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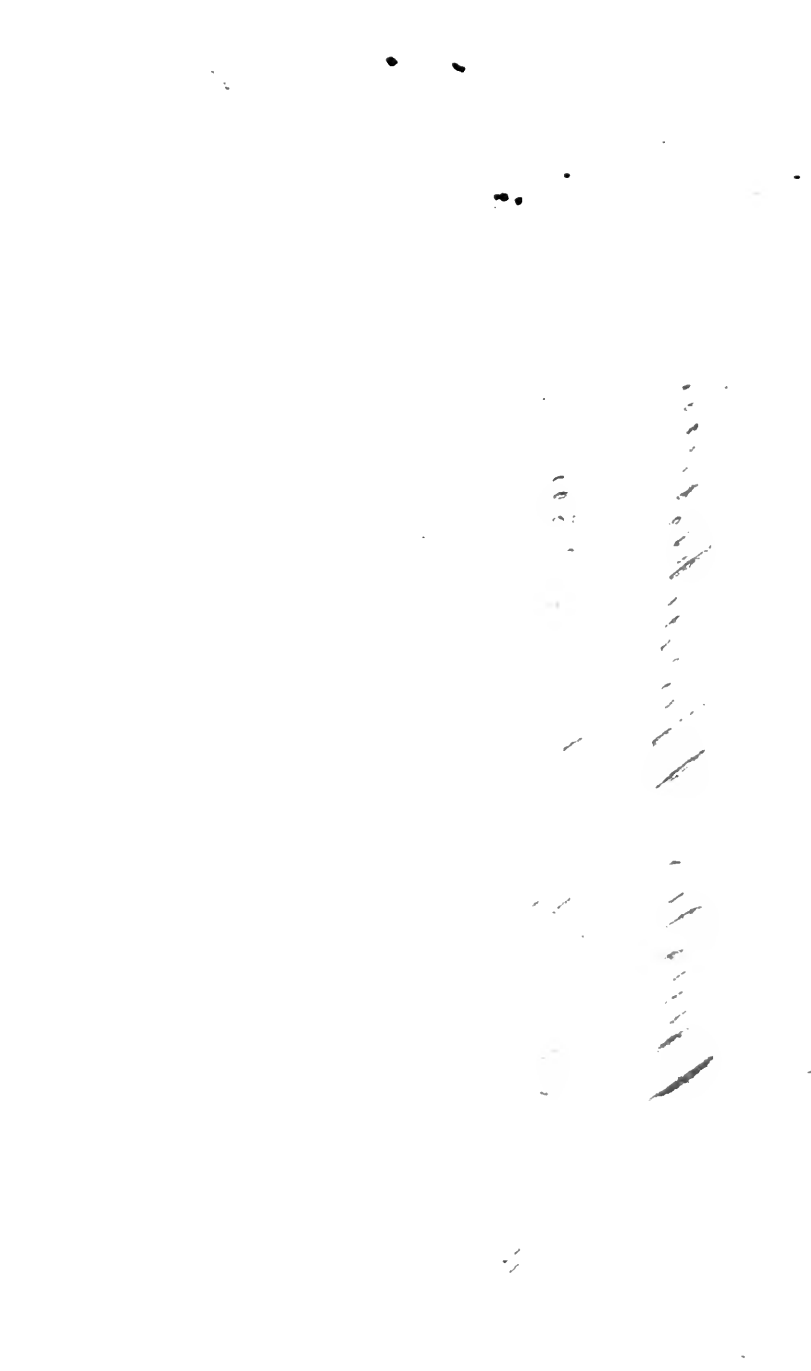
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*No Breckum*

SERMONS

AGAINST

POPEERY,

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

In the YEAR 1735.

---

By Several MINISTERS.

---

In TWO VOLUMES.

---

V O L. I.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN NOON, THOMAS COX, RICHARD  
FORD, RICHARD HETT, and JOHN GRAY.

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M DCC XXXV.

*Lately published,*  
*Price 2d, or Eighteen per Dozen,*  
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**A** PROTESTANT'S RESOLUTION: Shewing his Reasons why he will not be a Papist. Digested into so plain a Method of Question and Answer, that an ordinary Capacity may be able to defend the Protestant Religion against the most cunning Jesuit, or Popish Priest.

Printed for *Richard Hett*, at the *Bible and Crown* in the *Poultry*.

# POPERY

THE

Great CORRUPTION

OF

CHRISTIANITY.

A

# SERMON

PREACHED AT

*Salter's-Hall, Jan. 9, 1734-5.*

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By JOHN BARKER.

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*The* SECOND EDITION.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for RICHARD HETT, at the *Bible* and  
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[Price Four-Pence.]







2 C O R. xi. 3.

*But I fear, lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve, thro' his subtilty; so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*



URSUANT to the Notice which has been publickly given in the several Congregations of Protestant Dissenters in and about this City, I appear here to-day; not so much to begin the Course of Sermons intended to be preach'd in this Place every *Thursday* Morning, against Popery, for some Time to come, as to introduce this Design, and to let you know what you are to expect on this Occasion, and what has induced so many of us to engage in this Business at this particular Juncture. Now I may venture to tell you in the general, and at present, That you may expect to hear, so far as these Sermons go, the Protestant Religion defended, and the Popish Religion fairly charg'd, fully heard, and solemnly condemn'd, as the grand Apostacy of the Christian Church, a gross Corruption of Gospel Simplicity, and a wicked Design to raise the Authority of Men upon the Ruins of the Authority of Christ, and to increase their Wealth, Power, and

Grandeur in the World, at the Expence of all Civil and Religious Liberty. So odious and dangerous a Thing is Popery; and therefore Papists must excuse us, who are thoroughly persuaded of this sad Truth, if we expose and treat it accordingly.

Yet this I will venture to say, and I would chuse to say it here, That we bear no ill Will to the Persons of Papists, and how ill soever we think of their Religion, we pity them who profess it, as deluded People, and are grieved for *the Blindness that has happen'd to them, and for the Hardness of their Hearts*: They very well know, that much has been said and written by Protestants for their Conviction, and to take off the Veil from their Faces, and we charitably believe concerning many of them, that could they get rid of the Prejudices of Education; could they come at more and better Light; might they search the Scriptures, and were not their Inquiries prevented by the terrifying Apprehensions of Censure and Punishment, and were they not intoxicated with the Arts and Sophistry of crafty and designing Men, they would forsake this idolatrous and impure Communion, and readily embrace the Protestant Reformation.

Whether any Papists will attend this Lecture or no, I know not; many there are, it seems, both Priests and Profelytes, in and near this City; should the one Sort see fit, and the other be permitted to attend this Service, I verily believe they would hear enough to convince  
any

any candid and unprejudiced Christian alive, that Popery is not the surest Way to Salvation, and that the Protestant Religion, which they so injuriously call *a damnable Heresy*, and so freely and frequently curse, is the very *Truth as it is in Jesus*, and that *Faith which was once deliver'd unto the Saints*. In this Faith we mean to confirm our own People ; it is the Design of this Lecture to arm and guard Protestants against the Errors and Dangers of Popery; what therefore naturally arises from the Subjects in debate will be said freely, tho', I hope, Care will be taken not to transgress the Rules of Decency ; and should Curiosity, or any other Motive, induce either Popish Priests or People to be present here, I dare say, they will have no just Cause to complain, that they are not treated in this Controversy either as Gentlemen or as Christians. Some of us have heard it has been objected, that any Opportunity of Conversation upon the Matters in dispute between us and the Church of *Rome* has been refus'd, when desir'd ; but I believe there is no sufficient Ground for such a Pretence. We firmly believe we have great Advantage in this Controversy in point of Argument, and this will be prov'd and maintain'd freely and fully, whether our Adversaries care to hear it or no. For if the Bishop of *Rome* will confidently assume what neither he nor any Man in the World has a Right to ; if Popish Councils and Prelates will decree and impose Falshood, Absurdity, Contradiction, and I know not what

Stuff

Stuff and Trumpery, and this upon pain of Damnation, and when they have it in their Power, inforce their Authority with all the Cruelties of Persecution, inhuman Torture, and Effusion of Blood, they must expect and bear to be told on't, and till they repent and renounce their Errors and Wickedness, they must stand charg'd with them, and with all the Infamy and Reproach these things deserve. I suppose they'll complain; but if they do, they are to be told, the Fault and Blame is theirs; and this will be shewn and proved to you from Authors and Records which Papists themselves allow to be approved and genuine.

But before I proceed any further in the Account I am to give you of this Lecture, I will a little consider the Text just now read: The Connection and Import of which you may take thus.

