God and this Seed united unto one Person, became our Lord Jesus Christ ; so as he might bring the Blessing of Salvation to the Chosen of God in all Nations. What doth the Apostle mean in that *Wish of being found in Christ*,
but

but that he might have a Share in his Righteousness, *Phil.* 3. 9. Not his own Righteousness, but the Righteousness of God communicated through, or by Faith. In a Word, the Chosen of God, have in Christ their Head and Sovereign that Compleatness and Perfection which is reckoned and made over to them, and accepted for their Justification, so that *of his Fulness they receive, and Grace for Grace*, *John* 1. 16. It was not therefore without good Ground that the Apostle *Paul* pronounced of the Saints and holy Brethren, who received Christ, and so are mystically united to him, in whom dwelleth all Fullness, that is Christ, as in *Col.* 2. 10. And ye are compleat in him, which is the Head of all Principality and Power.

Here it might be easy and proper to enter upon Examination of those many Opposites, and Adversaries both ancient and modern, to those Truths which we have in this Work, I hope, not only proposed, but in some Measure cleared, both by Scripture and Reason, but I shall wave them : Purposing by divine Help, only to take Notice of, and obviate some few of those many lately revived, and spreading with a swift Pace over the Land. And this will fall in naturally, under the Use of Examination. I am now therefore in the

4. Place come to the fourth and last Part of my Undertaking, namely,

The A P P L I C A T I O N.

The Improvement of this Work shall consist of three general Uses.

As,

As 1. *Information* : 2. *Examination* and *Expostulation* : 3. *Exhortation*. The

1. Is of *Information* : Here I shall endeavour to inform you of four very important Points, viz.

1. The desperate and forlorn Estate of an unconverted Person.

2. The Impossibility of our Recovery out of this damnable Condition, by any Strength of our own, or any Creature whatsoever.

3. The admirable Graciousness of almighty God in providing the Means, and by them effectually working our full Deliverance from the Power of Sin and Damnation.

4. Lastly, the blessed Estate of Grace where-to he hath now brought any of us, and where-in he preserves us under the Hope and Expectation of eternal Glory. I beseech you to take these Things daily under your humble, and most serious Meditation. And

1. The desperate and forlorn Estate of an unconverted Person. It is impossible that such an one should ever be happy : For the whole Tenor of the Gospel declares his unavoidable Misery. God must change the Covenant of Grace, blot out all his Threatnings in Scripture, proclaim himself unwise in his Administrations before it can be otherwise. *Know you not*, saith the Apostle; *that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God ?* Be not deceived : Some understand by Unrighteous, unrighteous Nature, as well as unrighteous Acts. There can be no Fitness for Heaven, where there are only Preparations for Hell. The Apostle *Paul* describes the miserable Condition

dition of such in a very lively and emphatical Manner, in Eph. 2.12. *They are without Christ, Aliens from the Common Wealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World.* But alas, how apt are Men to delude themselves with Hopes of Mercy in a State of Sin? Self-flattery is one of the strongest Branches, which grows upon the Pride of Nature. Men wallowing themselves in their Sins may with far greater Assurance promise themselves a Kingdom and Crown in this World, than an Admission into Heaven, with their old Man; there must be a stripping off this before Men can enter in at the strait Gate which leadeth unto Life. Christ the eternal Truth hath passed his Word for it; and his Word will stand firm against all presumptuous Confidence whatsoever. For Christ must be a Liar, and the Gospel false, if ever there be a Heaven enjoyed by an old Nature. - John 3. 3. *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* Except Persons be changed in their Hearts and Principles, they can never have any true Share, either in the Kingdom of Grace in this Life, or in the Kingdom of Glory in that which is to come. You know it is usual by the civil Laws of Countries, that none enters into the Possession of an earthly Kingdom but by the Right of Birth; and for the obtaining of the Kingdom of Heaven, there must be a New-Birth, a heavenly Renovation of the whole Man, Soul, Body and Spirit, to give him a Title by the wise and unchangeable Constitution of God in the Gospel; and

and to qualify him for the Enjoyment of it. How is it possible then for any Man, after such an Assertion of our Saviour, to live under the hearing of the Christian Doctrine, and fancy a heavenly Glory belonging to him without a heavenly Nature? The Apostle *Paul* reasoning principally on the Grace of God in effectual Calling: *Gal. 1. 6.* Asserts, that this Doctrine is so certainly true, that *if an Angel from Heaven should declare the contrary, he ought not to be believed.* See *V. 8.* *AUSTIN* said truly when he delivered his Sentiment to our present Purpose, in the following Words, *Qui Salutem cuiquam promittit sine Christo, nescio an ille salutem potest habere in Christo.* That is, whosoever promiseth Salvation to any out of Christ, I know not if he himself can have Salvation in Christ.

2. The Impossibility of our Recovery out of this damnable Condition, by any Strength of our own, or any Creature whatsoever. Man in all his Capacities is too weak to produce a saving Change in himself. The New-Birth is not arbitrary of the Will of Man, or the Result naturally of a religious Education. All the Power of regenerate Men in the World joined together cannot renew another. It comes not of the Blood of Men and Women, nor of the Blood of *Abraham* (which was the Boast of the *Jews*, *We have Abraham for our Father*) nor from the Lusts of the Flesh, nor from a Power in Man's Will, or Men's free Act in adopting other Men's Children; *but of God*, *John 1. 13.* The whole Tenor of the Scripture set forth Man exceeding weak and unable

able to do any Thing spiritually good : *They that are in the Flesh cannot please God*, Rom. 8.8. i.e. The carnal and unregenerate, neither they, nor any Thing they do, is pleasing to God : Their best Works are dead Work, and filken Sins, (as one expresseth it) so long as they continue in such a State. To be Sinners, and to be without Strength, is one and the same Thing in the Apostle's Judgment, Rom. 5. 6, 8. *While we were yet without Strength ; afterwards, while we were yet Sinners ;* i. e. in a State of Sin, and under the Guilt and Power of Sin. Believers in some Sense are still Sinners, 1 *John* 1. 8. but their Sins being pardoned and subdued, they go no longer under that Denomination. Sinners in Scripture are said to be those in whom Sin dwells and reigns. See *John* 9. 31. Such we were by Nature. Yea we were not only Sinners, but Enemies to God. 'Tis impossible we can have Strength of our own, since our first Father was feeble, and conveyed his Weakness to us ; by the same Reason that its impossible we can have a Righteousness of our own, since our first Father sinned, Isa. 43. 26, 27. *Declare that thou may'st be justified. Thy first Father hath sinned.* There is an universal Weakness which hath seized every Faculty : The Mind is dark, *Eph.* 4. 18. He cannot know, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. There is a Stoniness in the Heart, he cannot bend, *Zech.* 7. 12. There is Enmity in the Will, he cannot be subject, *Rom.* 8. 7. As to Faith he cannot believe, *John* 12. 39. As to the Spirit, the Worker of Faith, he cannot receive, that is, of himself, *John* 14. 12. Acknowledge

Christ he cannot, 1 *Cor.* 12. 3. As to Practise, he cannot bring forth Fruit, *John* 15. 4. Every regenerate Man in his first Conversion is fully sensible of this universal Weakness in himself. Accordingly this Poverty of Spirit, or Sense of our own Emptiness, and Indigence, is the first Gospel-Grace wrought in the Soul, and therefore our Saviour puts it in the Front of all those noble Qualifications in his excellent Sermon on the Mount, as fitting Men for the Kingdom of God; *Blessed are the poor in Spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* *Mat.* 5. 3.

3. Thirdly, The admirable Graciousness of Almighty God in providing the Means, and by them effectually working our full Deliverance from the Power of Sin and Damnation. No natural Privilege under Heaven can entitle us to the Kingdom of Grace or Glory. The Text saith, that *Nicodemus* was a Ruler in *Israel*, not only born and brought up in the Church of God; but was a Man of great Authority in it, yet this alone did not entitle him to the Kingdom of God: Moreover our Lord intimates to him, that not the choicest Privilege of that Church, viz. the Honour of having the Law from God's own Mouth; the Glory of an outward Covenant; the Treasure of the Oracles of God; the Seal of Circumcision born in the Body, can instate a Man into that Felicity. These Things abstracted from the Love and Grace of almighty God are insufficient for so miraculous a Work; and therefore the whole of Redemption is wrapt up in that one Expression of the Angel's Song, *Luke* 2. 14. *Good-*
will

will towards Men. The Grace of God under the Name of his Love, is rendred the sole Cause of the redeeming Death of his eternal Son, and what was there in Heaven or Earth, that could in so singular a Manner, commend the boundless Love of the eternal Father, to a perishing World as the Gift of his only Son to be a Sacrifice for Sinners? In the Act of infinite Grace he confirmeth his Love; and by this certain Sign he maketh it very illustrious: And to this Purpose the Apostle applies it, Rom. 5. 8. *But God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* In this most distinguishing Grace of providing Means for Man's Redemption, the Lord would not only manifest his Love, but assume the Name of Love. And by this Name the Holy Ghost calls him in Relation to this good Will manifested in his Son. 1 John 4. 8, 9. *God is Love, in this is manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only Begotten into the World, that we might live through him.* Again, the Lord hath not only provided the admirable gracious Means of our Redemption; but by them effectually worketh our full Deliverance from Sin and Damnation: It is by the Grace and Power of God, we have whatsoever pertains to Godliness as well as Life. 2 Pet. 1. 3. *According as his divine Power hath given us all Things that pertain unto Life and Godliness thro' the Knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Vertue.* In these Words the Apostle shews what Reason there was to hope that Grace and Peace should be multiplied to them, and perfected in them,

viz. because God hath already given them all Things pertaining to Life and Godliness. q. d. He that hath done thus much for you, will do more, and finish his Work in you. In a Word, if you duly consider your changed Natures, your pardoned Guilt, your shining Comfort, your quelled Corruptions, the standing of your tottering and reeling Graces, these are sufficient to preserve a Sense, and prevent a Forgetfulness of the admirable Grace of God which hath appeared in providing Means, and delivering wretched Man from Sin, and justly deserved Damnation. God bestows our Salvation, and works it by his own Strength; and therefore both are joined together in the Prophet's Song, *Isai. 12. 2. The Lord is my Strength and my Salvation.*

4. lastly, The blessed Estate of Grace where-to he hath now brought any of us, and wherein he preserves us under the Hope and Expectation of eternal Glory. It is the Happiness of the Soul, to be reduced to its true Centre, to be reinstated in an unspotted Nature, to return to a due Respect to those Ends for which it was made, to have the Understanding conversant about the loveliest Object, the Will inclined to the most amiable Goodness, and the Affections fixing more and more upon it, and growing up with it. It is indeed the highest Excellency to live the Life of God, to have the Image of God wrought upon you, and your Souls conformed to his Holiness. As it is excellent so it is honourable, it is the most honourable Relation that you can possibly arrive

to :

to : 'Tis more Honour to be a New-Creature in Rags, than a carnal Prince in Purple, tho' the greatest in the World, for you will then be settled Heirs of all the Promises. You will be more allied to Jesus Christ, by the inward Formation of him in your Hearts than the blessed Virgin by the Conception of Christ in her Womb, *Luke 11. 27.* She was more happy by partaking of Christ in her Heart than by conferring a Flesh on Christ from her Body. Again, there is great Pleasure in this State : There is no State without a Pleasure pertaining to it ; Pleasures of Sense belonging to a Life of Sense, intellectual Pleasures to a Life of Reason. Divine Pleasures, to a divine Nature. *All the Ways of Wisdom are Ways of Pleasantness.* *Prov. 3. 17.* This is the Crown, Glory and Sweetness of all other Principles ; the Sons of God, not only have Grace ; but they are established in it ; and therefore the Assurance of this, makes Believers *come to Sion with Songs and everlasting Joy upon their Heads.* The Manner whereby we stand is different from the Manner of *Adam's* standing ; he stood in Dependance on his original Righteousness, which being once lost, all the original Vertues depending on that were lost with it. Our State is secured in higher Hands. Christ is made unto us, as *1 Cor. 1. 30. Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.* He is made all those to us, not we to ourselves. *Adam's* Life was hid in himself, ours with *Christ in God, Col. 3. 3.* *Adam* was under a mutable Covenant, and we under an everlasting one.

True

True Believers in this Life, stand upon as good Terms as the whole Assembly of the First-born, and upon a surer Foundation than any particular Church. Psal. 125. 1. *They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion which cannot be removed, but abides forever.* I come now to the

2. Use, viz. of *Examination.* In the Prosecution whereof I shall enquire

1. What special Rule or Standard the Conversion of a Sinner is only to be tried by ?

2. Examine the Facts alledged by the Advocates of the New-Light-Men, as sure Evidences of their peculiar Work, as to the Goodness thereof ; and shew them to be no more than Hypocrites may have.