The Apostle *Paul* having understood that several great Disorders were crept into the Church of *Corinth*, and that the *Corinthians* had gotten a new Leader, or Leaders, amongst them, who opposed him, and raised a Faction among them, very much to their own Dishonour and his Prejudice, writes them two Letters; in the first of which he tries what Interest and Power he had in this Church, and attempts to break the Faction stirr'd up against him amongst the *Corinthians*, and to rectify their Disorders. Having succeeded in this Attempt, and found by *Titus* that they repented,

repented, submitted to his Orders, and were by his first Letter brought into a good Disposition of Mind towards him, he writes them this second Letter, in which he more freely justifies himself, and deals more roundly and sharply with his Opposers: This Design runs thro' the first seven Chapters of this Epistle, and being interrupted by an Exhortation to a liberal Contribution towards the Necessities of their poor Brethren at *Jerusalem*, is afterwards resum'd, Chapter the 10th, and continued in this: *Would to God* (says he) Ver. 1. *you could bear with me a little in my folly.* So he modestly calls his own Self-Defence, which if it had a shew of Vanity they had made it necessary. *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy.* I fear lest the vilifying Speeches of my Adversaries should pervert and mislead you. *For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ.* I have form'd you for Christ, and brought you to him, and am in care that you may not be drawn aside from that Subjection and Obedience you owe to him. *But I fear lest by any means,* i. e. some means or other, *as the Serpent beguiled Eve thro' his subtilty,* i. e. the Devil by the Serpent, under the Pretence of Kindness, and other Arts, *So your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* g. d. I fear lest your Hearts divide and rove, I am afraid of your being unchast and corrupted. Christianity is plain and simple, and no impure Mixtures are to be made or allowed with

it; no Jewish Observances, no human Inventions, no old or new Traditions; to this singly, without Addition or Alteration, should Christians stick and adhere, keeping to the Truth as it is in Jesus, and preserving the *Simplicity* of the Gospel, not mingling it with any thing that is false and foreign to it, not concealing any part of it, or mixing any Falshood with it, or wresting and perverting the true Sense and Meaning of it to serve our own Ends, the Lusts of others, or any worldly Purposes whatsoever.

Thus the Apostle shews his own fair Practice, and the false and fraudulent Behaviour of his Adversaries as to this in the 4th Chapter of this Epistle, 2d Verse, *We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending our selves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

From the Text thus explain'd, I should be led to observe,

I. The Apostle's Account of the Gospel, or Christian Revelation, it is *the Simplicity that is in Christ.*

II. The Concern he expresses lest those who are in possession of the Gospel should be *corrupted from the Simplicity of it.* This he intimates by *godly Jealousy* and *holy Fear.*

Now this as it gives one a pleasing and grateful View of the Gospel, and engages ones  
Heart

Heart to receive it on account of its Plainness and Perspicuity, its Simplicity and Purity; so it shews us the great Duty and Business especially of Christian Ministers, and that is, to preserve the Simplicity of the Gospel themselves, and to warn and fortify all under their Care against every sinful and dangerous Corruption. I am strangely mistaken if Popery be not a gross Corruption of Christianity, and a most scandalous Departure from the Simplicity that is in Christ: In opposing therefore the Growth of this, carefully watching all its Motions, taking the Alarm ourselves and giving a faithful Warning to others when we see any of its Emissaries taking pains to propagate this Religion, especially if they do it, or are likely to do it with any Success; is, no doubt, acting in Character as Christian Ministers, and doing the Duty of *Watchmen, Overseers, Shepherds, and Stewards* who are intrusted with the rich and invaluable Treasure of the Gospel, and of whom it is required that they be found faithful to God and Christ, to their own Souls and the Souls of others.

Permit me to give you only a short and general View of Popery under the following Heads, and then leave you to conclude, Whether it be not a Corruption of the Simplicity that is in Christ.

1. Many Doctrines of Popery are false and absurd.

2. Popish Worship is idolatrous.
3. Many Practices it recommends are impious and wicked.
4. The Spirit of Popery is tyrannical, domineering and cruel.

1. Many Doctrines of Popery are false and absurd. There are, I acknowledge, some common Christian Principles in which Protestants and Papists both agree; such as the Being and Perfections of God, the Truth and Inspiration of the Scriptures, the Doctrine of the Trinity, and that of the Death, Sufferings, and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ the Son of God, our only Lord and Saviour; but then Popery corrupts so as well nigh to destroy some of these, and adds many others which are both false, absurd, and dangerous. *For instance*, Papists own the Bible to be the Word of God, and they allow that *all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God*; but then they make the Scripture to depend upon their Church both for the Authority, Truth, and Sense of it. Take away, says the Jesuit, (whom the celebrated Mr. *Chillingworth* so effectually answered) the Authority of the Church, and no Man can be assured that any one Book or Parcel of Scripture was written by divine Inspiration.<sup>a</sup> And then they make themselves the only Interpreters of Scripture.

<sup>a</sup> *Knot* or *Wilson* the Jesuit, in his *Mercy and Truth*; which Mr. *Chillingworth* answered in his celebrated Piece, entitled, *The Religion of Protestants*.



The Council of *Trent* is a little upon the Reserve as to the former Point; but as to this, it declares roundly, that it belongs to the Church to judge of the true Sense and Meaning of Scripture.<sup>b</sup> So that we are never the better for our Bible, till they have put a Sense upon it for us. And as to the Doctrine of Christ's Sufferings and Satisfaction for Sin, it is so corrupted with their impure Mixtures of Merit, Indulgence, and Absolution, as greatly to dishonour the Merits, and eclipse the Glory of the blessed Redeemer. And besides the pure Doctrines of Christianity which they corrupt, what a spurious Offspring do they add ---- such as those of Tradition, the Seven Sacraments, which are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony ----- All these the Council of *Trent* declare to be Sacraments; and if any one says they are not so, that they are superfluous, or do not confer Grace, let him (say these Doctors) be accursed.<sup>c</sup> Add to these ---- The Doctrine of Transubstantiation, Communion in one kind, Veneration of Saints and Images, Prayer in an unknown Tongue, auricular Confession, Purgatory; but above all, those of the Supremacy of *St. Peter*, and the Infallibility and Authority of the Church; and you will soon conclude what a Corruption

<sup>b</sup> Ecclesiæ est judicare de vero sensu & interpretatione scripturarum sacrarum. Sess. 4<sup>ta</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> Co. Tr. Sess. 7. Can. 6, 8.

there is in Popery of the Simplicity of the Christian Doctrine.

2. The Worship of the Church of *Rome* is idolatrous. The Scriptures teach us that God is the only proper Object of Worship: *God is a spirit, and to be worshipped in spirit and truth. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* And they teach us, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Saviour of Men, and our only Mediator and Advocate with the Father: *There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* This is the pure and simple, the plain and unmixed Doctrine of the Gospel: But Papists misapply their Worship, and give that Honour to Creatures which is due to God alone. They have a great Catalogue of Saints, whom they admit into that Order by a solemn Canonization, and then account them Objects of Worship and Intercessors in Heaven for the Church on Earth. The Council of *Trent* determines, that it is good and profitable to invoke the Saints, and declares, that whoever says this is Idolatry, or contrary to the Word of God, or the Honour of Christ, they do *impiè sentire*, their Sentiments herein are impious and wicked.<sup>d</sup> This is their Doctrine, and they practise accordingly. They have stated Offices and Forms of Prayer, according to which they worship their Saints. Sometimes they pray to particular Saints, sometimes by this and the other Saint,

<sup>d</sup> Sess. 25. Decret. de Invoc. Sanct.

sometimes they join God and the Saint, sometimes not ; but I will only mention one general Form ; it is this : “ O all ye Saints and  
 “ Elect of God, I beseech you by the Love  
 “ wherewith he hath loved you----help me  
 “ most miserable Sinner before Death shall  
 “ snatch me hence, and reconcile me to my  
 “ Creator, before Hell shall devour me.”<sup>e</sup> Is this acceptable to God ? Is this honourable to Christ ? Is not this Idolatry ?

3. Popery recommends many impious and wicked Practices. The Simplicity of the Gospel, as to Practise, lies very clear and plain before us. The Scriptures teach us the Duty God requires of Men, and they strictly and solemnly require of us Purity of Heart, and Holiness of Life ; Repentance towards God, Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and unfeigned, impartial, uniform, and persevering Obedience. The two grand things in Religion are Knowledge and Practice. Christianity is a vital, practical thing. We are nothing and do nothing, if we do not aim and labour after *all holy conversation and godliness*. *The grace of God, i. e. the Gospel or Doctrine of Grace, hath appeared unto us, bringing salvation, and teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world.* Well, this is true, you'll say, and to be taken on all hands for granted ; but how does this affect Popery ? Are there not

<sup>e</sup> Hor. B. Virg. Sec. uf. Sar. p. 71.

holy and good Men of both Communions? And are there not bad of both? Ungodly, dishonest, intemperate Protestants as well as Papists? Is there much to chuse in this point? Will you put us upon counting Numbers on both sides? Can you say the generality of Protestants are virtuous and good? Have Protestant Countries that *righteousness* amongst them *which exalteth a nation*, and are they in a remarkable and distinguishing manner clearer than Popish ones, from those *sins that are a shame to any people*? Or is the personal Character of a Protestant always or generally better than that of a Papist? Now here, I confess, I very much wish I could make a better Apology for Protestants than I am able. I wish I could more unanswerably appeal to Facts and Numbers on this Question. Would to God the People of our Communion would lay this Matter to heart, and that there were fewer ungodly, dishonest, intemperate and perfidious Protestants in every Place, and every Day than other! ---- But when I have admitted this Charge, I must take leave to add, that there are some sad Truths to be told of Popery even here, which can't be either denied or excused. Protestants, however they practise, are taught to keep the Commandments of God, and if they break any of them, it is no fault of their Religion: But Papists break the Commandments of God, and teach Men to do so, and their doing so is the fault of their

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Religion. Popery is itself subversive of practical Religion, and really teaches those things and allows those Liberties which naturally tend to and issue in all kinds of Sensuality, Worldliness, and Wickedness. Papists own one for Head of the Church, who can (they say) when he pleases, dispense with several Commands of Christ. *Bellarmino* says it may be affirmed in a good Sense, that Christ has given *Peter* Power, to make that to be Sin which is no Sin, and that which is no Sin, to be Sin.<sup>f</sup> The C. of *Trent* affirms--That the Church can dispense with some things forbidden about Marriage in the *Levitical* Law; and if any question this, or say the contrary, they are accursed;<sup>g</sup> and they have accordingly taken upon them to reverse many lawful Marriages, and make incestuous ones lawful: The Pope and the Church can (they say) absolve Men from the most solemn Vows, Oaths, and Contracts, and can dispense above and against Law, for this choice Reason----That the Pope's Tribunal and God's are but one.<sup>h</sup> The Papists likewise teach the bad Doctrine of Venial Sins, *i. e.* the Person who so sins is not so far guilty as that God can in justice punish him; he does not deserve one Stripe in Hell for Thousands and Millions of these Transgressions. Nay they go farther still; they grant Licenses to commit any sort of Sins.