3. Examine some Tenets of the New-Scheme Men, their Skill in applying some Scripture Grounds, on which they would build their Tenets, and advancing Arguments to maintain the general Goodness of their Work.

4. In the Spirit of Meekness expostulate briefly with our Brethren concerning their rash and rough Treatment of all those, who do not forthwith, take up in the gross with whatever they are pleased to project, and propose as Points to be believed ; and Matters to be practised. I shall enquire

1. What Rule or Standard, the Conversion of a Sinner is only to be tried by ? The Rule most generally insisted on by our New-Light-Men, (especially the Night-Disciples) is the Light which they now pretend to have within themselves ; and the Guise of their Party ; their Wisdom seems to stand much in this,

viz.

viz. in contemning and despising others in Comparison of themselves ; the Measures they take, for the most Part, are these, they measure themselves by themselves ; and compare themselves amongst themselves, that is, with Birds of their own Feather, such as are like unto themselves, and of their own Faction and Party ; which no wise Men would do. When corrupt Teachers had invaded the Peace and Purity of the Church of *Corinth*, the Apostle throws the same Reflection upon them, and purgeth himself from their Manners, 2 Cor. 10. 12. *For we dare not make ourselves of the Number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves, &c.* Thus Men fail greatly in choosing the true Direction. Some are guided by their own private Conceit, some by the Guise of the Times, some go with the Drove, are carried with the Multitude ; but I beseech you to consider, that the Lord hath not promised a Blessing to, but indeed curseth the Fancies of Men's own Hearts, and giveth a Blessing only to the obedient yielding to his own Ordinance. *Cursed be the Man* (saith the Scripture) *that maketh Flesh his Arm, and withdraweth his Heart from the Lord,* Jer. 17. 5. The Word of God is the only sure Rule to measure ourselves by, this is the only impartial Friend we can stick to, and therefore it ought to be made our main Counsellor. The Word is the Principle whereby Grace is wrought, and it is the only Rule and Mean whereby Grace is known. The Word is that whereby we must judge of Doctrine, *To the Law, and to the Testimony*

timony (saith the Prophet) Isa. 20. If an Angel from Heaven speaks any other Thing, than what God hath delivered, he is not to be heard. 'Tis also the Rule whereby we must judge of Graces. If Conscience speak any Thing for a Man's Comfort, that is not according to the Word, 'tis to be silenced. If Conscience presents us with any Thing as a Grace, that will not stand to the Trial of God's Word, 'tis to be rejected in that Case. The Word is the Touch-Stone of all religious Doctrines and Practises, to that only they are to be brought, to see if they be counterfeit or currant Coin. By this as the most sure Rule we are to try, as our own, so other Men's Spirits. The Scripture Beam is like a Sun-Beam, it will discover the most inward, and the most minute Thing. The Word of God is a most nice, exact, and critical Judge, discerning the Gravity and Rectitude of the Thoughts, it discovers and distinguishes them as they are; and is capable as a Judge, to charge and discharge as its Author will by it. It discovers the most inward, close, secret and constant Motions, both speculative and practical, of the Soul of Man inseparably united to the Heart, and one with another, whether they are Opinions, Conceptions, Resolutions, or Decrees, so subtile and so secret, as who can know them but who made the Heart. Such is the trying and discerning Power of the Word, as the Apostle very particularly describes, Heb. 4. 12. *For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the di-*

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viding asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart. This Word which we preach, and you read and hear must try us at the last Day ; for it is to be the Rule of the last Judgment, to Salvation or Condemnation : And therefore, what else can be so good, and suitable a Rule of our self, Judgment? It is indeed a rich Blessing to find our Hearts seasoned and filled with the Graces of the Spirit of God ; but then one Grace must not be tried by another but by the Word. Our Hearts when in the most holy and exalted Frames, are liable to infinite Mistakes ; accordingly the wise Man from his own Experience proclaims ; he that trusteth his own Heart, is a Fool, *Prov.* 28. 26 Thus of the Rule or Standard of Examination.

2. I shall examine the Facts alledged by their Advocates, as sure Evidences of the Goodness of the Work of the present Day : and shew them, to be no more than Hypocrites, and Counterfeits may have, who are not yet made the Subjects of saving Grace, nor blessed with a Principle of spiritual Life. All the Facts that have been published, and which we have hitherto seen ; are not more and better than what hath been often observed in many who have been under the Checks of a natural Conscience and the Principles of moral Vertue. But from such only the spiritual and saving State of the Soul can never be determined. Morality is indeed to be valued, 'tis a comely Thing among Men, a Beauty to humane Societies,

eties, Satisfaction to natural Conscience, Security to the Body, Example to others ; Men are to be applauded for it, and encouraged in it. But Morality is not Conversion, or the New Creature ; that is moral Honesty, and Freedom from gross Vices, &c, but O how many upon this Account think themselves New-Creatures, who are yet deeply under the Image of Satan ; and though they have blown off some Dust from the Law of Nature, yet never had a Syllable of the Law of Grace written in their Hearts ? Nay the Image of the Devil may be more deeply engraven in a Soul, whose Life is free from an outward Taint. Profane Men express more of the Beast, a civil and moral Conversation may have more of the Devil and Serpent within, in spiritual Wickedness. This being premised, let us now examine particular Facts briefly. And,

I. That they are advanced to a great Degree of Knowledge in divine & spiritual Things. This may easily be granted ; and it ought as readily be acknowledged, that as the Apostle lays down this as one of those Attainments that an unregenerate Man may have, and yet be an Apostate, Heb. 6. 4. *They may be once enlightned, taste of the heavenly Gift, and made Partakers of the Holy Ghost,* nevertheless remain still in the State of Unregeneracy. Persons may come to a clearer Knowledge of Gospel Truths than before ; they may see with a new Light spiritual Things, and have the Mind raised up to such Objects as they knew not before ; but yet may have no new Eyes or Understanding,

derstanding given them, and so are but as Devils like Angels of Light. A natural Man may be raised to a great Pitch of Attainments and yet not have his Nature changed. This is evident in *Socrates* who died for owning the Unity of the Deity ; and the Scribe who was near the Kingdom of Heaven, Mark 12. 34. *And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* He who once rightly understands the Law of God, and hath cast off that silly Fancy of thinking to please God with ritual Things, hath made a great Proficiency under the Law as a School-Master, who if rightly understood will shew him the Need of another Righteousness than his own wherein to appear before God. Again, the Scribe applauds our Saviour as having said the Truth, and confessing that the fulfilling of those Cardinal Precepts, which our Lord mentioned was more than all Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings ; herein he was orthodox, agreeing with what *Samuel* the Man of God had long since told *Saul*, *That to obey was better than Sacrifice*, and it needs must be so, seeing that all the true Value of Sacrifices, lay in the Obedience by them given to the Will of God. Upon the Scribes discreet Answer, our Lord tells him, he was not far from the Kingdom of God ; as if there were but a Step between his present Frame ; and a State of Grace ; but we do not read, that I know of that ever he got over that Step. That

2. There appears not only great Trouble, and Concern ; but also alternately much Comfort

fort and Peace of Conscience in those who are under the Operations of the Spirit so diffusive of its Influences at this Day. But this cannot be a distinguishing Mark of its being a Spirit of sanctifying Grace, and true Conversion. These are not Attainments which a natural Man cannot encompass. (1) Unregenerate Men, many Times lie under the Regrets and Troubles of Conscience. 'Tis not Trouble of Conscience that is the Attainment wherein true Grace doth consist. By his Conscience you hear *Cain* that primitive Reprobate crying out, *my Punishment is greater than I can bear.* Nor could *Judas* find out any other Way to stifle his Conscience, but by twitching his Neck in a Halter. The Conscience of the worst of Men will not always digest Mire and Dirt, but sometimes throw it up. *Judas* falls into a Distress of Conscience for what he had done, he repented himself; and brought again the thirty Pieces of Silver to the chief Priests and Elders, and went and hanged himself. Hence it is plain that all Repentance is not saving, nor doth all Confession of Sin obtain Remission. *Judas* repents, & confesseth he had sinned, and his particular Sin, in betraying an innocent Person. The Conscience may be defiled when it is not feared; it may be awakened when it is not sanctified; a filthy Puddle may be stirred as well as a clear running Stream, the Conscience may work Terrors and Horrors, where the Spirit of God never wrought true, sanctifying Grace. (2) A natural unregenerate Man may sometimes,

sometimes, have Peace and Quietness of Conscience. 'Tis not rare to meet with those at this Day, who talk as they did, *Deut. 29. 19.* *And it come to pass when he heareth the Words of this Curse, that he bless himself in his Heart, saying, I shall have Peace though I walk in the Imagination of my Heart, &c.* It is very usual with distracted Persons thus to fancy themselves Princes and great Persons, when indeed they are but wretched and miserable Spectacles, nay they fancy themselves to be rich when they have nothing of real Riches, like that delirious *Athenian* daily setting himself on an Eminence to take a Prospect of the Harbour, pleased himself with imagining that all the Ships which passed & repassed that Port were his own, so do spiritual mad Men; & as the Devil appropriates to himself all the Glory of the Earth; so these look upon Heaven, and the Glory of it, and boldly call it all their own. Thus by applying Lenitives, they give themselves some Ease for the present; and by a superficial skinning over the Sore, while the Corruption is in it, or Stupefactive, making *themselves senseless not feeling their Pain, saying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace,* *Jer. 6. 14.*

3. The Affections may be sweetly moved, and raised to uncommon Raptures and Extacies (as is to be observed frequently, in those who are occupied with the present Day's Work) even in an unregenerate Man: Therefore are not to be looked upon as certain Evidences of true sanctifying Grace. Our Saviour compar-eth the natural Man to stony Ground, which received

received the Seed, so the natural Man heareth the Word, and anon with Joy receiveth it. Anon, i. e. presently as in the Original, a sudden Passion surprizeth such, which is but like the overflowing of a Brook which is quickly down. The Word of God (as some other Objects) doth often on the sudden affect some Persons in whom it doth not take up any deep Root. *Herod* (we read) is said to have heard *John the Baptist* gladly. And *Ahab's* Humiliation was so great, that God takes special Notice of him. *1 Kings* 21. See his Character Verse 25. *But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work Wickedness in the Sight of the Lord.* What then? Had he never any Remorse? Yes, the Lord gives Testimony to it, Verse 29. *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me?* How often are all Sorts of Persons taken up with new Things, sometimes the Novelty and the Strangeness of them, may affect them. And it would be strange indeed, if some good Affections were not stirred up in Men, sometimes from the affecting Nature of spiritual Objects themselves. Again, Affections may be much moved by the Art and superior Skill and Dexterity of others, this is evident in some that teach the Word; they are regarded by many Men as a skilful Musician, who to a well tuned Instrument hath sung the Praises of Vertue, or of vertuous Men; it pleaseth their Ear, but it doth not frame their Hearts and Life to Vertue. The Jews of old loved and admired the Prophet *Ezekiel* for his eloquent Lamentation, and Reproof of their Enemies,

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and for foretelling that they should fall, and saying nothing against them and their Sins for three Years past. Ezek. 33. 32. *And lo, thou art to them as a very lovely Song*: But when he exhorts or dissuades them to Duty, or from Sin, they will hear, not do. Persons may sometimes have their Judgments gratified with the Learning and Abilities discovered in divine Discourses, and their Affections stirred up with the eloquent and pertinent Utterance of it; but though the Affections may thereby be put in Motion, yet is it not a certain Evidence of spiritual Affections in us.

4. ' We are told that the Spirit that is so much, and successful in doing now, convinces them of the Dreadfulness of Sin, and of their own guilty and miserable State by Nature.' These Things an unregenerate Man may be convinced of, when he hears so much spoken of the Beauty and Excellency of Holiness: He is convinced in his Judgment that those Things are true, viz. *That without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* And when he is thus convinced of this, it will make him break out into Pangs of Affection wishing for Grace and Happiness. Very many still in a State of Unregeneracy, wish with *Balaam* to die the Death of the Righteous, and that their last End might be like his. It is not unusual with very wicked and rebellious Men, to make open Remonstrance of Obedience to the Lord, nay they are apt to promise a perfect Obedience to God's Will, whether grateful, or ungrateful unto them, and they further declare

a Conviction, if they did it, it should be well with them, according to that, *Deut. 5. 29.* Which sheweth the mighty Power of Lusts in unregenerate Hearts, and mighty Operation of the evil Spirit, in the Children of Disobedience, *Eph. 2. 3.* That although they be convinced that if they did obey the Voice of God it would be well with them, yet they will not do it in Things which they have a Power to do. A pregnant Example hereof we have in those wicked Men that came to the Prophet declaring their high Resolutions of Obedience, *Jer. 42. 5, 6.* *They said the Lord be a true, and faithful Witness between us, if we do not according to all Things for which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us, &c.*

5. It is said that there is a manifest Change wrought in the Lives of those who are under the Operations of the diffusive Spirit that is at Work at this Day. It is true, that there seems to be a great Change in the Lives of many; but it is as true that even as great Change may be in the Lives of unregenerate Persons. Professors may escape, and forsake the gross and outward Pollutions and Defilements that they were drenched with in their Lives, but yet no pure Heart or divine Nature wrought in them. *2 Pet. 2. 20.* *For if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, &c.* Unregenerate Persons may have such a Knowledge of Christ as brings with it an outward Reformation of Life, tho' it do not purify the Heart. That Reformati-

on of Life that only frees us from Debauchedness, falls vastly short of a true saving Change; this is that which as in Times past so (I fear) many at this Day sooth up themselves when they look back upon the very wicked Extravagancies of the former Part of their Life, how monstrously they have mispent the Prime of their Years in riotous Living, in Drunkenness, Uncleaness, and Blasphemies, and now they find themselves deadned to these Sins, and are become Men of Chastity, Temperance, Sobriety and sound Speech, whence they presently conclude, that so great a Change cannot be made on them any other Way than by the effectual powerful sanctifying of the holy Ghost. But yet there may be no Work of Regeneration wrought in them. This is very evident at least in two Examples; one is the young Man in the Gospel; who in his own Conceit had so well performed his Task, that he desired our Lord to set him a new one; Mat. 19. 20. *The young Man saith unto him, all these Things have I kept from my Youth up; what lack I yet?* Christ told him he wanted one Thing, and the principal Thing. i.e. Love to God above his great Possessions. Luke 18. 22. The other is that of Paul, before his Conversion, touching the Righteousness which is in the Law he was blameless, Phil. 3. 6. He was in the Eye of Man, of a blameless Conversation: Men could not tax him; he had behaved himself conscientiously, Acts 23. 1. He lived in all good Conscience before God, even before he was made a New-Creature by the mighty Power of God.

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These Instances shew us how far a Man may go, that yet is a great Way short of a truly good and spiritual State. He may know that nothing in this Life will make him perfectly happy. He may desire eternal Life and Salvation. He may go a great Way in keeping the Commandments of God, as to the Letter of them. He may come to the Ministers of the Gospel to be further instructed. But herein he will fail, he will not come to Christ, that he may have Life, but fancy he should do something meritorious of it ; and gain Heaven by his own Industry.

6. Another Fact given, and held forth to us as a sure Mark and Evidence of Conversion and Regeneration, is that the Spirit that occupies the Party, is observed to operate in such a Manner, as to raise their Esteem of Jesus Christ. This their sure Mark of Regeneration, is equally common to all *Roman Catholicks*, as to some *Protestants*; and is as distinguishing a Mark of the Spirit that operates in them, as in any Protestant confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, &c. I remember that I have read, not long since of an Order of Friars erected in the Church of *Rome*, about two Centuries ago, who had this Rule given them, *to know nothing else but Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Mary*. And it appears in the daily Deportment of those of the Romish Communion, that their Esteem of the blessed Jesus, is raised to a high Degree of Superstition ; viz, in their constant bowing at the Name of Jesus ; carrying the Crucifix about them, and bowing at that as often as they come

come to Sight of them; crossing themselves when the Name Jesus is mentioned in their Blessings before, and Thanksgiving after Meat, carrying the Host in Baskets exalted on Poles in great Proceſſion, and kneeling at the Sight of that as often as they come across it in their Streets.

7. It is alledged that the Spirit occupying the noisy Party, must be the good Spirit of God, in that it works in Persons a greater Regard to the Word of God, and Desire of hearing and reading of it, and other Acts of Worship. This Matter is now out of Doubt; and the Reason given why it is so, (as it is frequently said by many who now pretend to extraordinary Inspirations, and Revelations) is because of the strong Impulses, and Suggestions on their Minds moving them to holy Duties. Here I must put our New-Light Men in Mind of two or three Precautions, As (1) That they examine their sudden Suggestions and Motions by the Word, and carefully see what Ground they have in the Holy Scriptures; and that they are not to yield Obedience to them because they are suggested into their Minds, but because they find that God hath commanded them. (2) They should consider not only whether they be in themselves good, but also whether they be now seasonable, and whether the Performance of them, will not disturb their orderly Proceeding in the Ways of Godliness, and disable them from Performance of some other holy Duties, which in their Christian Prudence (weighing all Occasions and Circumstances) they find for the present more necessary

necessary and seasonable, and if they do not to give Place unto them. (3) That they diligently study the Holy Scriptures, which will teach them not only what God requireth as good, but also how and when it is to be done, and in what Order and Manner upon due Consideration of all Circumstances. But such Precautions, alas, are little heeded by many who make it now a Rule, that it is impossible Satan should spur Men on to holy Duties: Not considering that it is not unusual with the Devil, to move the Soul to Evil under the Motion and Appearance of Good: All tempted Souls have an Experiment of this; for none is tempted to Evil under the Appearance of Evil: Evil as Evil being what a reasonable Soul cannot be courted to, the Devil therefore, in all his Temptations to Sin, tho' his End be to ruin and destroy, yet appeareth as an *Angel of Light*, 2 Cor. II. 14. And spurs on to Devotion, that Men may do them from ill Ground, not because God commandeth them, but because he suggesteth them: And he backeth these Motions with servile Threats and superstitious Fears. Thus when he seeth that they incline to Prayer, he will bind them to it by servile Necessity and superstitious Fear, urging them to pray as much and often as he suggesteth, and in Conclusion to neglect all Duties of their general and particular Callings, and do nothing else but pray, because the Apostle enjoineth, 1 Theff. 5. 17. *To pray without ceasing*: Whereas the Christian is bound to perform religious and civil Duties in their Season, not suffering
 one

one to juggle out another, and is required by the Apostle to pray, not at all Times, but upon every fit Occasion, and good Opportunity. So if Persons be given to the hearing of the Word, then he will move to go as often as he suggesteth, and as if they were all Ear, to do nothing but hear, at the same Time laying aside the Duties of their lawful Affairs, and neglecting the necessary Charge and Care of their Families. Again, that he may move them to perform religious Duties disorderly and unseasonably, causing them so wholly to pitch upon one, as that being taken up with it, they may be drawn to neglect all others. Moreover, he moveth them in the Duties of God's Worship to do himself Service ; since they are done at his Suggestions, and not because God hath commanded them. Finally, he hereby accustometh Persons to be at his Service and Command, by yielding unto and obeying him in Things lawful, because upon the same Ground he may move them to desist from doing of them when he countermandeth, and to do those Things which are unlawful, and so draweth them on by these delicious Morfels to swallow Poyson. But here the Question may fairly be put, that seeing we are often Times and most commonly moved and excited to those religious Duties by the Operations of the good Spirit of God, how may we distinguish these from the Suggestions of Satan ? I answer that we may do it by these Signs & Marks : viz. (1) The Suggestions of the Devil, do press us to these Duties by a certain violent Necessity, when notwithstanding

withstanding hereof, there is no Reason of them grounded in God's Word, all Circumstances duly weighed. (2) When the Performance of these Duties is disordered and unseasonable in Respect of Circumstances, and wonted to juttle out other Duties, in Respect of present Occasions more necessary and seasonable: But then when we are moved unto them by God's Spirit, one Duty is a Help and Furtherance to another. (3) When these Suggestions and Motions press upon us ceremonial Circumstances, as the Time, Place and bodily Gestures, as necessary and essential to the Service in Hand, which are in their own Nature indifferent; and the Spirit of God leaveth us free to Use, or not to use them, as in Christian Wisdom we find them more or less convenient to fit us the better for the religious Duties which are to be performed. Thus you see that there is great Necessity to a Christian, of using due Caution and Care in distinguishing between the Motions and Suggestions of the Devil even to holy Duties, and those of the Spirit of God: For those of the evil Spirit look very much like to those of the good Spirit of God. For as there is a true Spirit, that witnesseth to our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God, *Rom. 8. 16.* So there is a false Spirit, just like the true one, witnessing that they are the Sons of God: Of such a Spirit, I apprehend, our blessed Saviour speaks, *Mat. 24. 23. &c.* Which should do great Signs and Wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they would deceive the Elect of God; but he had prayed for them, only they must

must also watch and take Heed, that they might not be cheated and deceived by them. And there is great Danger of it, which we may easily perceive by a short Collation, or Comparison of both together in a few Particulars :

For as,

1. The Spirit of God humbles the Soul, so before Men such as have the Witness of the false Spirit, they are mightily cast down and dejected in Spirit ; and now they are earnest Suiters for Ease and Relief, and they resolve to lead new Lives, to resist no longer, but submit ; but their Obedience is feigned, *Psal. 66.3. Thro' the Greatness of thy Power shall thine Enemies yield themselves unto thee.*

2. The Spirit of God in the Gospel reveals Jesus Christ and his Readiness to save : So the false Spirit discovereth Christ's Excellency to receive the Sinner if he will come in upon his Terms. *Balaam* prophesied the Happiness of Israel, and by Inspiration sheweth *Balak* and his People the Glory of Heaven and God's People, *Numb. 24. 5, 9. &c.*

3. The Spirit of God gives In-sight into Christ and his Benefits, so as the true Believer is sweetly affected therewith : So the false Spirit by his common Devices and Collusions, affecteth Persons, to taste of the Goodness and Sweetness of Jesus Christ, as those did, *Heb. 6.*

4. And it also makes them breathe out passionate Admiration, and wonder that there should remain any Hope for such vile Wretches as they have been, and raises such Joy in them

them as if they were upon the Brink of possessing the Glories of the upper World.

4. When the deluded Soul is thus comforted, after a few Days of Horror and Wounding are passed, he calleth God his God, and the Lord Jesus his pleasant and sweet Saviour; and now all Doubts and Fears are come to an end for he is incontestably sure of Heaven and Happiness. And why? Because he hath received much Comfort after much Sorrow and Distress. But let such know that the Lord will in due Time refute their Pretence of a peculiar Relation and Interest in him, and tell them what they may expect, as Hosea 8. 2, 3. *Israel shall cry unto me, my God we know thee. Israel hath cast off the Thing that is good; the Enemy shall pursue him.* Hence it is plain and evident, that mighty Pretenders to Revelations and Inspirations, and proud Boasters of high Attainments in Religion; may notwithstanding, remain in a State of Unregeneracy, and and be miserable, deluded Creatures still. It is therefore necessary before I close this Article to note the Difference there is between the Witness of each Spirit, and this may be done in two Words.

1. The false Spirit makes a Man believe he is in the State of Grace, and shall be saved, because he hath tasted of Christ, and so hath been much comforted: But the true Spirit discovers to a Man his State is good and safe, because he hath not only tasted, but hath purchased this Pearl of great Price, he hath not got a Taste but a saying Sight of Christ in the Gospel,

Gospel which changeth the Soul into the Image and Likeness of Christ, from Glory to Glory; carrying on the Souls of Believers from one Degree of Grace to another; making such a glorious Change in the Heart, as shall not be blotted out until a Soul cometh into those Possessions of Glory which God hath prepared for his People. See 2 Cor. 3. 18.

2. The false Spirit having given a Person a Taste of Christ, and much Quiet and Peace therein, he is now come to a Stay, without Quicknings to further Progress: but when the good Spirit of God, hath made a Soul to taste of the Love of Christ, he moves and excites him to do much for Christ, and to do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth; his daily Addresses are in those Words of Paul, Acts 9. 6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* He is daily sensible of great Weakness, and manifold Infirmities, and the Danger of strong Attacks from Enemies, and therefore often cries out in the Words of Nehemiah, Chap. 8. 10. *The Joy of the Lord is our Strength*, and in those of David, *Uphold me with thy free Spirit*, Psal. 51. 12.