<sup>f</sup> De Excusatione Barclaii, cap. 31.

<sup>g</sup> Sess. 24. Can. 3.

<sup>h</sup> Taylor's Polem. Disco. 342.

*Rivet*<sup>i</sup> tells us he saw a Book at *Paris*, printed in the Year 1500 *cum privilegio*, where are taxed at a certain Rate all Absolutions in the Church of *Rome* for all sorts of Sins; and *Dr. Taylor* says that Pope *Innocent* the Eighth was either the Author or Enlarger of it. And to what do the Doctrines of Intention, Attrition, transferring of Merit, Absolution, and Purgatory tend, but to licentious Wickedness. I will conclude this Head with referring you to a Book, entitled, *The Practical Divinity of Papists proved destructive to Christianity and Men's Souls*, written by the Venerable Mr. *David Clarkson*, some time Tutor to Archbishop *Tillotson*, and I have heard, at his particular Desire; there you will see in a Variety of Instances, and by unquestionable Evidence, that Popery does most shamefully strip God's Commands of all their Authority, and disarm his Threatnings of all their Terror. I am to add lastly,

4. The Spirit of Popery is tyrannical, domineering, and cruel; Papists not only make void the Law of God by their Traditions, and break the Commandments of Christ, and teach Men to do so, but they impose their Errors and Conceits, and bind them on Men's Consciences, and require an implicit Faith and blind Obedience. You must say you believe whether you do or no, and must under-

<sup>i</sup> *Rivet's* Castigation of the Jesuit --- It is called, *Taxa Camerae Apostolicæ*.

stand with their Understanding, and contrary to your own, or else — What? — Not that which any reasonable Man would think, and has a Right to expect; not Argument, Reason, Scripture, and the Representation of Truth in a fair and convincing Light; but opprobrious Names, solemn Curses, a Sentence of Excommunication, and then cruel Usage, corporal Punishment, and every wholesome Severity, *i. e.* all Kinds of Persecution in their turns, and every Degree of it, against Reason and without Shame: Such as Imprisonment, Confiscation of Goods, Torture, Banishment, and at last Death by Sword or Fire, or in any inhuman or terrifying way whatever. Witness the History of several Ages and Nations, witness your Books of Martyrs, witness the Tragedies acted in *France* and *Ireland*, witness the Inquisition still subsisting, witness what your Fathers told you in their Day; and to confute the false Pretence imposed on weak Minds, that Papists are altered, and that Popery is now become mild and gentle, and Lamb-like, witness the poor Protestants of *Saltzburgh*, who are driven out of their Country at this very time, only for the sake of their Religion, many of whom your own Eyes have seen, your Hearts pitied, and your Hands relieved. While Papists are inveigling and deceiving you they are oppressing

pressing and persecuting your Brethren, and actually doing where they have Power, what, where they have none, they artfully excuse, or confidently deny. But, Sirs, let it sharpen your Spirit ever so much against this cruel and false Religion, it is true, unquestionably true, and beyond all Contradiction, that the very Spirit of Popery is a domineering, tyrannical, persecuting, and antichristian Spirit.

And thus I have given you a short and general View of Popery, and from this Account it appears to be a great Corruption of the Simplicity of the Gospel. But I have only touch'd upon these things, and barely shewn you the Surface of this corrupt Religion; my Brethren who follow me will enter more deeply into this Mystery of Iniquity, and carefully represent, and sufficiently confute and expose it.

But I am warranted from this Text to observe,

2. The Concern the Apostle expresses, lest the *Corinthians* should be *corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*: *I am, (says he) jealous over you, and I fear lest your minds should be corrupted.* Jealousy is a Mixture of Love and Fear; by this the Apostle expresses great Concern for the Good of these Christians, and great Fear and Apprehension of their Danger. He  
 took



took it to be one great part of his Business to give them good Advice and faithful Warning: *He watch'd for their souls as one who was to give an account.* His Jealousy and Fear made him attend with Diligence and Care, and use proper Application and suitable Methods for their Preservation; from this religious Concern arose this tender and affectionate Caution.

And that the Apostle understood it to be the Duty of Christian Ministers to do the same in like Circumstances, may appear from several Directions and Cautions, such as that *Acts xx. 28*, and following Verses, to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*: *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: Also of your selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them: Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.* Again, to the Church of *Rome* he thus writes, *Romans the 16th Chapter, the 17th and 18th Verses, ----- Now I beseech you brethren, mark them*

*which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them ; for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly ; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, i. e. by flattering and colloguing Words they deceive the plain - hearted and harmless, who suspect no Hurt. I beg leave also to observe, that St. Peter was of the same Mind, as appears from that humble and tender Exhortation in his first Epistle, 5th Chapter, 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Verses. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly ; not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind ; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. I cannot pass over this Passage without observing the modest, humble, and condescending manner in which it is deliver'd, suitably to the Nature of the apostolick Office, which was a service and ministry, not a sovereignty and domination. But such are the confident Pretensions of the Bishops of Rome, that they*

they claim the Title of Christ's Vicars, and the Administration of his Kingdom, by Virtue of a Succession from this Apostle. To which purpose they tell us ---- that our blessed Saviour before he left this Earth, delegated his supreme Authority to *St. Peter* the Prince of the Apostles; and *St. Peter* fixing his See at *Rome*, and dying there, bequeathed this Supremacy to his Successors in that Chair to the end of the World: And therefore the *Romish* Bishop is the Head of the Catholick Church, his Empire the same with Christ's, whose Lieutenant and Delegate he is, and that all the Christian World ought to be subject to him upon pain of Damnation. And as the Successor of *St. Peter*, the Pope is accordingly call'd, his Holiness, the Sovereign Pontiff, our most holy Lord the Pope, and sometimes our Lord God the Pope; and (they say) all Laws human and divine are lodged in his Breast, and that it belongs to him to judge all, and to be judged by none. Exorbitant Pride! horrid Blasphemy! and wretched Abuse of a most pious humble Man! whose own Account of himself is only this, ----- *Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ*. Well! is it not our Duty who are Christian Ministers to warn People of such dangerous Pride, Tyranny, and Blasphemy as this? Is not such daring In-

sult

sult as this upon the Authority of Christ to be check'd? And are not the Corruptions, Errors, and Sins that grow out of this Stock to be expos'd and rooted up? And should not Christian People be fed and taught more sincerely and more faithfully? If you think so, I now tell you this is the Design of this Lecture, and if you judge of it as we do, we hope you will encourage it, by attending here once a Week as long as it lasts, and by attending to the things that are spoken from the Word of God, this being all the Preachers expect from you as the Reward of our Labour.

But I will now enter further into the Reason of our preaching in this manner against Popery, at this particular Juncture.

I. And I very freely declare, ( and am glad at my Heart that I am able to do it fully and strongly ) that it is not from any Apprehension that our Rulers favour Popery. This is not the Reason. We do not suspect that Popery has any Encouragement from that Quarter. Papists meet with no Smiles at Court, wherever else they find them : There was a Time indeed, ( and some of us have Reason to remember it ) when the Nation had terrifying Apprehensions of *this* Danger. *Charles the Second*, if he had any Religion, was a Papist : But his Brother, and Successor, abundantly discover'd

ver'd that Popery was the Darling of his Heart, and that he was so set upon the Re-establishment of it here, as to venture at every thing. You know that King *James the Second* carried matters so far as to receive a Nuncio from the Pope, and he sent an Ambassador to *Rome*; in his Reign Popish Bishops were consecrated in the Royal Chapel, and the free and open Exercise of the Popish Religion was every where set up. A first and second Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, against Law, and for the sake of Papists only, then came out; and many Bishops for petitioning the King to excuse them and their Clergy from reading the latter of these, were sent to the Prison of the *Tower*; which Event, as consequent upon many other illegal and arbitrary Proceedings, awaken'd the People of *England* to implore the Prince of *Orange* to come over and rescue the Protestant Religion and Liberties of *England*. He came accordingly, by the good Hand of our God upon him, and brought our Salvation with him: And were this a proper time for it, I should remind you of the general Joy spread thro' the Protestant Nations, upon his being at length made and declar'd our King---How Providence carried that immortal Hero thro' a difficult Reign---How he asserted the Cause of Truth and Liberty---How he humbled the Power of *France*, form'd a Confederacy  
which

which broke the Scheme of universal Empire, and left us Men who learned of him how to defend the Liberties, and revenge the Injuries of *Europe*. What followed upon the Death of the brave King *William*, who pursued his Scheme in the following Reign, and who eclips'd, at length, the Glory of his Successor, broke the Confederacy, and led us far back into great Danger of Popery and Slavery, you all know. But there was one Pillar of our Happiness erected by King *William* which those Managers had not Time to pull down, that was, the Protestant Succession in the illustrious House of *Hanover*. King *George* I. succeeded the dead Queen in Peace, and soon after he was seated on the Throne, wisely enter'd into Measures to rectify our disordered State, repair our tottering Constitution, strengthen the Foundations which had been treacherously weaken'd, and render those means impracticable which had been us'd to pave the way for a Popish Pretender.