Hereto I purposed to affix, or tack a short Collection of those many Hereticks who have appeared in the World, from the days of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, even unto this Day, and who in their respective Periods have poisoned a great Part of the World with their Corruptions and Cheats of pretended Revelations: And have given my Reader a Specimen of their concordant Motions, Agitations, Extacies, Gestures, and Trances, to direct and caution him against

the abounding Enthusiasm of this Day : But willingly suppress the publishing thereof, since I have seen a Collection of that Nature lately published, entitled, *The FRENCH PROPHETS*, which I think is very seasonable, and worthy of every one's careful Perusal, and attentive Deliberation, that by the Blessing of God, they may guard against those Delusions, that seem to have slain their Thousands in this Land. I come now to the

3. Branch of the Use of *Examination*, wherein I am to examine briefly some Tenets of the New-Light Men (so called) their Skill in applying some Scripture Grounds, on which they build their Tenets, & advancing Arguments to maintain the general Goodness of their Work. I am to examine

1. Some of their Tenets, many whereof accord with those of the Romish Whore, which would oppose and destroy those Doctrines of Grace which we have been treating upon. These have indeed been almost dead and buried as to the Churches of the Lord in this Land, and have met with but little Trouble from that Quarter for the Space of a whole Century ; but now they seem to obtain a splendid, and potent Resurrection. I shall cull out of the Heap, and examine a few that are most conspicuous. As,

1. It is pretended at this Day, by some *New-Light-Men*, that the Spirit of God in the same extraordinary Measure is given, as in the Day of Christ, and his Apostles : viz. by Inspirations, Visions, Dreams, by Signs, by audible
Voice

Voice and the like. The World now seems to be over-run with such enthusiastical Delusions ; and this is not without its Precedents, and Patterns. Papiſts and other Hereticks, have pretended the like extraordinary Gifts in ſome Ages paſt. This Aſperſion caſt upon the Holy Ghoſt crept very early into the Church of *Rome* ; the Conſequence whereof (as at this Day) was a Contempt of the written Word of God. Pope *Leo* the tenth, termed the Goſpel a Fable of Chriſt. It is alſo a received Opinion of that Church, that the Scriptures of God are not ſufficient to inſtruct Mankind unto Salvation. The ſacred Scriptures were likewiſe much traduced by the Philoſophers, whereof one ſaid of *Moses*, that good Man maketh a trim Diſcourſe but proveth nothing : The *Greeks* alſo counted the Preaching of the Goſpel Fooliſhneſs. The ſame Opinion gave Riſe to the Enthuſiaſts of old, Quakers, and others ; who maintain that the Lord hath not ceaſed yet to reveal his Will as he did of old ; as many Exhorters ſay in theſe troubleſome Times, contrary to the Holy Scriptures in many Places ; ſee *Heb.* 1. 1, 2. There the Apoſtle calls the Time of the New-Teſtament, the laſt Days, becauſe under the ſame there is no Alteration to be expected, but all Things are to abide without adding or taking away, as was taught and ordained by Chriſt until the laſt Day ; ſee *Joel* 2. 28. *Acts* 2. 17. All former Viſions, Inſpirations and Dreams, do end in Writing. *Exod.* 17. 14. Which is a moſt ſure and infallible Way of the Lord's revealing his

Will

Will unto his People. And to this the Confessions of the best reformed Churches give Assent, and is as plain to every Man and Child, as Words can make it, in the Answer to the second Question in the Assembly's Catechism, viz. *The Word of God as it is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New-Testament, is the only Rule to direct us, how we may glorify and enjoy God.*

Now although I do upon Scripture Grounds, with the purest Churches, and most celebrated Divines of the Protestant Communion, deny such extraordinary Revelations of the Will of God as hath been pretended by Enthusiasts of former Ages, and is now stily maintained by those of our Age: Yet do I with all good Men thankfully acknowledge the ordinary Cooperation of the Spirit of God with his own appointed Means of Grace, and the Quality of inherent Holiness planted by God himself in the Soul of the regenerate, to be promised and given to his People, from Age to Age, and in a more plentiful Manner in some Ages of the Gospel than others. The Want of a due Observation and Distinction of these Things hath caused many both Leaders and Followers to err greatly. This is self evident from the Confusions of this Day; of many of their Teachers, who are now so famous in the Opinion of the Inconsiderate, and Injudicious Populace; and also of such of their Followers and Favourers, with whom I hitherto met both in Print and Conversation; I say, of such I will venture to say as the renowned Dr. *Usher* said
of

of Dr. *Heilin*, that “in Point of true and solid Theology, they had Need to learn their Catechism. If such talked less, and studied more, Purity of Doctrine and Soundness in Principles would not suffer so much Injury as now they do ; and the simple People would not be so much in Hazzard of being captivated into so many gross Errors and Mistakes as now they are.”

2. It is said and maintained by many that the *New-Light* within, their inward Feeling is the Rule of Faith, and directs the Conversation, and is equal to, yea the Interpreter of the Holy Scriptures. And this gross Mistake is boldly fathered upon the Holy Ghost : This is akin to a Piece of gross Forgery coined in the early Days of the Romish Church : In the third Century *Cornelius* the Pope sends his decretal Epistles to all the Sons and Bishops of the Church to rejoice with him at the Translation of the Bodies of *Peter* and *Paul* at the Entreaty, as (was said) of that devout Matron *Lucina*, from the Catatombs to the golden Mountain, &c ; And what then ? It is all fathered upon the Holy Ghost, the Lord being the Author. There is another Aspersion cast upon Heaven, to the same Purpose : viz. Pope *Pius* amuses the World with a Piece of Forgery, namely, that his Brother *Hermes* when a Shepherd, but afterwards a learned Doctor, had the Testimony of an Angel given to him concerning the Celebration of Easter on the Lord's Day : and all fathered upon the Lord. Many more such Forgeries might be produced from the corrupt

Records

Records of the Church of *Rome*. And more especially in the dawning of the Reformation in our own Nation, there were very many monstrous Cheats imposed upon the People by the Intrigues of base Papists; a famous Instance thereof is that of the *Nun of Kent*; it is plain enough that generally those who are called at this Time *New-Light-Men*, harmonize with the *Enthusiasts* and *Quakers* of the two last Centuries, whereof some call the Scriptures a historical Rule, and a dead Letter, they call them not the Fountain of Truth and Knowledge, nor the first Rule of Faith and Manners, but the secondary Rule subordinate to the Spirit: Whence as they affirm the Holy Scriptures have all their true Worth and Excellency. To this very Issue tends the Notion which we commonly find in the Mouth of all those *New-Light Men* that I yet met with. It is true they do not care yet to treat the Holy Scriptures with the same Contempt as some called *Quakers* do: but this I can safely affirm that they rest in this in all their Discourses, that they now *feel* something within them that affords to themselves constant Light and Peace, and gives them a clear and full Understanding in all the Scriptures; and have in my hearing applied to themselves those Sayings of *David*, Psal. 119. 99, 100. *I have more Understanding than all my Teachers. I understand more than the Ancients.* When with much Assurance and Boldness, they very frequently applied to me and others that Saying, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God.* And when

when I often requested some of the Exhorters and their Followers to give me the distinguishing Mark of their pretended superior Light from the Spirit, which the Quakers would obtrude upon us; here they have ever been struck dumb, and silently acknowledged their Coalescence and Agreement. But we are under no Difficulty to shew that this their *enthusiastical Notion* is in *direct* Opposition to *true Conversion*, and the sacred Texts in many Passages thereof: See *Gal. 6. 16.* There, the Scriptures are called *a Rule*, they are indeed the *only perfect Rule*, nothing is to be added to them, *Deut. 4. 2. and 42. Prov. 30. 6. Rev. 22. 19, 20.* And we are assured of it, that we ought rather to follow the Scriptures in this Life, than a Voice spoken from Heaven, *2 Pet. 1. 19, 21.* And is not the Scripture written that we may believe? *John 20. 31.* Is not the Scripture given for *making the Man of God perfect*? *2 Tim. 3. 17.* We must betake ourselves in the whole of Religion *to the Law and to the Testimony*, *Isa. 8. 20.* And Christ himself refers the greatest Question that ever was, *whether he was the Son of God or not*, to the Scriptures, *John 5. 38, 39.* Paul saith, that *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*, *Rom. 10. 14.* And the Confessions of Faith of the best reformed Churches witness to this Truth. And indeed the Spirits cannot be known by any other Rule than by the written Word. 'Tis certain that the Devil transforms himself into an *Angel of Light*, *2 Cor. 11. 14.* There is a *Spirit of the World*, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* *A Spirit that*

that rules in the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience, Eph. 2. 2. There is a *lying Spirit*, 1 Kings 22. 22. And a *Spirit of Error and Delusion*, 1 John 4. 6. Now how shall these be known to be such, or the Spirit which the Quakers obtrude upon us to be one of them; but by the Rule of the Word?

3. It is alledged by many, that by this *Light within* they have the Gift and Ability of discerning Spirits; determining the State of Men's Souls, and thereupon to pronounce them in a State of Salvation or Damnation: And they are so mighty in their Penetration that they can accomplish so great and inscrutable a Work in less than a *half an Hour's Conversation*! This smells too Rank of that Corruption of the Romish Church, upon which they ground their *auricular Confessions*, which are still in Use with them; and is contrary to the true Meaning of many Scriptures, see Jer. 17. 10. and 20. 12. *David* is stiled a *Man after God's own Heart*, yet knew nothing of the State of *Achithophel's* Soul, he made him his Counsellor and Guide, yea his Equal, *They took sweet Counsel together, and walked unto the House of God in Company*, Psal. 55. 12, 13, 14. So it was that the eleven Apostles knew nothing of *Judas's* Heart Treason against his Lord and Master's Life, before Christ discovered it to them. It must be acknowledged that *Philip* and the Apostles had as much of the true Spirit of discerning as any *Enthusiast* of former Ages, or *New-Light-Men* in this, can pretend to; but *Simon the Witch* deceived them all. His Followers

lowers declare to the World, that *he was the great Power of God*: He believed, was baptized, he continued with the Christians; but still *in the Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity*: As this Pretence, therefore of discerning and knowing the State of Men's Souls, hath no Ground in the sacred Text: So it is in direct Opposition to a Spirit of true Conversion, true Christian Experience; and also the Confessions of the best reformed Churches.

4. It is taught, and practised by these Men of *pretended superior Light*; that, as the Consequence of such discerning and judging is found, whether in their peculiar Way of thinking, or in the good old Way, so the Union with, or Separation from professed Christians must be, if not judged converted; from such turn away; both Ministers and People; if Men are not in their Way of thinking, they will (say they) have nothing to do with them. Well, is this a Gospel-Doctrine? No, 'tis a *Dictate of the Mystery of Iniquity*, one of the Fumes of the Brains of *Jezebel*. Much like unto it is that crafty Device invented in the third, and stilly maintained in the fourth Century; and which upon the advancing & establishing of the Popish Hierarchy, was universally embraced: Accordingly the Popes published their decretal Epistles, fathering them upon the Holy Ghost to support this Corruption. Pope *Hildebrand* decreed and commanded that no Man should hear Mass from the Mouth of a Priest, that hath a Wife. The *Rhemists* do publish how the Sermons of Heretics (and so they term all Protestant Ministers)

must not be heard, tho' they preach the Truth, their Prayers and Sacraments are not acceptable to God, but are the howling of Wolves, and these Corrupters of Gospel-Truth; that is, the Papists say, that to the Perfection of a Sacrament the actual Intention of the Minister, at least his verbal Intention of doing that which the Church doth, is necessary. But this Device hath no Footing in the Scriptures of Truth: For *Judas* who was a Thief, a Traitor, did according to the Command of Christ baptize as well as the rest, *John* 4. 2. Yet Christ never called in Question his Baptism. And it is plain to be seen in *Phil.* 1. 16. That the Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments doth not depend upon the Piety and Worthiness of the Instrument. If it did, who could be sure of his own Baptism? Since no Man can be sure of the Intention of the Minister. The Truth is, the Operation and Efficacy of the Sacraments depend upon the Operation of the Holy Ghost, and the Word of Institution, *Mat.* 3. 11. *I Cor.* 12. 13. And this is asserted and maintained by pious, able and learned Divines of our Side.

5. It is boldly declared and impudently practised, that any under the Conduct of the Spirit of the present Day, and finds himself gifted, is therefore authorized to preach the Gospel; but some of their Favourites and Followers say they do not preach, *but exhort*. This is a Nick-name given it, as they do to many other Things among them: For the Gospel itself informs us what the true Preaching of it is; viz. *Christ the End of the Law for Righteousness to such as believe*. And such

is the Tenor of their *Exhortations*, as several of them have confessed to myself. Nay, some of them have boldly affirmed in my hearing, their being called to this Honour as was *Aaron*, that is, said one, by the Spirit. I confess this Intrusion upon the sacred Office is not without its Authority in the Popish Councils: This Wickedness is established by their Law, as may be seen by the seventh Canon of the seventh Session of the Council of *Trent*. They take all Ministers to be Wolves, Hirelings and Intruders, &c. who are not sacrificing Priests anointed by some Antichristian Bishop of the Romish Synagogue. The *Socinians*, *Quakers* and others, have given our *New-Light-Men* a Precedent in this monstrous Delusion. They say that the Key of Doctrine, or the preaching of the Word, is proper to any Man furnished with suitable Gifts, though not called and sent to that Employment. Such Invasion upon the sacred ministerial Office, is no Evidence of true Conversion; but a manifest Violation of the Word of Truth. We are told, Rom. 10. 14, 15. *That no Man can believe in Christ of whom he hath not heard, and how shall he hear without a Preacher, and how shall he preach, unless he be sent?* And we know that Women may have suitable and competent Gifts of Preaching, and yet they are forbidden to *Speak in the Church*, 1 Tim. 2. 12. And the Scripture also blames such as have run, and yet have not been sent, Jer. 23. 21, 32. And no Man ought to take this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God as was *Aaron*, Heb. 9. 4. Moreover, the Scripture manifestly sheweth that God set apart certain peculiar Ministers for

for the preaching of the Word, *Rom. 1. 1. Eph. 4. 11. Tit. 1. 3.* Nevertheless these Substituents, Factors of the evaporating, enthusiastical Drugs of our Time, presume to mangle divine Truths in their peculiar Dialect. Again, it is a granted Case, that no Man take the Office of a civil Magistrate, or a Deacon of the Church upon him, unless he be called thereunto, *Luke 12. 14. Acts 6. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 10.* And therefore no Man ought to take upon him, the public Preaching of the Word, unless he be called thereunto likewise, for he that taketh upon him this Office without a Call, he usurpeth Authority in the Church, seeing Preaching is an Act of Authority. *1 Thess. 5. 12.* And the Titles which are given to the Preachers of the Gospel are Names of Office. They are called the *Ambassadors of Christ. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Stewards of the Word, Tit. 1. 7. The Men of God, 1 Tim. 6. 11. And Angels, Rev. 2. 1.* And there is not one approved Example in all the Word of God, for a gifted Brother to preach without a Call, and therefore seeing it is not done in Faith, it must be Sin. Accordingly the best reformed Protestant Churches have ever avoided and rejected such giddy-headed Men.

6. Another Corruption of the Romish Church imbibed by our *misguided Zealots* and Obtruders on the sacred Office, is that when they observe upon their unwarrantable Declamations of the Terrors of the Law, Hell, &c. in their *inconnect Harangues*, any of their Company come under the Lash of one of the seven Sacraments of the *Babylonish Harlot*, namely *Penance*, which they *miscall* their Convictions, attain to some Relentings,
and

and presume to have found the Lord Jesus Christ; and are now rejoicing in him, as indeed they might and ought, if they *taste and see that the Lord is gracious*. The Exhorters forthwith pronounce such, *justified, sanctified, & pardoned*. What else is the Meaning of their unsound Form of Words, viz *Ye are incarnate Devils, God is more angry with you than with those that are already tormentéd in Hell. Your Place shall be below all the Devils in Hell, they will make Hell seven Times hotter for them, and tell them that they will speedily send them thither, and point to the Devils round them ready to carry them off by Wholesale*. But as soon as they have passed their ordinary Quarrantine, and the Factors have extorted from poor deluded Women and Children, * a Confession of Jesus, and have audited their Dreams and Vision, &c. &c. they are immediately declared to have *passed through the New-Birth* in all the Throws of it ! And are now without Doubt savingly in the Lord of Glory. I am afraid these Declaimers are not sensible of the Blasphemies of their Language ; I think they know not what to say ; God grant they may soon see their Mistake. This also is a Potion prepared by the Italian Conclave to infect and ensnare the Simple and unwary throughout Christendom, as may be seen in the stated Rules of the Church of *Rome* as to Pardons. viz. If you would have a Pardon for the Sins of forty Days, a Bishop may grant it; for the Sins of one Hundred Days, a Cardinal may grant it; & for all your Sins committed or to be committed, from the

* Such more generally.

Pope you may have it. Pope *Innocent* the second hath granted to every one that devoutly shall say this Prayer following, 4000 Years Pardons: The Title of the Prayer is this, *Hail Wound of our Saviour's Side, &c.* Again, whosoever shall devoutly say this Prayer shall have 3000 Days Pardon of criminal Sins, and twenty Thousand Days of venial Offences, granted by the Lord Pope *John* the two and twentieth, as is to be read in the *Antidotary of the Soul*. Again, whosoever devoutly will say the Prayer following, shall merit thereby eleven Thousand Years Pardons. The Prayer is, *Hail Lady St. Mary, Mother of God, &c.* You see the Mint where humane Pardons are coined, they are not found in the Scriptures, which say, *By his Stripes we are healed, Isa. 53. 5. There is Salvation in none other: For among Men there is given none other Name under Heaven, whereby they must be saved, Acts 4. 12. Thro' his Name all that believe shall receive Remission of Sins, Acts 10. 43, &c.* And to this the best reformed Churches willingly yield their Assent.

7. A seventh corrupt Doctrine stily maintained by the Exhorters of this Day and their Followers, is, that *unconverted Ministers*, and others cannot understand Scripture-Truth, or instruct others therein. And upon this Score have Scores of them already withdrawn from the Ministrations of their learned laborious & faithful Pastors; whereas they are unable at the same Time to give any Ground for such their rash and uncharitable Judging, but that *they think so*: Or, that these have not fallen down to worship the *Dagon* of their Corruptions. What Dissimilitude there is between this Flight of theirs, and the Fruit of
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the true Spirit of God manifest in the Examples of the Saints ; and how contrary it is to the Tenor of the sacred Canon, I shall not stand to discover ? But briefly observe, what Similitude there is in this Piece of *New-Light* to that of old invented at *Rome* ; I mean that injurious Accusation wherewith the prime Men of that Synagogue have slandered God and his written Word, that the Bible is an obscure Book not to be understood. The Scriptures are obscure, say they ; but to whom think you ? To their illuminated Doctors and spiritual Men ? No they can understand them well enough, they are able to reconcile all seeming Contradictions, to reduce all Tropes and Figures to their plain Meaning, to note the various Acceptions of Words, to dive into all hidden Mysteries of the Text, and over and above the just Meaning find out many spiritual Senses of it, that the Author never thought on. Much so it is with our Men of the *New-Scheme*, they have got a clear Insight into all the Mysteries of the sacred Text ; as they have often said to me and others. Which leads me to examine in the

2. Place, some Scripture-Grounds on which they would build their Tenets : And

I. I *John* 4. 1, 2. I *Cor.* 12. 3. As to the first, some in teaching from it have aimed at giving us therein an Evidence of the inward Work of the Spirit of God upon Men's Hearts, and not an outward Profession, which is all that the Apostle intends. And as to I *Cor.* 12. 3. *No Man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost* : The Apostle speaks there of the Gifts of the Spirit,
not

not of the inward Grace; the assenting to Christ that he is Lord, is a Gift of the Spirit by a common Illumination. And it is the conscientious Judgment of the most celebrated Divines, that the Apostle *John* in the former, gives only the Note of a true Teacher as to Matter of Doctrine viz. If he asserts that Christ is come in the Flesh, is the true Messiah, the Son of God and righteous. And indeed in that Age, an Assent to a new, vilified and persecuted Doctrine, was a greater Testimony of Faith, than the highest external Profession can be in the Age wherein we live. And an higher Esteem raised in an external Profession is (as you have heard) all the Apostle *John* intends in this Place. Had such consulted good Expositors on these Texts rather than pursue their own Fancy, had they I say consulted great & good Men who have treated of 1 *Joh.* 4. 1. in a more scriptural and judicious Manner, (particularly our learned and ingenious Professor †) rather than pursue their own ill digested Imaginations; they should not need to torture that Text to so little Purpose.

2. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit, &c.* The natural Man there might better have been translated *rational*, as the Original Word most commonly imports, agreeably, the Apostle in the whole Course of his Argument in that Chapter makes the Opposition between the rational and spiritual Man, that is, in short, him that is directed and governed by Reason only; and him that hath quite laid aside

† *Dr. Wigglesworth's Trial of the Spirits, 1735.*
his

his Reason, but is principally directed and governed by Revelation, i. e. God's written *Word*.

3. Another Passage of Scripture much abused by most, if not all the *New-Scheme-Men*, is that 1 Pet. 3. 15. *Be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you with Meekness and Fear.* From this Text they presume to have a Warrant, to spend much of their Time in relating of Experiences, and comparing Notes, after they have got thro' with their Conversion, as they say. That this Text is abused when thus applied, may easily be seen by comparing the Original here with other Places of Scripture: Which is, *Apologia*, i. e. Apology or Defence, accordingly it is so translated, Acts 22. 1. *Men, Brethren and Fathers, hear ye my Defence.* See also 1 Cor. 9. 3. The Apostle *Peter* writes this Epistle to the Jews, see 1 Pet. 2. 12. who had embraced the Doctrines of the Gospel; and here exhorts them, so to acquaint themselves with those Doctrines as to make Apology, or Defence of the Faith they professed. Agreeable to this Exposition, I heard above twenty Years ago, three of the most solid Divines,* that ever I had the Honour and Happiness of free Conversation with, express themselves on this Text. Must we in earnest speak of these Men, which *Job* doth of his Friends in Derision; no Doubt *but they are the People, and Wisdom shall die with them.* As for those simple Souls, the learned and pious Divines, and solid Christians of the

* Rev. Messieurs *Williams* of *Hatfield*, *Williams* of *Deerfield*, and *Breck* of *Marlborough*.

Protestant Communion, (excepting those of the *New-Scheme*, have not Wit enough to understand the Meaning of plain Words. To such their proud Contempt of God's People, we may without any Fear of transgressing the Rules of Modesty oppose that of *Job*, Chap. 12. Begin. Even these have Understanding as well as they, yea and are not inferior unto the greatest of them, unless they could give the World a better Proof of their deeper Wisdom than ever yet they have done.

4. A fourth Scripture much abused and tortured by the *Exhorters*, and their Followers, is that in *Joel* 2. 8. *And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, &c.* Upon this Text they would ground much of their *Visions, Inspirations, Dreams and Revelations*: We grant this Text hath Reference to the sending the Messiah in his Day, and the wondrous Work to be done under his Kingdom; and that in large Measures the Holy Spirit should be given, which the Messiah exalted did send, *John* 16. 7. in an extraordinary Power & Gifts in the Apostles and first Preachers of the Gospel, but in an ordinary Measure of Gifts and Graces to all Believers; and this is all that they have Promise of; see *Eph.* 4. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. And indeed the main Scope of the Text is to signify, that the Knowledge of God and his Will should abound and be more clear to all Ranks, Sexes and Ages in the Messiah's Days, and should surpass all that formerly was by Prophecy, Dreams, or Visions.

5. *John* 14. 26. *But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, &c. He shall teach you all Things, &c.*
This

This Text hath immediate Reference to Christ's Disciples, and next to all Believers to the End of the World; but is there not the least Ground therein to fix the Expectation of new Revelations of the Mind and Will of God upon. For the Promise of the Spirit is not to make new Revelations of new Notions; it only brings to our Remembrance what Christ hath said, and further revealeth what was before in the Word revealed. There are no new Truths, but particular Persons may have new Discoveries of old Truth, which they had before Mis-apprehensions of.

6. *Mat. 6. 31, 32, 33.* Whence many now imagine and say, that no Matter what becomes of temporal Affairs and Concerns, if they spend their whole Time in their religious Assemblies and Worship: But such mistake our Lord's Meaning in these Passages of Scripture; wherein he forbids not all moderate and provident Thoughts for Things necessary, but only such Thoughts as shall argue our Distrust in God, or perplex and distract our Minds, or be inconsistent with our Duty, and Employment of our Thoughts about higher and better Things; and that our principal Care should be how to get to Heaven, and how to promote the Kingdom of God in the World.

7. *1 Cor. 2. 15.* *But he that is spiritual judgeth all Things, yet he himself is judged of no Man.* Hence our New-Light Men pretend to maintain their Claim of Right to judge of the State of Men's Souls. But this cannot be the true Meaning of this Text, because such a Gloss will contradict

tradiet an exprefs Prohibition of our Saviour in this very Cafe: Mat. 7. 1. *Judge not, that ye be not judged.* Our Lord must not be here understood prohibiting any Judgment, for this is in other Places of Scripture allowed; and therefore, we must not think that the Holy Spirit doth command and forbid the same Thing, whence it is manifest that it is not to be understood of political and ecclesiastical Judgments, because our Saviour is not speaking here to any such Persons: It is therefore to be understood of private Judgments; but not absolutely of them, for it is our Duty to judge ourselves, nor are we prohibited to judge of our Neighbour's Opinions and Actions, which terminateth in ourselves, in our Satisfaction, as to the Truth or Falshood of the former, or Goodness or Badness of the latter: we ought so to *prove all Things* in order to our *holding fast that which is good.* Nor is all Judgment of our Neighbour's Actions with Reference to him forbidden. How can we reprove him for his Errors or restore him that is fallen, without a previous Judgment of his Actions? But that which our blessed Lord here forbids is either a rash Judgment of his State, or a judging him for doing his Duty. Wherefore the Apostle's Scope, *1 Cor. 2. 15.* Is to be understood thus, viz. the spiritual Man discerneth or judgeth all Things, that is of this Nature, the Mysteries of God, which concern Man's eternal Life and Salvation; not that every good Christian hath any such perfect Judgment, or Power of discerning, but according to the Measure of Illumination which he hath received. *Yet he himself is judged of no Man,*

Man, that is, examined, searched, or condemned; the Wisdom that is of God is not to be subjected to the Wisdom of Men. The Truth which the spiritual Man owneth and professeth, dependeth only upon God and his Word, and is not subjected to the Authority and Judgment of Men, nor to the Dictate of human Reason. I might easily stretch the Discourse beyond my designed Brevity in examining many other Texts of Scripture, which the Party have no less abused and perverted from their true and genuine Meaning, than those which I have already mentioned; but these few may suffice to give the Reader some Notices of their Heterodoxy in interpreting and applying divine Truths.