His present Majesty peaceably succeeded his Royal Father, inherits his Virtues as well as his Crown, and lives and reigns the Patron of Liberty, the Guardian of our Laws, and the Defender of the Protestant Faith. It is now the great Law of *England* ---- And may it be as that of  
the

the *Persians* and *Medes*, never to be altered, — That no Papist is capable of succeeding to the Imperial Crown of these Realms. It is indeed one Artifice of Popery, to try by any Means to make us careless, or indifferent at least, what Religion our Prince is of; and something of this sort has of late been hinted in that pestilent, malignant Paper, called the *Craftsman*. — But *Englishmen* easily see through that Device; we too well remember our Danger in the *Stewarts* Reign, to believe this; we know the Absurdity and Inconsistency of a Popish Head to a Protestant Body, and are abundantly thankful to Almighty God for a Protestant King and Queen, surrounded with a large and lovely Offspring, adorned with Royal and Princely Virtues, and upon whom we look as, under God, the Strength and Glory of *Great Britain*, and the whole Protestant World. But further,

2. We do not now appear against Popery, from any Imagination that the Reformation from it has not been unquestionably proved to be highly reasonable and absolutely necessary. The Reformers waited till Error and Impiety came up to their height, and continued in the *Romish* Church till she was most wofully corrupted; and (as one expresses it) till her Wounds stunk, and became incurable; and then they departed from the

*Tents of those Men, that they might not be consumed in their Sins.* And we not only approve the Reformation, and think it justifiable, but we heartily rejoice in it, and bless God, who inspired the Reformers with so much Zeal and Courage, and gave them such good and great Success. They bore a noble Testimony for God, they bravely contended for the Authority of Christ, and the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and finely pleaded the Cause of Truth and Liberty, against Men *who loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil*: Their Separation from the *Romish* Communion was unquestionably just and necessary, and the Charge of *Schism* and *Heresy* exhibited against them on this account, was a most unjust Reproach, which they were well able easily to wipe off.

Nor do we forget the noble Stand made by the Clergy and People of *England*, against the return of Popery, in the Reigns I just now mentioned; the Reformation was then bravely defended, and this corrupt Religion effectually exposed with most solid Arguments, and the greatest Strength of Reason, by Men of the first Rank for Learning, Parts and Furniture. The Names of *Chillingworth* and *Barrow*, of *Williams* and *Tillotson*, of *Stillingfleet*, *Patrick*, *Clagget* and *Sherlock*, who all bore so considerable a Part, and made so  
good



good a Figure in the Popish Controversy, ought always to be mentioned, by all Protestants, with the greatest Honour; nor are *Owen* and *Clarkson*, and *Pool* and *Baxter* to be overlooked in this Controversy; they were worthy Men, and behaved well in a critical and dangerous Juncture. We have a great Cloud of Witnesses before us, for the Protestant Religion; we follow Men of Renown here; and it is indeed a Matter of some Wonder, that those Men, who so thoroughly disabled the Advocates for Popery, did not write that Religion quite out of the World! But it is not in all Cases enough, it seems, to refer People to Things done a good while ago; our Religion has, indeed, been well defended, and with great Learning and Labour; but particular Occurrences may happen, that make it exceeding proper to review such a Controversy as this, stir us up to imitate the Zeal of our Fathers, and examine the Ground we stand on, for our own fuller Satisfaction, and the Information of the rising Generation. And, which brings me to my main Point, such I apprehend is the present Juncture. Attempts are at this Time made every where about us, by Popish Zealots, to disease and unsettle the Minds of Protestants: We are well informed, that there are great Numbers of Popish Emissaries amongst us, many Mals-

Houfes in the feveral Parts of this City, and other Places, and great Pains taken to reconcile Proteftants to Popery, take off thofe Prejudices and Horrors they have been wont to conceive againft it, and to abate by degrees, any Fears of fatal Confequences, if this Religion fhould be again eftablifhed in *England*. Popifh Catechifms, printed this very Year, and other Books which we have feen, and fome of us have in poffeffion, are put into People's Hands, full of Craft and of Affurance; and fresh Informations are frequently fent to many of us, of the great Diligence of the Papifts at this Time, and beyond their ufual Secrecy, to corrupt the meaner People efpecially, and to gain over Numbers to their Side. The juft Charges we lay againft Popery, they roundly deny; — tell People it is now a quite different Thing than what it was formerly; and that they, good Men, have laid afide Cruelty and Perfecution, and are for doing no Body any Hurt at all, but from pure Motives of Charity and Religion, induced to take unwearied Pains to recover Backfliders to the Fold of Chrift. While Papifts ufe the Subtilty of the Serpent, they would feem to be as harmlefs as Doves; and they appear on this fide the Water in Sheeps Cloathing, who on the other are fierce as ravenous and devouring Wolves: One while they put on a grave and folemn

Face,

Face, and tell People, that Salvation out of their Church is impossible ; and therefore beseech them, for the Sake of their Souls, to embrace their Communion. At another time, after courteous Behaviour, much civil Discourse, great good Manners, and a plain and easy Account of their great Power and Dexterity in helping People to Heaven, they strongly and boldly undertake for the Salvation of such as become Converts to them, believing and doing as they appoint and require, saying, — You are secure of Salvation in our Church ; your Happiness is undoubted and unquestionable ; and, my Soul for yours, you shall not, and cannot miscarry.

These confident Undertakers would make People believe, that they can easily secure them from all Danger that arises from Ignorance and Wickedness ; they have Indulgence and Absolution ready, and at hand, for all that ; and the Priest, by the high and mighty Power he receives from the *Pope*, and *St. Peter*, especially at *Easter*, will make every confessing Sinner, for a small Sum, as sound and clean as when he came first into the World. If indeed there should be any doubting of the Truth of this Religion, or the Power of the Priest and the *Pope*, and any Inquiry into and after the sacred Scriptures, those blessed Fountains of  
Light

Light and Truth, this is a most dangerous Thing, this shews an heretical Disposition, and poor Souls are soon frightened out of it, with the dreadful Threatnings of Hell and Damnation. Thus is Popery founded in Ignorance and Wickedness, and supported by Craft and Terror.

Well, Sirs, we must not sleep while the Enemy sows these Tares. Error and Sin must not spread their poisonous Roots amongst us unrebuked! while Papists are diligent to deceive, Protestants sure should not be idle. A good Cause must not be left to shift for itself: It becomes us all to take some Pains, if we do indeed fear, that *as the Serpent beguiled Eve thro' his Subtility, so these Managers should corrupt our People from the Simplicity that is in Christ.* And sure I am, a Plea for Separation from the Church of Rome comes very naturally from our Quarter: Protestant Dissenters are exceedingly consistent in the Defence of Truth and Liberty against all Popish Domination and Tyranny: In this we may engage as a common Cause, without a Suspicion of private Interest or Party Views; and for my Part, I cannot but think the present Juncture a loud Call upon us, to lay aside all Differences among ourselves, if any such remain, when the common Enemy of Dissenters, and of all Protestants, is, I know not with what Views, making

making fresh and vigorous Attempts upon us. Besides: Silence at such a Time as this might turn to our Reproach: We might be supposed wanting in our Affection to the Government under which we have the Happiness to live, and in our Zeal against a Popish Pretender and his Adherents, if we did not appear with Readiness and Spirit on the present Occasion; nor is it a small Advantage and Encouragement to us, that we can appear for the Protestant Religion in the most publick Manner, without Offence to our Rulers, and that we are not under the same Inconvenience our Fathers were who pleaded this Cause in the Reigns of former Kings.

And now I have said what I think may be sufficient to let you into the Reason and Fitness of this Lecture against Popery at this Time. I beg Leave to add a Paragraph out of the Preface of the late Reverend Mr. *Bennet* of *Newcastle*, to his Sermons against Popery, — The Words are these — “ Had  
 “ Popery been an old Heresy, dead and  
 “ buried in the Church a thousand Years ago,  
 “ I would not have raked in its Ashes and  
 “ given it a Revival; but 'tis a living Re-  
 “ ligion, the Religion of a great Part of  
 “ *Europe*, and what has long been striving  
 “ for more Room, endeavouring to extend  
 “ its Branches over distant Countries, and  
 “ spread its Poison thro' the Nations round  
 “ about.