To conclude this Article, we hope, we have learned better Things, than to bring God in Suspicion with Man of Envy and Fraud, as if he had caused a Word to be written for Instruction of Men which they should not understand, and in it had laid a Snare to intrap Men's Souls in Heresy and false Opinions, by perverting the Scriptures to their own Perdition; no, hear what Christ saith of his own Words, which are the Scriptures. See Prov. 8. 8, 9. *All the Words of my Mouth are in Righteousness, there is nothing forward or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find Knowledge.* We scruple not to say, that did the simplest of People use but half that Diligence that they ought in attaining Christian Knowledge; and would take but as much Pains to understand the Scriptures as they do the Deeds
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of their Lands, or other Instruments, and the Law-Books, or such like, Experience would quickly tell them that the Scriptures are not so far above the Reach of their Understandings as our *gain-saying Exhorters* and their Followers conceive. It is easier to inform the Understanding, than to subdue the Will and Affections : The Mind may be plainly taught, whilst yet the Heart remains froward, unbroken, and untractable : The very Heart and Life of Faith is the strong Inclination and Union of the Soul unto the Truth and Goodness of spiritual Things, preferring them in our Choice above all Things whatsoever, which gracious Motion is the Work of God's Spirit, powerfully binding and drawing the Heart to embrace that Good which is offered unto it : But it doth not necessarily follow, the right and clear Information of the Understanding. And therefore it is both possible and easy for an unregenerate Christian by the Help of common Illumination to go far. By common Illumination I understand, religious Education, the Course of the Revelation of divine Truths now usual in the Christian World : Consisting in the Knowledge of all Arts, Skill of Languages, Use of other Men's Labours in their Writings and Commentaries, Conference, and accustomed Painfulness in the Study of any Kind of Knowledge. By these Means a Christian, allowing the Truth of the Holy Scriptures, may even while in a State of Unregeneration make great Progress in the Understanding of divine Mysteries. He may understand every Article of Christian Belief : The many Controversies

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in Matter of Religion, all Duties of Piety in Christian Practice, any Treatise tending to holy Instruction, Places of Scripture of obscurest, and doubtful Interpretation. And in these Things many Times Sanctity goes not so far as those common Graces do. Those that are acquainted with reading the various Interpretations of learned Men, or the Holy Scriptures, may by Experience know, that the holiest Men have not been always the happiest Expositors. And doth not the Trial of every Day shew, that many a wretched Man and vile Hypocrite, may nevertheless make so good a Sermon, even about the most spiritual Points of Christianity, and so heavenly a Prayer, that the most penetrating Men may deem him sound-hearted. So easy a Matter it is for worldly Applause, Honour, Interest and Advantage, to learn Religion by Rote, and to teach the Tongue to speak what the Heart doth not affect. Histories and Predictions are known unto the most illuminated Understandings, by no Evidence of the Things themselves, but only by Evidence of the Relation. Precepts & Discourses of dogmatical Points mentioned in Scriptures, are in Part known by the Evidences of the Things themselves, both to the Regenerate and also to the Unregenerate. But then there are some Points that are the more proper Doctrines of Divinity, of a higher and more spiritual Nature; that can never be comprehended by any Evidence of Reason, no not of the most illuminated in this Life: Such are the Mystery of the *Trinity*, the *Union of two Natures in one Person*, in the Person of the *Logos*, but then again there

are some Points which may be in Part evidently known in their proper Nature. but yet only in such as are truly sanctified, by the blessed Spirit of all Grace, not by the Unregenerate. This indeed makes up a great Part of the Christian Religion, as the Mystery of Regeneration, & Man's Estate in Grace in this Life. Here are a Thousand Things that are clear & evident to the sanctified and spiritual Man, which the unregenerate Man knows nothing of but by Repetition, or Hear-say. As a Resurrection from Death to Life wrought wondrously by the Spirit of God, the Power of a saving Faith, the Nature of godly Sorrow for Sin, of Peace of Conscience, of Joy in the Holy Ghost, Communion with Christ, and the whole Art of our spiritual Warfare, containing the Wiles and Methods of Satan and Corruption in tempting, with the admirable Power of Grace and spiritual Wisdom in making Resistance and overcoming. Thus you may easily perceive the Difference between the Knowledge of the Unregenerate and Regenerate in God's holy written Word; which is known by the Plainness of the Narration thereof, else the Study of Divinity were a vain Attempt. Points of Nature and Morality may be in themselves evident to all, but the proper Mysteries of Divinity can be in Part evident only to the Regenerate. I might easily fill up a whole Page with the Names of the most sage and solid Divines of the Protestant Communion, who have expressed their Sentiments on these Points, agreeable to what I have declared thereof. But I shall only mention one of those, viz. The worthy Mr. *Flavel*, whose

Praise

Praise is in all our Churches, and his elaborate Works in deserv'd Esteem with our People. See a late Extract from *England's Duty* * and Appendix. † And having in some Measure, discovered the sandy Foundation on which the Faction would build their unscriptural Tenets ; and shew'd that they have no Footing in those Passages referred to by them : For according to that well-known and approved Rule ; *Scripture misinterpreted and misapplied is no Scripture*. I cannot but hope that upon a serious and more sedate Review of Things, our many great and good Men both in our Government and Churches, will no longer halt, but will bestir themselves in their respective Places, seasonably to oppose and suppress the many spreading Errors and Confusions of these Times ; and to prevent (as much as in them lies) our being carried back again to *Babylon* in the Chains of Inadvertency and Credulity ; and not suffer us thereby to be made an easy Prey to our Adversaries. Believe it, my Brethren, *the dotting Argument of the general Goodness of the Work of the present Day* ; which is frequent in the Mouths of its Advocates and Favourers, can never make Apology for the many Corruptions in their Doctrines and Practices. For it is equally absurd in Reason and Divinity, to think or say, that the Doctrines of free Grace can long subsist among us in their native Purity ; if we suffer them to be interlaced with so many gross Corruptions of the Church of *Rome* and others. No, (*non bene conveniunt, nec in una*

* P. 15. † 17.

sede morantur) let Paul give you the Meaning, and Phrase of this, 2 Cor. 6. 15. *What Concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what Part hath he that believeth with an Infidel?*

I come now in the

4. Place, to examine a few of their Achillean Arguments, wherewith they propose to clear up and maintain the Goodness, and the general Goodness of *the Work*, so called: and here I must observe in the first Place, that when our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, promised to send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, he also declared that *the Spirit will guide into all Truth*, John 16. 13. A Set of Men, who of late have appeared in this Land; have occasioned great Trouble and Disquietment to Ministers, and Churches of Christ throughout this Country. viz. Some wandring Teachers, and especially those called *Exhorters*; some of whose Arguments, as well as Tenets held forth by them are, I humbly think, in their own Nature much in Opposition to the Doctrines of Grace, of which we have treated in this Work; and differ little from the like Shifts of the Disciples of *Rome*: Which in Charity and due Respect, I chuse rather to impute to their raised Temper, and Rashness than to any the least Design, to corrupt or byass the pure Doctrines of Christ professed & maintained in these Churches of the Lord: Notwithstanding whereof, as we find that these Corruptions have spread too much already, & infected many; it behoves the faithful Servants of Christ to endeavour that this Leaven may not, through their Neglect, infect
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the whole Lump. This being premised, I pass to examine a few of their most plausible Arguments.

1. One Argument for the Goodness of their Work is taken from the *Multitude of People that fall in with it, and their Unity*: This hath no Footing in, but is contrary to that Doctrine of Christ, Mat. 7. 14. Who saith, that *Strait is the Gate and narrow is the Way, which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* The Exhorters, and their Followers boast much of this Argument put into their Mouths by their Superiors: But it would be easy to shew, that it is equally cogent and good for the *Mahometan* Imposture and the *Romish* Corruption and Superstition; and that it hath been since thrown out of Doors, as a Thing very detestible by many eminent Divines of the best reformed Churches, and so it was long before them, by the ancient Fathers: *Augustin* saith, *Si justus es, noli numerare, sed appende.** That is, if thou wouldst deal uprightly in this Case, take not Religion by Tale or Number, as though that were best which most receive, but try it by Weight. There are many Scriptures besides that of our Saviour already mentioned, which abundantly shew, that Multitude in Matters of Religion is no good Rule to proceed by, either in Points to be believed, or in Matters to be practised. A Matter may be believed and professed by many, and approved by a Multitude, and yet there may be neither Soundness in the one, nor Holiness in the other. In the Days of

* *Augustin* in Psalm 39.

Noah it is said that God looked upon the Earth, and all Flesh had corrupted his Way, Gen. 6. 12. Four Hundred Prophets at one Time consented together in one Thing, and when the King asked their Advice touching his Expedition against Ramoth-Gilead, all said; *Go, and prosper*, 1 Kin. 21. When Paul opposed himself to the Idolatry of the Ephesians, which worshipped the Images of Diana, there arose saith the Story, a Shout for the Space of almost two Hours, of all Men, crying, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*, Acts 19. 34. The Spirit of God prophesying by the Apostle John of the coming of Antichrist saith, *That all that dwell on the Face of the Earth shall worship him, whose Names are not written in the Book of Life*, Rev. 13. 8, 16. In all these Instances, and many more which might be added, we see great Multitudes, even Swarms of People running one Course with one Heart, like Men possessed and ruled with one Spirit: And yet all deceived. Where many indeed join in the Truth, there is a good Way, and a goodly Society, but not for the Many's Sake, but for the Truth's Sake.

2. Another Argument is taken from the general Goodness of their Work. It is generally good (say they) therefore to be swallowed in gross Crust and Crumb; under the Penalty of *Anathema's*. This Sort of Reasoning reproacheth two Maxims commonly known. One is, *Dolus latet in generalibus*. The other, *Bonum non nisi ex integra causa; Malum ex qualibet defectu*. And to infer a general Goodness of a Work, and its being generally of the Spirit of God, from its being really so in some Instances; is to argue a *Baculo ad*

ad Angulum ; et a genere ad speciem affirmative. It is a Rule very early given to the Servants and Messengers of the Lord of Hosts to make a Distinction between Truth and Errors, to put a Difference between Things commanded and Things forbidden. Aaron and his Sons were to put Difference between *holy* and *unholy*, and between *unclean* and *clean*, *Levit. 10. 10.* And this is no temporary but a perpetual Statute. *Ezek. 44. 23.* The Neglect of observing this Rule by the Lord's Priests of old is given as one great Reason why he *poured out his Indignation upon his People, and consumed them with the Fire of his Wrath* : *Ezek. 22. ult.* I say, this Neglect of the Priests is given as a main Reason for such severe Proceeding, *Ver. 26. Her Priests have violated my Law, and have profaned mine holy Things : They have put no Difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed Difference between the Unclean and the Clean, &c.* And the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus* is commended in that he *tried them which say they are Apostles and are not ; and found them Liars*, *Rev. 2. 2.*

The Man of Sin doth generally own the Doctrines of Christ, but then he opposeth Christ himself, as his Name given him by the Apostle *John* doth evidence, when he is called *Antichrist*, one that is against Christ ; not that he openly and professedly opposeth him, but as *Judas* kissed his Master, and betrayed him. Thus those many learned Men who have treated of *Antichrist*, explain this Matter : See *Whitaker, Daneus, Chamier, Moulin, Junius*, and others. He serveth Christ, but it is to serve himself of him. He acknowledgeth

knowledgeth him in all his Offices, and yet doth vertyually deny and oppose him in them all. He professeth himself a Servant of the Servants of God, and yet persecutes, curseth, proscribes, and killeth them, opposing Christ in his Members. He *maketh War with the Saints*, Rev. 13. 7. It would be an easier Task, further to shew the Insufficiency of this plausible Argument of general Goodness, by comparing it with the State of the Christian Church infected with the *Arian* Heresy, *Pelagian* Error of old, &c. and the *Arminian* Tenets of a later Date; but I hope what I have briefly offered may satisfy the impartial Reader, as concerning the Weakness, and Insignificancy of it; and warn all against those Corruptions which successfully spread & ingross themselves into too many Christian Professors under the Pretext of general Goodness. And it may fairly be supposed that this is one Reason why those who long since embraced the *Pelagian* and *Arminian* Errors, &c. are so loud in their Acclamations of Praises to the Work, and sing their Sonnets in Commendation of it. And others of deeper and better Skill in Doctrine, & known Solidity in Practise and Conversation are so silent in the present Commotions in Religion, seeing the Work like to be done to their Hand, by such as they would never have trusted, or employed.