“ about. And who knows not that ever  
 “ since our happy Reformation it has been  
 “ waiting for a Return amongst us, seeking an  
 “ Hole to creep in at ; and even at this Time,  
 “ some think, they see it standing on tip-  
 “ toes on the other Side the Water, ready  
 “ to make us another Visit.” — This was writ-  
 ten in the Year 1714 ; but, thanks be to God,  
 before that Year concluded Things had quite  
 another Aspect, the Protestant Religion (often  
 rescued by Providence) was again preserved  
 by the Protestant Succession taking Place, to  
 the Joy and Surprize of us all, and to the  
 Glory and Honour of God. O that ever memo-  
 rable First of *August* ! With what Agitation  
 and Transport did we hear King *George* pro-  
 claimed ? With what Gratitude did we then  
 remember King *William* and receive his Lega-  
 cy, and with what Ardour and Piety were our  
 adoring Eyes and Hearts then lifted up unto  
 God ? One might have guessed by the Coun-  
 tenances of those that met us, who were dis-  
 appointed and who preserved.

Well, Sirs, the Corruption we then fear'd,  
 it is the Design of this Lecture to oppose ;  
 the Blessings we then received, we are now  
 setting ourselves to defend ; and this we do,  
 because where-ever Popery sets up its Altars,  
 Liberty and Religion are made a Sacrifice ;  
 as that rises those must fall : Popery threatens  
 and grasps at all that's dear to us both as Men  
 and

and Christians; no wonder therefore that if any, tho' it be but a distant Danger of this appear, such as we are alarmed, and seize the Opportunity to prevent its Approach by prudent Endeavours and fervent Prayers to the blessed God, whose Servants we are, and whose Cause in this World we believe to be that of Truth and Liberty. This Cause Protestant Dissenters humbly plead with God and Man well knowing it is our Interest and Duty so to do; for it is easy to foresee, if Popery should ever return hither, who are like to be its first, tho' not its only Sacrifice. In this Service then let us all agree; our Aim as far as I know is singly this, to warn Men of the present Growth and Danger of Popery; to shew them that this is just what it ever was, without any real Difference in either its Principles or its Spirit; to raise and animate that Zeal against it which seems too much abated; to find out its lurking Places, and root it out of Mens Hearts, and shew them the Use and Value of their Bibles— for the Bible, the Bible, (said Mr. *Chillingworth*) is the Religion of Protestants. This Papists conceal; this they corrupt and adulterate; to this they add, and from this they criminally take away; but this Protestants prize and contend for, as the great Rule of our Faith, the Charter of our Privileges, and the only Ground of our eternal Hopes: With this

Sword of the Spirit, let us contend with Error and Sin ; from hence let us learn to preach, and pray, and live ; and when we have obtained *Mercy from the Lord to be found faithful, and having served God and our Generation according to his Will*, shall be dead and gone, may others rise up, and bear a Testimony for God and Christ, and true Religion, not only as we have done, but much more abundantly.

F I N I S.

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THE  
NOTES  
OF THE  
CHURCH  
CONSIDERED:

IN A  
SERMON

On 1 TIM. iii. 14, 15.

Preached at **SALTERS-HALL**,  
*January 16, 1734-5.*

---

By *SAMUEL CHANDLER.*

---

Omnes confitentur, in sola vera Ecclesia esse veram fidem,  
veram peccatorum remissionem, veram spem salutis  
æternæ. *Bellarm. de Not. Eccles.*

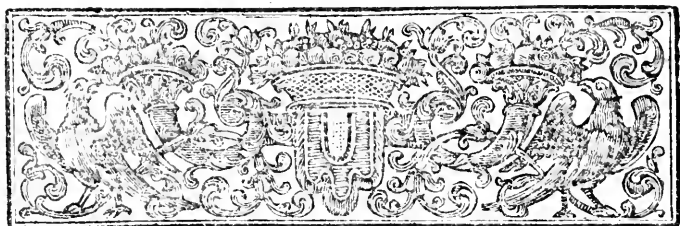
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I TIM. iii. 14, 15.

*These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.*



YOU have been already informed, that the design of this lecture is to represent and expose the absurdity, and antichristian nature of the corruptions and errors of the apostate church of *Rome*, and to confirm and establish you in the belief of those doctrines of the Reformation, which have the sacred writings, and all the valuable remains of antiquity to support them; that you may be always upon your guard, against the attempts of those who lye in wait to seduce you from *the simplicity* of the Christian faith, to enslave your consciences to the tyrannical impositions of imperious and cruel deceivers, and to bring you back to those impious idolatries, which are a reproach to the Christian  
B name,

name, and contrary to the plainest dictates of natural and revealed Religion.

One would really wonder, how so monstrous a perversion of Christianity could ever take place, and by what kind of arguments and pretences, mankind could be prevailed with to embrace and submit to a Scheme, which had they consulted their senses or their reason, or the sacred records, they must evidently have discovered the falshood and imposture of ; Popery being really an imposition upon, and the most palpable contradiction to the plainest testimony of each of these witnesses, as will, I doubt not, be fully demonstrated in the course of the ensuing lectures.

However, we are far from being ignorant of the *devices of Satan* on this head. Ecclesiastical history furnishes us with a variety of causes, to which this great apostasy from the Christian faith and worship hath been owing, which well deserve to be distinctly considered, and represented to you. But I shall only mention that particular one, which is more immediately and directly to my purpose, which is *the power and authority of the Church* ; or rather, the superstition and tyranny of the Bishops and Clergy, who have appropriated the name of the Church to themselves, and under that venerable character have erected themselves an empire, upon the ruins of primitive Christianity, and the civil and religious liberties of mankind.

And as it is but too true, that all the great innovations, as to the Christian doctrine and worship,

worship, have been introduced by the Bishops and Clergy, under the sacred character of the Church, and as the pretended authority of the Church is *the pillar and ground* of the corruptions of Popery at this day, 'tis necessary that we lay the axe to the root, and distinctly consider these two things,

I. What the true notion of a church is.  
And,

II. What are the peculiar powers and privileges it is invested with.

'Tis to the first of these I am confined. The second will be treated of distinctly by a very able hand, with whose province I shall as little as possible intermeddle.

I am then to consider what the true notion of a church is; or what are the essential characters of the Christian church, by which it may be known and distinguished from all other assemblies and bodies of men whatsoever. And here the only possible way of forming a true judgment, is from the Holy Scriptures; because these are the most antient records of Christianity, written by the apostles and apostolical men; and because they are, even our adversaries being judges, the infallible word of God. Nor will they deny us the liberty of judging concerning the nature of the church by this rule, provided we will allow them these two small things, *viz.* that the church

B 2

may

may judge for us concerning the sense of Scripture, and that the unwritten traditions of the church are of equal authority with the Scriptures themselves. And this possibly we might be willing enough to do, if this plain contradiction was not unfortunately in our way, *viz.* that the judging by Scripture concerning the notes of the church, and yet allowing the church to judge for us of the sense of Scripture, is rendering it impossible to form any judgment of either, and supposing that the notes of the church may be understood, before we know what in reality they are.

For if the Scriptures are to determine the marks of the church, the Scriptures must be known and understood, before we can form any judgment from them what the marks of the church are. But if the church is to judge for us what is Scripture, and what the sense of it, then we must know what the church is, and what her distinguishing marks are, before we can pretend to judge what the sense of Scripture is. The consequence of which is, that 'tis impossible to form any judgment of either. We cannot judge of the marks of the church by the Scripture, because the church is to determine the sense of Scripture; nor can we judge of Scripture by the church, because the Scripture is to settle and determine the marks by which we are to know the church. So that according to this way of arguing, neither the Church nor the Scriptures can have any certain marks to distinguish and discover them,

them, whereby their church will be of as little signification and authority, as they would fain have our Scriptures to be.

And by further consequence, the pretending to prove by Scripture what the marks of the church are, and yet affirming that the church is to judge of the sense of Scripture, is supposing them to be both known before they are understood, and their authority demonstrated even whilst it is incapable of being proved.

Once more, if the Scripture be the rule whereby we are to judge of the marks of the church, the authority of Scripture must be superior to that of the church; and if the church is to determine what is Scripture, and to judge of the sense of it, the authority of the church is superior to that of the Scripture; and consequently, they are each of them of superior and inferior authority to the other; they are each of them a rule by which to judge of the other, and yet can neither of them be a rule whereby to form a judgment of either. To these shameful absurdities are the Papists reduced, by pretending to prove from Scripture, what are the marks of the church, and yet affirming, that the church is to judge for all others what is the sense of Scripture. But 'tis no wonder, that they who can be stupid enough to believe, that a wafer can be changed into the body and blood and soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, should be disposed and given up to believe all other absurdities and contradictions whatsoever.

But

But to leave them in possession of this treasure, I shall come more directly to the argument before me, and in prosecuting it, shall endeavour to do these two things.

1. To set before you the Scripture notion of a church, and what are the peculiar and distinguishing marks of it therein laid down. And,

2. To consider what are the notes or marks which the Papists give of a church, and shew you either that they are no marks of the church of Christ at all; or if they are, yet that they are notes or characters which do not belong to the church of *Rome*.