3. A third Argument for the Goodness of their Work, and its being generally from the Spirit of God, is taken from a *Declaration of Experiences*, and *external Reformation*.

I shall not stand to shew the illogical Nature of this Argument, by examining and comparing it

it with allowed logical Rules and Canons (which seem to have forfeited their Character, and Use with some of the new Scheme) but pass to shew the Weakness of it in a Manner more intelligible to my common Reader. Verily, were this made an universal Rule, or Ground whereby to judge of Professors real Conversion, many an honest, gracious Soul should never obtain such a Judgment upon them while they live; there being many such, who put them to Declarations of this Kind, could say little or nothing. He that were best read in practical Treatises of the Nature of Repentance and Faith, and the Way of the Spirit's Working of these, and had a Gift of Utterance, should carry the fairest Sentence, whatever were the real Work in his Heart, if he could but carry fair outwardly in his Conversation, as an Hypocrite may, without Scandal, nay it were in Effect to erect a Stage for Hypocrites, to exercise their Gifts upon, and to cast a Stumbling-Block in the Way of honest Hearts, not endued with Gifts of expressing themselves. I acknowledge that good Use may be made of drawing out of Christians, what Experience they find of the Work of the Spirit upon their Hearts, and Conferences between Ministers and People, and between Christians among themselves, may, and ought prudently to be exercised for that end; but I find Fault with making *Declarations of Experiences*, a general Rule and Ground for judicial Trial and passing Judgment concerning the Regeneration and Conversion of Professors.

To clear and maintain this Point let me add two or three Particulars for your Consideration.

I. That

1. That Regeneration and Conversion being an inward Work on the Heart, no Judgment can be made thereupon by Man, but by outward Actings.

2. That it is not the Actings according to their Matter, or the Deed done, but as they are done from such Principles, Faith and Love; and for such an End, the glorifying of God and pleasing him; that argues the Heart to be regenerate, and the Doer to be in Christ, and in the State of Grace, and consequently that a Man cannot positively judge of another's Regeneration by them, but as they appear some Way to be done, out of such Principles, and for such an End.

3. That Actings good upon the Matter, may in some Probability at least appear to others to be done from such Principles, and to such an End, 'tis not enough to have the Man's own Word and Assertion for it; but there must be a good Time of them, and that under some Variety of Cases and Conditions and some Temptations, or Trials. For to act right for a Start, or to act right even for a good Time, a Man coming under no Alteration of Condition, or being under small or no Temptation, does not give much Appearance to Men without, that these Actings are right in their Principles and Ends. It is Evenness and Constancy in Alterations of Cases, and under Temptations assaulting, to turn off the Way, that carrieth Appearance of Discovery of this.

4. Consider, that the greatest Part even of Converts are not eminent Saints, but Weaklings, and but as Children, and that unregenerate Civilians

lians and Hypocrites may in Outwards go far beyond many sound gracious Christians. Let these Things be well weighed, and tell me, if there can be a general Rule whereby there may and should be a judicial Trial and positive Judgment passed upon all and every Professor concerning their Regeneration or Non-Regeneration? This is no novel Opinion, for as it is agreeable to the Word of God; so it is the Judgment of very learned and judicious Divines of the Protestant Communion, I might mention them by Scores; but it may suffice to produce two Worthies whose Judgment in this Point is not to be slighted. One is the famous Mr. *Baxter* in his Book against *Tombs*. † “ The Rule of their Judgment (saith he) is that a serious Professor of the Faith, is to be taken by us for a true Believer; he meaneth, as a little before he explains himself, probably; viz. That the Judgment to be passed upon a Man that he may be received into the visible Church, is not *purum*, that he is a true Believer, but *Modale*, that it is probable that he is a true Believer. The other is the learned & judicious Mr. *Norton* who when he hath laid down the Rules and Grounds whereby Judgment is to be passed upon Persons about their spiritual State (see his Answer to *Apollonius*) there he saith, we must not judge positively, but negatively and practically, that is, saith he, not judge Evil of them, but to carry ourselves towards them in common Duties as if they were good, where it is clear, that as to the Act of Judgment,

ment, he requireth no more, but that we judge not Men Unregenerate, viz: That in admitting of Persons unto the Fellowship of the visible Church, we are to look at, and take for sufficient Qualifications such or such outward Professions, prescindig & abstracting (*simplici abstractione*) from the inward spiritual Estate of the Man; for when I do not positively judge a Man regenerate or really gracious, but only judges him not unregenerate and graceless, certainly I abstract from both. Thus have we briefly examined a few of the Darling Facts, Tenets, Scripture-Grounds, and Arguments of our *New-Light-Managers*, and their Followers, which may give my Reader a Specimen of their profound Skill in Matters of this Nature and Importance. I will dismiss them at present with that Saying of the learned *Erasmus* in another Case, (*male res agitur ubi opus est tot remediis*) it is certainly a Sign of an untrue Opinion, when it must be bolstered up with so many Shifts. I pass to the

4. and last Branch of the Use of *Examination*. Namely, in the Spirit of Meekness, expostulate with our Brethren, concerning their rash, and rough* Treatment of all those who do not presently take up in the Gross, with whatsoever they are pleased to project and propose as Points to be believed, and Matters to be practiced. It is too common and open to be denied, that those who are so exceeding zealous in promoting the abounding *Enthusiasm* of these Times, are very

* *Agitatus inhorruitaer*, the Weather became rough.

free in charging their Neighbours, who are not of a Piece with them, with the Guilt, at least being in Danger of the Guilt of the *greatest Sin* : Pray consider that we *do not* oppose the *good Work* of the Holy Ghost ; but the *Faction*, and *Contention*, *Bitterness* and *Censoriousness*, the *Pride*, and *Ostentation*, the *Confusions* and *Disorders*, as also those many *Corruptions* in *Doctrines* and *Manners* that are carried on under Colour of a *Work* of the good Spirit of God : Far be it from us to despise or discourage any that are truly Godly so far as Men can judge, such are very dear and precious in our Estimation, and we bless the Lord, for the Riches and Power of his Grace bestowed upon them. And we acknowledge that as it is the Duty of every Professor in the visible Church in the Sight of, that they be not only so far as Men can judge, but in Truth and indeed truly gracious, having true saving Faith, Repentance and Sanctification ; so that it is the Duty of Ministers, and of every private Christian according to their Station and Capacity, to endeavour by all Means instituted by God, that it may be so. But the Thing that we oppose is your *rigid Opinions*, and *irregular Conduct* in traducing and excommunicating, as much as you can, all those Ministers and People who are not of your *peculiar Way of thinking* in Matters of Faith and Practice, and to be cast out, or abandoned as Heathen. This we oppose because it hath no Warrant in the Word, is contrary to the Word, is obstructive to the Salvation of Souls, tendeth to the Ruin of the Christian Church and Religion. To oppose these Evils, is much different

different from opposing a *Work of the Spirit of God*. And must the Ministers and People of God, for this, *perish, be cursed, destroyed*, and the *highest Threatnings and Curses* in the Book of God come upon them? This is *too much* the unwarrantable, and unfavory Dialect of the *New-Scheme-Party*; and what could the *Accuser of the Brethren* said more boldly and more bitterly? We have not learned Christ so, as to repay Evil with Evil; Bitterness with Bitterness; you have cursed us, we bless you, we wish you heartily a Blessing, Repentance and Forgiveness of these evil Thoughts of your Hearts, and the uncharitable Issue of it. And herein we know we copy after the Example of Christ our Lord and Master, who *being reviled reviled not again*. And his faithful Servants, of whom I shall only mention two: One the sweet-spirited CALVIN, who said, *Let Luther call me Dog or Devil, I will say of him nevertheless he is a precious Servant of Christ Jesus*. The other the Martyr CRANMER of whom it was a Proverb (*Do the Bishop of Canterbury, a Displeasure, and you shall ever have him your Friend*) and much to be admired are the parting Words of that holy Man: *I never had any greater Pleasure in all my Life, than to forget and forgive Injuries, and to shew Kindness to them that sought Evil to me*. And to conclude this Examination and Trial, I shall use almost the Words, and join sincerely in the ardent Wishes and pious Breathings of one of the faithful Sons of the Prophets. Let us look to our exalted triumphing Lord; who will reign 'till all his Enemies are made his Footstool, and whose Truth will finally triumph,

and

and render eternally victorious all serious Asserters thereof. The Power is his, the Glory and the Victory. Let us together with pleading with our Mother, cry unto him the glorious Head and Husband, intreating that he arise and plead his own Cause, and hasten in its Time, his final Victory over the detestible Antichristian Synagogue; and when the Vial is poured out, which will light upon the Seat of the Beast, and the Papacy itself is extinct, the litigious Contendings for its Legacies and Love Tokens will fall of Course, and be at an End. We know it is now near (O very near) the dawning and breaking up of the eternal Day. And the Accomplishment of the Church's Warfare, blessed therefore is that Servant, who shall be found vigilant and sedulous in the Lord's Work when he comes, delighting in the serious Study of Conformity unto him; rather than in tossing the Dust of Disputes and Debates. *Even so come Lord Jesus.*

3. Third and last Use, namely of *Exhortation*. And,

1. To all Sorts and Sexes, and Ages that they endeavour as much as in them lies to get into a State of saving Grace; and for this End let them seriously consider the Nature and Necessity of it, as they have been described in their proper Places in this Work, and also in many other excellent Treatises of this Kind. And let such as upon good Grounds find themselves in that blessed State, not stop and stay their Progress; but be growing and increasing: There are those at this Day who make Monsters in Grace, as there have been some in Nature: Nothing

thing more common in their Mouths than *getting through*, as they call it, and attaining to a State of sure Peace and Freedom : But we know, that though Grace be sown in an Instant, it grows not up so suddenly. Christ formed in the Heart is like Christ in the Flesh ; first in his Cradle, before he be upon his Legs. The new Creation is not a sudden Leap from Corruption to perfect Purity. The Day dawns in the Heart, but the Light takes a Time to expel the Darknes, Prov. 4. 18. *But the Path of the Just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day.* This Duty of growing is frequently urged in holy Scripture, 1 Theff. 4. 4. *We beseech you Brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Jesus that ye increase more and more.* 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in Grace :* Heb. 6. 1. *Let us go on unto Perfection.* In *Ezekiel* the Graces of God are figured out by the Waters flowing from the Sanctuary, which were at the first to the Ankles, then to the Knees : Next to the Loins, and last as a River which could not be passed over ; so are the Graces which God bestoweth upon his Chosen, though they be but as a small Stream at the first ; yet they do still like a living Spring swell higher and higher 'till they come to that Measure which the Lord hath allotted to every Christian. The Children of God must be as a Man running in a Race, who is ever in Motion, and never thinks upon resting until he come to the Goal, and have got the Reward. So the Apostle exhorts the believing *Hebrews*, Heb. 12. 1. *And let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us.*

2. Let us pray and labour for the Preservation and Success of the Gospel in its native Purity. Let us not flight the Word, *or be ashamed of it, for it is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth*, Rom. 1. 16. Some are got to a woful Pass at this Day, who boldly and openly assert, *that the Bible is now needless*, † they can do well eno' without it, & can sufficiently instruct and direct others by the Spirit which now influences them. Oh let us (while others despise it) bless God, that ever we had the Word of Truth made known unto us. How many Millions sit in a spiritual Darkness, without so much as the Means of a new Begetting ! Millions never heard the Sound of it, nor ever will ; much more that it hath been successful to any of us. Why hath the Word grappled with any of our Souls, and not with others ? Arrested any of you in a Course of Sin, and left others to walk in their own Ways, to run down silently like the Streams of a River, 'till swallowed up in an Ocean of Death. How then should the Law of God's Mouth be better to us, than Thousands of Gold and Silver ; *Psal. 119. 72.* Let us sit down at the Feet of God and receive of his Words, *Deut. 33. 3.* Beware of expecting Salvation in any other Way ; never did God appoint any other Way but this. Miracles were never appointed but as Attendants upon this. Miracles come after Teachings in the great Gift to the Church. *1 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9, 10.* First, the Manifestation of the Spirit, the Word of Wisdom,

 † Some *New-Light-Men*.

and

and the Word of Knowledge, then Gifts of Healing and Miracles. Miracles are ceased, as being not absolutely necessary; but the Ministry of the Word will last to the End of the World. By the Prophets God brings Souls out of Bondage, and by the Prophets he preserves them in a State of Grace, *Hosea* 12. 13. By a Prophet the Lord brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and by a Prophet was he preserved. Again, God never made any Promise but in this Way. God promised to *circumcise their Hearts, to love him with all their Soul*. But in the Way of hearing his Voice, *and observing his Statutes*, *Deut.* 30. 6, 10, 11. He meets Souls only that remember him in his Way, *Isa.* 64. 5. And to the Preaching of the Gospel only our Saviour promised his Presence to the End of the World, *Mat.* 28. 20. The Promise is perpetually and immoveably throughout all Ages of the World fixed to this Command. Again, no other Way did God apparently work by formerly in the Time when God did especially manifest himself to his People by *Visions, Dreams, and Apparitions* of Angels, and in those Ways made Revelations to them, he converted not any either from a State of Nature, or from a particular Fall, but by the Word. *Manasses* Conversion was by the Word of the Seers, *2 Chron.* 33. 18. Nor was *David* reclaimed after his Fall by an immediate Vision, but by the Ministry of *Nathan*. *Peter* by a look, which revived the Word spoken to him, *Luke* 22. 61. The Angel that attended the Eunuch, *Acts* 8. 26. made no Impressions upon him, but was ordered to direct *Philip* thither to explain to him the Mystery

stery of the Gospel; and the Spirit particularly orders him to go near the Chariot, V. 29. but makes no Impressions upon him, but by the Ministry of the Word. An Angel is sent to direct *Philip*, but *Philip* is sent to discover Christ. Again, an Angel is sent to *Cornelius*, not to preach the Gospel, but to direct him where to send for a Teacher, *Acts* 10. 3, 5, 6. God prepares the *Jaylor* by an Earthquake, but renews him not but by the Ministry of *Paul*, *Acts* 16. 26, 32. In the Times of the Gospel there was first to be a teaching of God's Ways, before a walking in his Paths, *Isa.* 3. 3. The Gospel is compared to a Net, and Christ first brings Souls to the Net, and by the Net to himself. Wisdom's Gates are the Places where to expect her Alms, *Prov.* 8. 34. Wait therefore upon the Word, wherein the Spirit of God travels with Souls.

3. Beware that you do not rashly embrace false Doctrines, and be careful lest Innovations and Inventions of Men be introduced into the Worship of God. His own Word is to be the unalterable Rule of our Devotion to God, & not the Inventions and Traditions of Men. *Moses* though a peculiar Favourite of God, would not introduce any Thing into his Service, but by his own Voice and Authority, *Exod.* 24. 3, 4, 7. So did *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, as he received from God, *1 Chron.* 28. 12, 13, 19. Whatsoever is offered to God by the Contrivance and Inventions of Men, is looked upon by him as *strange Fire upon his Altar*, and that which hath brought Vengeance upon the Offerers. An awful Instance of it is that of *Nadab* and

Abihu, the Sons of Aaron, who offered strange Fire which he commanded them not, and there went out Fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord, Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3. Prophaning the Institutions of God by their own Inventions and Idolatries are assigned as the chief and principal Sins for which God brought Destruction upon the Jewish Nation, and the Temple at Jerusalem. The *Caldeans* ruined them, but they were the Rod of God's Anger, *Ezek. 43. 7, 8.* God is always jealous and severe against Sins and Transgressions of the second Commandment: 'Tis therefore *Paul's* Exhortation, *1 Cor. 10. 14.* *Wherefore my dear beloved flee from Idolatry.* If once you begin in a Way of Superstition, you'll never know where to stop or stay, nor where to make an End; but you'll multiply your Idols, and increase your Altars, and grow worse and worse. *For evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse & worse,* *2 Tim. 3. 13.* It is the Nature of all Sin, but of this in an especial Manner, as it is in bodily Uncleanness, when Men are given up to that Lust they are insatiable, and work all Uncleanness with Greediness, so it is with the Sin of spiritual Whoredom, it is an endless Sin. Of this I could give you many Instances, *Jeroboan,* made *Israel* to sin by setting up the Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*: But *Omri* went beyond him, for it is said, *He did worse than all that went before him,* *1 Kin. 16. 25.* But his Son *Ahab* was worse than he, for he did set up all the Worship of *Baal,* *1 Kin. 16. 30, 31, 32, 33.* Hence the faithful Servants of God have been exceeding wary and watchful against the least Appearances and Beginnings of Idolatries.

Idolaries. This is evident by two Instances, two Worthies in the Church of God. One of the Ancients (viz. BASIL) when the Heathen Idolaters had put Incense into his Hand, and offered to spare his Life, if he would but throw it in, or let it fall into the Censer, he chose rather to burn his Hand and lose his Life than to commit that seeming little Sin. The other is the Rev. and renowned CRANMER, being bro't to the Stake, in Queen Mary's Day, burnt first his Hand, offering it freely to the Flames, because therewith he had sign'd a Paper which carried in it some Compliance with popish Superstition. Wherefore it is not impertinent, but well to the Purpose to add the Apostle's Advice here, Eph. 4. 14. *That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Slight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

4. Suffer me, I beseech you, who am the weakest, and most unworthy in the sacred Order of the Ministry, to intreat both Ministers and People of the *New-Scheme* to desist from invading the Provinces and respective Districts of their Fellow-Labourers and Brethren: And thereby disturbing the Peace, and spoiling the good Order of these Churches, upon Pretence of little Differences between you and them, and so exclude yourselves their Communion. Such a Practice as this is was early condemned in the Christian Church, 3 *John* 10. And the Apostle *Paul* seemeth to reflect on the false Teachers that crept into the Church of *Corinth*, who had nothing to boast in but a pretended Building upon *other Men's Foundations*

dations, and carrying on a Work made ready to their Hands, 2 Cor. 10. 16. Remember that ordinary Ministers are fixed in particular Churches and Places, among whom they are to exercise their Gifts, unless there be a special Occasion in Providence for their Remove; so saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 24. *Brethren, let every Man wherein he is called, therein abide with God.* A venerable Man of God, † a precious Gift of our ascended Lord, to these Churches, was not without his Fear, that *wandering Stars, blazing Stars, seducing Spirits,* would at last be the Judgment of God upon *New-England,* and these Churches: Which seem now to be begun. For faithful Ministers and Ordinances are much interrupted; and indeed laid aside in some Places: And it is evident from Scripture, that when the Glory of God's Ordinances is obscured amongst a People, it is a Forerunner of Judgments to come upon them. *The Glory of God went up from the Cherub.* What then? *I will take away the Hedge of my Vineyard, and it shall be eaten up, and break down the Wall thereof; and it shall be trodden down.* Isa. 5. 5. The Ordinances of God are understood by some Interpreters to be the Hedge and Wall of a People; when God takes away the Hedge, the Breach is made wide for every wild Beast to enter, and tread it down. There are two or three Things, it would be well, if the *Exhorters* and their Followers could be perswaded to refrain, viz, (1)

† Dr. INCREASE MATHER'S *Heaven's Alarm* to the World, P. 35.

To

To keep each of them in their proper Business. *Nē sutor ultra crepidam*, that is, blind Folks should not judge of Colours. (2) That they no longer traduce the sacred Scriptures, that is, laying aside some Parts of them as useles, and esteeming o-ther only necessary as they agree with their peculiar Sentiments. (3) Using humane Composures in the publick Worship of God, in Room of sacred Scriptures; I mean their using Hymns, so as almost to have superseded the Psalms of *David* and other spiritual Songs. This is a manifest Violation, and Reproach of the Wisdom and Law of God. For he appointed Parts of Scripture only to be sung in his Worship: See *Col. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 19, &c.* Perhaps they think themselves warranted by the several Appellations of the same Thing there mentioned: it is true that the School-men of the Romish Communion have understood them in such a Sense: But our Protestant Expositors have generally made this Distinction only, viz, That Psalms were such as were anciently sung with musical Instruments, Hymns, such as contained only Matter of Praise, spiritual Songs such as were of various Matters doctrinal, prophetical historical, but all the three were to be Scripture, as I could easily shew from the Nature and Matter of sundry Psalms, and other divinely inspired Songs. And I am far from thinking that the good Gentleman, † whose Hymns are mostly used by our giddy Zealots,

† Dr. WATTS.

ever intended that any Composure of his should supersede the Psalms of *David*, or any other of the divinely inspired Poems in the publick Worship of God. And the Opinion of many good Divines in this Land in this Matter, is convincingly declared in the Preface to the new English Version of the Psalms of *David*, &c. Singing of Hymns composed by Men uninspired by God in his Worship, was no Part of your Forefather's Religion. Where is the Man to whom they handed it as a Part thereof? No, this smells a little of that industrious Source of all religious Forgeries viz. the Church of *Rome*, which hath impudently introduced into the Worship of God their *Te Deums*, *Anthems*, & *Ave Marias*, &c. These *Cockatrices*† and their Followers, do not consider what they do, and the Guilt they bring upon themselves; the Charge the Spirit of God brings against such is of that high Nature as is recorded, *Ezek. 44. 5, to 9.*

5. Lastly, Suffer me, my dear Brethren, (and particularly those of you who have been most exposed to the Sufferings and Calamities of these Times) to put you in Mind of the Apostle *Paul's* Advice, *2 Cor. 4. 6. &c. Let us approve ourselves as the Ministers of God, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Stripes, in Prisons, in Tumults, in Labours, by Watchings, by Fastings, by Purity, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kind-*

† Mr. GILBERT TENNENT gave them the Name.

ness, by the Holy Ghost, by Love unfeigned ; by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the Armour of Righteousness on the right Hand and on the left, by Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report, and good Report. In all this Travail and Painfulness, let this rejoice our Souls, we serve a Master that will see us well rewarded. We have a sure Promise for it, Rev. 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto Death and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*

Sit Laus et Gloria Christo.

F I N I S.

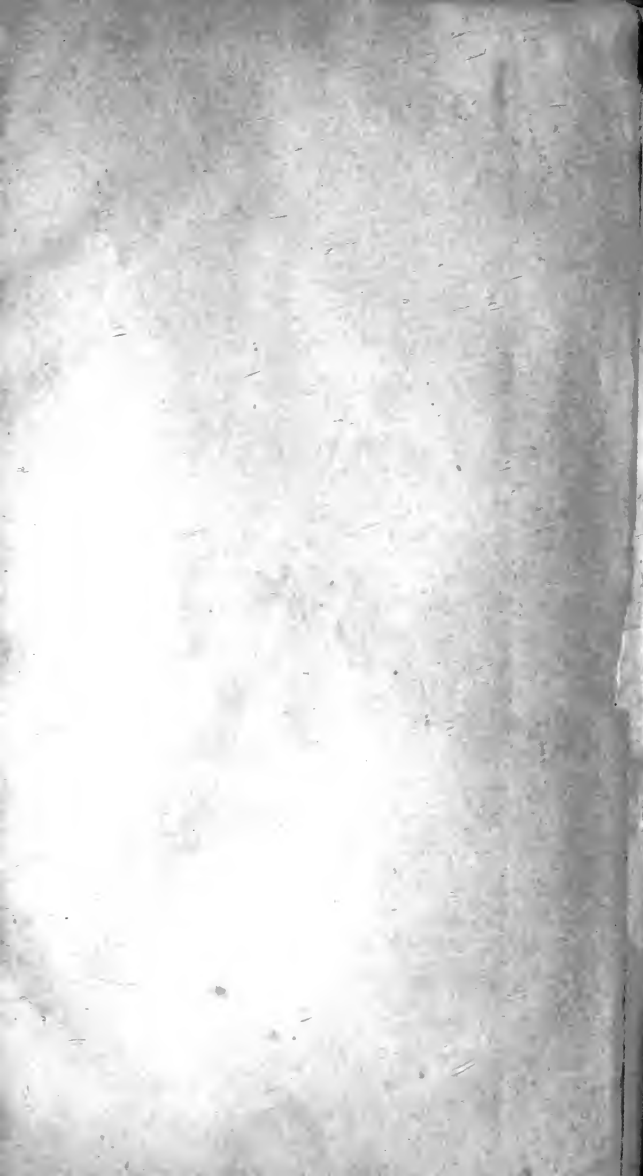


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