1. I am to set before you the Scripture notion of a church, and to give you the peculiar and distinguishing marks or notes of it, as there laid down. The original word *ἐκκλησία*, which we render *church*, denotes in general an assembly of people called or met together, either upon civil or sacred occasions. Thus the town-clerk of *Ephesus* tells the *Ephesians*, that <sup>a</sup> *the law was open, and they might determine their causes in a lawful assembly*. Hence the same word is applied to any number of persons, more or less, who embraced the doctrine of the Gospel, as preach'd to them by the Apostles, and worshipp'd God in the name of Jesus Christ. Thus the first converts at *Jerusalem*, who consisted of about 3000 persons,

<sup>a</sup> Acts xix. 39.



persons, <sup>b</sup> are expressly called the church, because they were an assembly or congregation of Christians. And when afterwards the Apostles preach'd the Gospel in other cities besides *Jerusalem*, the number of converts in each of those places constituted a distinct Christian church or congregation, each independent of the other as to all things, their common faith and worship as Christians only excepted. Thus we read of the church at *Antioch*, *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, and other places, and of the churches of *Galatia* and *Macedonia*, i. e. the several distinct congregations of Christians in the several cities of those provinces. Yea when the number of converts in any place did not extend beyond the branches of any one particular house or family, those converts, though few in number, are also called a church. Thus we read of the church at *Priscilla's* house, in the house of *Nymphas*, and with *Philemon*. And as all particular churches or congregations of Christians wherever planted, were united in one common faith and worship, under Jesus Christ their common Lord and head; as they were congregations gathered in his name, and professing a religion of his appointment; as they were all subjects of his kingdom, and governed by one body of laws, hence the whole number of Christians, wheresoever they dwelt, are also denoted by the same word, church or congregation; because though as to themselves they

<sup>b</sup> Acts ii. 47.

they were particular independent assemblies, yet consider'd in their relation to Christ, their common head, they were all one body, under his especial influence, protection, and government. In this sense *St. Paul* uses the word church, when he tells us, <sup>c</sup> that *God hath put all things under Christ's feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body.* And this is all the senses in which the word ἐκκλησία or church is used in Scripture, except only once, where it seems to denote the place where Christians met for worship. *When ye come together in the church,* says *St. Paul,* <sup>d</sup> *I hear there are divisions amongst you,* which he explains a verse or two after, <sup>e</sup> *When ye come together in one place.* In other senses the word is not used in the whole New Testament.

And I observe this principally for this reason, because though the Clergy have oftentimes appropriated to themselves the name of the church, exclusive of the Christian people, yet they are never once called by this sacred name in the holy Scriptures. Yea I find that the Christian laity are stiled the church by way of distinction from those, who had any particular charge or office in it. Thus when *Paul* and *Barnabas* came to *Jerusalem*, they were received <sup>f</sup> *of the Church, and of the Apostles and Elders*; and when the famous decree was sent to *Antioch*, <sup>g</sup> *the Apostles, Elders and whole*

<sup>c</sup> Eph. i. 22, 23.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 18.

<sup>e</sup> Ver. 20.

<sup>f</sup> Acts xv. 4.

<sup>g</sup> Ver. 22.

*whole Church* sent it by messengers of their own. From which passages it appears, that the Christian laity are properly and truly the Church of Christ, in the Scripture sense of the word; and that neither Apostles, nor Bishops, nor Elders are any otherwise to be consider'd, or own'd as the church, than as they are united with the body of Christians in the same common faith, profession and hope.

And this *Bellarmino* is so very sensible of, that though he produces the words of my Text, *The church the pillar and ground of truth*, as a proof that the Clergy in a general Council cannot err; yet he doth it, not by asserting that the word church signifies the Clergy or Bishops, but that the whole authority of the Church or Christian people<sup>h</sup> exists *formally* only in the Prelates, even as the light of the whole body is *formally* in the head; the good Cardinal taking it for granted that all the Christian people are stark blind, and thence shrewdly inferring that they are obliged to see with his, and his brethrens eyes.

But as 'tis one part of the character of a good Protestant not to renounce the testimony of his senses, nor to trust to other persons eyesight whilst he has eyes of his own, so we can evidently discern that this, and many other

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such

<sup>h</sup> Tota auctoritas ecclesiæ formaliter non est nisi in prælatis, sicut visus totius corporis formaliter est tantum in capite, l. 2. c. 2.

ſuch Texts prove nothing about the Clergy's infallibility ; but that if *the church* is declar'd by *St. Paul* to be *the pillar and ground of truth*, this refers to the body of Chriſtians profeſſing, maintaining, and *holding forth* the true faith of Chriſt, and not to their Biſhops and Paſtors in contradiction to them. Though I think the more probable interpretation is, that *the pillar and ground of truth* relates to *Timothy* himſelf and not to the church. The direction to *Timothy* was how to *behave* himſelf *in the houſe of God*, and the advice which the Apoſtle gives him was ſuitable to this representation of the church, *viz.* he was to behave as one who was *a pillar in or foundation of* that houſe ; which *Timothy* properly was, as an Evangelift and Prophet, and one who received his inſtructions immediately from an inſpired Apoſtle, and was himſelf favour'd with ſome extraordinary gifts of the holy Spirit. And what confirms this ſenſe is, that *St. Paul*, <sup>1</sup> ſpeaking of *James* and *John* and *Peter*, ſays, *they ſeemed to be pillars*. And indeed this character of pillars is frequently applied by the primitive writers to the Apoſtles, as I could eaſily ſhew, were it not foreign to the preſent purpoſe.

But not to inſiſt on this, you plainly ſee from what I have ſaid, that according to Scripture, every particular congregation of Chriſtians is a diſtinct and proper church ; and that the catholic or univerſal church conſiſts of all  
the

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 9.

the several congregations of Christians throughout the world, who all together constitute that one body, of which Christ is the proper head and governor; and that therefore the Clergy's assuming and appropriating this name to themselves, is an usurpation of that honour and privilege which Christ hath conferr'd on you; on you, fellow Protestants, whom *he hath purchased with his blood*; in whom ye are *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, and a peculiar people*; that true church of the living God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.* And this is

1. One essential and unalterable mark or note of a Christian church or congregation; viz. the constant and firm adherence of all the members of it to Jesus Christ, as the common Head and Lord and Saviour of Christians, and the submitting themselves wholly and intirely to his influence and direction; even as the members of a natural body are guided and acted by its natural head. For *we being many are one body in Christ*, and God hath given him <sup>k</sup> *to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all.*

And this I rather observe, because *Bellarmino* thus defines the church: <sup>1</sup> *That 'tis an assembly*

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<sup>k</sup> Eph. i. 22, 23.

<sup>1</sup> *Ecclesiam veram esse cœtum hominum ejusdem Christianæ fidei professione---colligatum, sub regimine legitimorum pastorum, ac præcipue unius Christi in terris Vicarii, Romani pontificis.* Tom. 2. c. 2.

*sembly of men, professing the same Christian faith, under the government of lawful pastors, and particularly the Roman Pontiff, the only Vicar of Christ upon earth.* But could the Cardinal imagine, that this would be taken for granted without proof? Or that any one, who had ever read the New Testament, would prefer the Pope, who is never once mentioned in it, to the Son of God himself, who is expressly declared to be the church's head?

No: The vicarious power of the *Roman Pontiff* is a thing absolutely unknown to the Sacred Writings. 'Tis a sacrilegious usurpation of that supreme authority with which God the Father hath invested his only Son, to whom only our submission is due in the great concern of religion, and eternal salvation, in opposition to the claims of all others, who would exclude him from the government of his church, or share with him in his legislative power. *Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ,*<sup>m</sup> are the words of our Lord himself to his disciples. And St. Paul tells the *Ephesians,*<sup>n</sup> that God had raised *Christ from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, ----- and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church: Head, as Governor and Lord,* to appoint the laws of his spiritual kingdom, the doctrines his people are to believe, the form of worship they are to observe, and the terms

<sup>m</sup> Matth. xxiii. 10.

<sup>n</sup> Eph. i. 20, 22.

terms of communion and Christian salvation; by which all the members of his church are to be finally and eternally determined.

And as he sent out his Apostles, in his name, and as his witnesses, and under the conduct of his infallible Spirit, to preach his religion in the world, their testimony is the testimony of Christ, and to receive their gospel and doctrine, is to receive and submit to Christ himself, as head and legislator in the church. *He that receiveth you, i. e. you my apostles, receiveth me,* ° says our blessed Lord. Hence the converts at *Jerusalem*, who were the first Christian church that was ever planted, are described as *continuing stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship.* P

Now as we have no full and certain account of the doctrines taught by Christ and his apostles, but from the records of the New Testament, and as these contain the whole revelation of the gospel, all that we are to believe and practise as Christians: 'Tis an undeniable consequence, that we can no otherwise demonstrate our subjection and fidelity to Christ, as Lord and Law-giver in his church, than by our care in acquainting ourselves with the Sacred Records of Truth, and religiously adhering to them as the only rule and standard of our faith and worship, as God shall enable us to understand them; in opposition to the claims of interested men to interpret them for us;

° Matth. x. 40,

P Acts ii. 42,

us, and to all traditionary doctrines and practices enforced and recommended as of equal authority with them. For to argue as the Papists do about the church: Protestants and Papists agree, that the Scriptures are the infallible word of God; but they do not both agree that traditions are of equal authority with the word of God, or a sure direction in all matters relating to conscience and eternal salvation. And of consequence it must be much safer to consult, and govern our faith and practice by that rule, which is allowed on both sides to be infallible and divine, than by that which on one side is affirmed to be fallible, human, superstitious and erroneous.

But I need not such kind of arguments as these. You are Christians, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ; and his authority, I know, you must allow to be sacred and conclusive. Hear then the command of the Son of God. <sup>1</sup> *Search the Scriptures, saith he to the Jews, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me; and good reason there was for this command, because an inspired apostle tells us, All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and are able to make us wise unto salvation, thro' faith in Christ Jesus.* <sup>2</sup> The letters of the several apostles are almost all of them written to the churches, and intended for their perusal and edification. And St. Paul expressly commands  
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<sup>1</sup> John v. 39.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.



the *Thessalonians*, <sup>s</sup> *Stand fast brethren, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or OUR EPISTLE.* And that none might be ignorant of the contents of his epistle, he tells the *Thessalonians*, <sup>t</sup> *I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the brethren.* And the *Colossians*, <sup>u</sup> *When this epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.* So that the writings of the New Testament were intended, fellow Christians, for your perusal, and without being acquainted with them, you can never continue in that doctrine of Christ and his apostles, the adhering to which is an essential note of the Christian church. I will only add further on this head,

That as far as men depart from this doctrine of Christ and his apostles, so far they cease to be members of the church of Christ, and are to be marked and avoided by all the faithful. Thus St. Paul advises Timothy, *These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness --- from such withdraw thyself.* <sup>x</sup> Yea, the apostle goes yet farther, and pronounceth a severer censure on those who perverted or altered the doctrine and gospel which he preached. *There are, says he, some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel*

<sup>s</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 15.

<sup>t</sup> 1 Thess. v. 27.

<sup>u</sup> Col. iv. 16.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Eph. vi. 3-5.

*spel of Christ. But tho' we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*<sup>y</sup> But thus much as to the first Scripture mark of the Christian Church. I shall mention but one more, and that is

2. The mutual and firm union of those, who profess the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, in the practice of universal virtue, and especially, by the exercise of fervent charity and love; since nothing is more evident, than that the disciples of Christ are to be distinguished as much by the holiness of their lives, as the purity of their faith; and because the love of the brethren is made one of the distinguishing marks of a true Christian by our Saviour himself. *A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you; that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another.*<sup>z</sup>

'Tis, I confess, difficult to judge of inward principles and dispositions; and those who as to outward appearance may profess the true faith, and wear *the form of godliness*, may yet be some of them insincere in the sight of God, and no genuine members of the church of Christ; and men, who can judge only according to outward appearances, may be deceived in the judgment

<sup>y</sup> Gal. i. 7, 8, 9.

<sup>z</sup> John xiii. 34, 35.

judgment of charity which they pass on them. However, we have one sure rule to go by, and may certainly conclude who are not of the church of Christ; *viz.* those who openly and avowedly pervert and *corrupt the simplicity* of the Christian Faith, by teaching doctrines absolutely subversive of the nature and design of it; and who habitually dishonour the doctrine of godliness, by the allowed immoralities of a wicked life. Or if thou knowest, Christian, any societies of men calling themselves by the Christian name, who have put off bowels of compassions, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, charity and love; and who, instead of practising these virtues, excommunicate and damn, malign and revile, and by methods of iniquity and blood, torture and persecute and destroy others, for their adherence to the original records of Christianity, and the purity of the Christian Faith and Worship; thou may'st safely pronounce them to be cut off from Christ, to be *of the Synagogue of Satan*, and to be actuated by that wisdom, which is *earthly, sensual, and devilish*, James iii. 14, 15.

Having thus considered the notes which the Scriptures give us of the church of Christ, I now proceed to consider those which are laid down by Popish writers; tho' I think such an enquiry is perfectly needless, considering the account they give of the church and the members of it. For as Cardinal *Bellarmino* makes it a mark of the church that they submit to the

*Roman Pontiff*, and expressly allows the most notorious sinners and secret infidels to be members of it, so they profess to believe as the church doth, and communicate in her sacraments, what need we any notes to discover the church? The church of *Rome* is well known, and the nations that adhere to her communion; and all the Cardinal's marks can't make her more *notorious* than she is already; and if the church of Christ and the church of *Rome* is the same thing, and this is to be taken for granted as a first principle, 'tis as ridiculous to give marks of the church, as it would be of the city of *Rome* itself, or of any other well known city or country in the world. But to pass by this, and other things of the like nature, let us examine the Cardinal's notes particularly.

#### N O T E I.

The first, according to the Cardinal, is, *the very name of the Catholick Church.*<sup>a</sup> But I think this is direct nonsense; because the catholic church is nothing but the collection of all true Christians and particular churches thro' the world. And therefore to answer any person enquiring, which, amongst all who bear the Christian name, is the true church? I say to answer him, that it is that which hath the name of Catholick, is either to say that the true church is the collection of all the true churches in the world, which is to say nothing

<sup>a</sup> *Ipsum catholicæ ecclesiæ nomen.*

to the purpose, because it is no answer to the question; or, that it is some particular church that assumes the name of catholic to itself; which is to say worse than nothing, because 'tis to affirm that it is a *particular universal*. And this contradiction the name of *Roman Catholic* really implies; because 'tis saying that the particular church or congregation of persons called Christians in *Rome* is the universal church, *i. e.* all the particular churches of Christ throughout the world.

Besides, what can bare names prove, which men may take or refuse at pleasure, with reason or without it? Hereticks themselves have, as the Cardinal allows, assumed this name; and if the bare assuming of it proves any thing, they have as much a right to it as the Papists.

Farther, there was a time when the word catholic could not belong to *Rome*, but did actually belong to the converts of another city, *viz.* to those of *Jerusalem*; because there were once no Christians but what were in that place, the gospel having been first published there, and therefore the word catholic can be no proof that the church of *Rome* is the only true church, because the catholic church existed before there was any Christian church in *Rome* at all. Or if by catholic church be meant, a church that holds that doctrine which is common to all Christian churches, then any church which holds that doctrine is as much the catholic church as the church of *Rome*, and therefore the mere name can be no distinguishing mark of that church.

## N O T E II.

The Cardinal's second note is *Antiquity*, because, as he says, *the true church is older than the false one, as God was before the devil*. But to this it may be answered, that bare antiquity is no certain evidence of truth, because there are many errors and falshoods which can boast of antiquity earlier than Christianity itself. Thus *Judaism*, which is now mere superstition, was older than the gospel, and idolatry older than both.

And with respect to the Christian church, we know that there were errors in it even in the apostolick age, which can never change their nature, or be transformed into truth, because of their plea of antiquity. For instance: the worshipping of angels was introduced during the ministry of *St. Paul* himself, and yet it must be allow'd to be superstition and idolatry. For *St. Paul* himself expressly condemns it as such: *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, vainly puffed up in his fleshly mind, and not holding the head;*<sup>b</sup> and by consequence the church of *Rome*, which maintains and practises this old angel worship, doth not hold the head, but hath cut herself off from the unity of the Christian church, notwithstanding the antiquity of this superstition.

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<sup>b</sup> Col. ii. 18, 19

However antiquity may be allow'd to be in some sense a mark or note of the Christian church, *viz.* when any society of Christians hold the true faith of Christ and his apostles, which was at first delivered to the saints; and this is *Bellarmino's* sixth note, *viz.* *an agreement in doctrine with the ancient church, or with that doctrine which the apostles delivered.* And as this note is the same in the main with the second, I shall consider it here. Now as there is no way of understanding the apostles doctrine so certainly as from their writings, which are allowed even by our adversaries to be the oldest records of Christianity, this therefore is the only true antiquity to which as Christians we are to appeal. And we are content that the controversy between us and the Papists shall be decided by this ancient and infallible rule. But they, conscious to themselves, that there is nothing in this antiquity to favour their peculiar doctrines and practices, decline the trial by this sacred judge, and fly to fathers, councils and traditions, all of them later than the writers of the sacred records, and will not suffer the laity to read them, lest they should discern their gross abuses and corruptions of Christianity. However, to you my brethren I appeal; and now call upon you to judge in the fear of God, on which side genuine antiquity lies. As Protestants then,

1. We renounce all dependance on the Pope of *Rome*, and acknowledge one Lord, one Lawgiver in the Christian church, *viz.* the  
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Lord Jesus Christ; and the reason is, not only because there is not one word about the Pope and his headship in the New Testament, but because Christ himself says, *One is your master even Christ;*<sup>c</sup> and because St. Paul says, *There is but one Lord, and one faith;* and that *the whole family in heaven and earth is named of the Lord Jesus Christ.*<sup>d</sup>

2. As Protestants we affirm that saints and angels are not mediators in heaven for us, and that Christ Jesus is our sole mediator and advocate. And here we have apostolick antiquity to support us. For St. Paul expressly says, *that there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.*<sup>e</sup>

3. As Protestants we affirm, that angels and saints have no claim to veneration and worship. Here St. Paul is on our side, who condemns it as superstition and will-worship, in the place before cited; and one greater than St. Paul, even Christ himself, whose doctrine it is, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*<sup>f</sup> Add to this, that angels themselves have condemned this worship. Thus when St. John fell down to worship before the angel's feet, the angel said to him, *See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant. Worship God.*<sup>g</sup>

4. As Protestants we affirm, that in the sacrament of the Lord's supper there remains bread and wine after the consecration, and that they are  
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<sup>c</sup> Eph. iv. 5.

<sup>d</sup> iii. 15.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>f</sup> Matth. iv. 10.

<sup>g</sup> Rev. xxii. 9.



not tranſubſtantiated into the body and blood of Chriſt. Here alſo, beſides the impiety, abſurdity, and contradiction of the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, genuine antiquity is evidently on our ſide. For St. *Paul* expreſſly calls that which we actually eat and drink in the ſacrament, bread and wine. *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's death till he come.*<sup>h</sup>

5. As Proteſtants we affirm that Chriſtians have an equal right to the wine as to the bread in the Eucharift. For thus ſays St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *As often as ye eat this bread, καὶ πίνετε and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's death till he come.*<sup>i</sup>

6. As Proteſtants we affirm that the Eucharift is only a memorial of Chriſt's death, and not a propitiatory ſacrifice either for the living or dead. Let Chriſt and his apoſtle determine. *Do this*, ſays Chriſt, *in remembrance of me.*<sup>k</sup> And that all Chriſtians were to receive the elements with this view only, St. *Paul* aſſures the *Corinthians*<sup>l</sup> from Chriſt himſelf. And the author to the *Hebrews* tells us, that *by one offering Chriſt hath for ever perfected thoſe who are ſanctified*; and that becauſe there is remiſſion of ſins under the new covenant, there is no more offering for ſin.<sup>m</sup>

7. As Proteſtants we renounce the doctrine of Purgatory, and affirm that the future ſtate is no ſtate of probation, but a ſtate in which  
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<sup>h</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26.

<sup>i</sup> Ibid.

<sup>k</sup> Luke xxii. 19.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 24.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. x. 14--18.

men are unalterably determined for happiness or misery. And here we have scripture antiquity clearly on our side. Thus the wise man, speaking of death, says, *Then the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it,*<sup>n</sup> without any intimation of stopping at Purgatory by the way. And St. Paul affirms, that at the judgment-seat of Christ every one shall receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;<sup>o</sup> the necessary consequence of which is, that there can be no Purgatory antecedent to the general judgment to cleanse away mens guilt; for then they could not receive at the judgment according to the deeds done in their bodies.

8. As Protestants we affirm, that the worship of God ought to be performed in a language which all men understand. And here we have not only the plain reason of the thing with us, but apostolick antiquity too. For St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, *If I speak with tongues, i. e. in such a language as those I speak to can't understand, what shall I profit you?* And hereupon he gives this command: *Let all things be done to edifying.*<sup>p</sup>

And finally, as Protestants we affirm that all Christians have a right to search the scriptures, and make the best use of them that they can. And here also we have the authority of Christ, *Search the scripture.* And of St. Paul, *Let*

<sup>n</sup> Eccles. xii. 7.

<sup>o</sup> 2 Cor. v. 10.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 6--26.

*Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs.*<sup>9</sup> Which command would be impossible, if they had not the word of Christ, and the Scriptures of truth to read and consult for themselves.

Now if these Protestant doctrines are as old as Christ and his apostles, and were taught by them, as we see plainly they were, it is evident that as Protestants we have the sanction of the most venerable antiquity on our side, and this note of the true church of Christ belonging to us, in its fullest perfection. When therefore the Papists scornfully cry out, and ask us: *Where was your Church before Luther and Calvin?* The answer is obvious: That the doctrine of our church was in the writings of the inspired apostles, where theirs is never to be found; 'twas the same as was taught by Christ himself, whom they have forsaken, and whose faith they have corrupted. And as to the professors of our doctrines, they were to be found amongst those martyrs and confessors, whose blood their church hath cruelly spilt; who had from their Bishops and Clergy, and Monks, like the antient worthies, *the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings and bonds and imprisonment, who were stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, wandering about, thro' their perfidiousness and cruelty, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, wandering in deserts and in mountains,*

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<sup>9</sup> Col. iii. 16.

*tains, and in dens and caves of the earth.* We willingly acknowledge these were our predecessors, even these persecuted disciples of the crucified Jesus, who protested against the abominations of their church, and were put to death by them for the testimony of Jesus.

But now what genuine antiquity have the Papists to boast of in vindication of their doctrine and worship? I confess that they have antiquity for many things older than the religion of Christ and his apostles: They have all the idolatrous nations of the earth, and the false prophets and deceivers amongst the *Jews*, wholly on their side, by whose authority and examples they may (if they please) vindicate their own idolatries: They have the *Egyptian* men-eaters, *Antiochus Epiphanes*, *Nero*, *Domitian*, and other monsters of mankind, who went before them in the measures of persecution, cruelty and blood: Yea, they have the example of one more antient than all of these, that we will allow them to glory in, even his, who, as our blessed Saviour tells us,<sup>r</sup> *was a murderer from the beginning.*

Other genuine antiquity they have none to plead. Many of their doctrines were unknown to, or abhorred by the primitive church, and are mere novelties and innovations, that were originally introduced by superstition, and then maintained by cruelty and blood.

The supremacy of the Pope, and his title of Universal Bishop, was first confirmed by a murderer,

<sup>r</sup> John viii. 44

murderer, even by *Phocas* to Pope *Boniface III*, who persuaded *Phocas* to ordain, that the church of *Rome* should be the head of all churches, and that the Bishop of it should be called, *Oecumenical* or *Universal Bishop*. This was above 600 years after Christ. And tho' *Bellarmino* denies that this title was then first given the Pope, yet nothing is more evident than that the Popes before this did not assume it as a title belonging to their See. For *Gregory the Great*, who was the immediate predecessor of *Boniface* except one in the See of *Rome*, rejected this title of *Universal Bishop* with abhorrence, and tells *Mauritius* the Emperor in a letter to him, <sup>s</sup> that it was <sup>t</sup> a blasphemous title, and that no one of the Roman Pontiffs ever assumed so singular a one. And in his letter to *John*, Bishop of *Constantinople*, <sup>u</sup> he says to him: *What wilt thou say to Christ, the head of the universal church, in the day of judgment, who thus endeavourest to subject his members to thy self by this title of Universal? Who, I ask thee, dost thou imitate in this but the Devil?* And in his letter to *Constantina* the Empress, <sup>x</sup> he says, *His pride in assuming this*

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<sup>s</sup> L. 4. Ind. 13. p. 137.

<sup>t</sup> Absit à cordibus Christianorum nomen illud blasphemiae, in quo omnium sacerdotum honor adimitur, dum ab uno sibi dementer arrogatur. Certe pro Beati Petri, Apostolorum principis, honore, per venerandam Chalcedonensem Synodum, Romano Pontifici oblatum est. Sed nullus eorum unquam hoc singularitatis nomen assumpsit.

<sup>u</sup> Id. Ibid. Epist. 38.

<sup>x</sup> Ep. 34.

title, shew'd the times of antichrist were at hand.

Again, the intercession of Saints and Angels is a doctrine of which there is not the least intimation in the writings of the two first Centuries, and therefore it wants the note of genuine antiquity; though it must be allowed to have been introduced in the very next Century following; *Origen* and *Cyprian* expressly favouring this superstition.

As to the worship of Saints and Angels, this is still of a much later date, especially as a standing generally received doctrine of the church. For though *Athanasius* was for worshipping Saints, yet *Cyril* who lived in the next Century says, *ⁱ We neither call the holy Martyrs Gods, nor are we used to worship them.* *St. Austin* affirms, that *neither Saints nor Angels will be worshipped.* And even as low down as *Gregory*, in the 7th Century, he tells us, *² that Angels refused to be worshipped since the appearance of Christ.*

As to the worship of images, though superstition had brought them in in the third Century, and though as *Platina* tells us, they were in the church of *Rome* in the fourth, yet *Pope Gregory* before-mentioned, expressly condemns the worship of them, in his letter to *Serenus* Bishop of *Marcellus*.<sup>⁴</sup> Yea in the 8th Century the worship of images was condemned by a Council

<sup>ⁱ</sup> Cont. Jul. p. 203. Ed. Spanhem.

<sup>²</sup> T. 3. p. 20.

<sup>⁴</sup> T. 3. l. 7. Ep. 111.

Council at *Constantinople* in the Year 755, consisting of 338 Bishops. Nor was it till above 30 years after this, that this idolatry was established in the Christian Church by the second Council of *Nice* in the Year 788, by the intrigues of the Legats of *Rome*, and under the influence of *Irene* the Empress.

As to the doctrine of Transubstantiation, it doth not appear to have been so much as broached till the 8th Century, when it was so far from being received as the doctrine of the church, that it was warmly opposed by the most learned men of that age, and censured as an innovation. The name itself was no older than the twelfth Century, nor the doctrine ever decreed or established by any general council, till the council of *Trent* in the Year 1551.

And as the sacrifice of the Mass depends on that of Transubstantiation, it must be as novel a doctrine as that; nor is any thing more certain than that the best writers for many Centuries make the death of Christ on the cross, the only propitiatory sacrifice for sin.

As to the communion in one kind only for the laity, this was never introduced till the twelfth Century; and the Council of *Constance*,<sup>c</sup> though they decree the communion for the laity to be received only in the species of bread, yet in this decree they own, that Christ instituted the Sacrament in both kinds, and that in the primitive church this Sacrament was received

<sup>c</sup> L'Enf. Vol. I. p. 386.

ceived in both kinds by believers ; thus impudently did they obtrude their own decree on the world, in opposition to the acknowledged appointment of Christ, and the practice of the primitive Church. And yet the Papists have the face to boast of antiquity !

As to Purgatory, there is not the least mention of it in the two first Centuries, and the notion was first introduced by *Origen* in the third, or rather towards the beginning of the fourth ; though *Bellarmino* himself acknowledges, <sup>d</sup> that *Origen's* Purgatory was very different from that of the Popish church, and derived from the *Platonick* philosophy. And therefore as *Origen's* Purgatory is too late an invention to have the sanction of true antiquity, much more is the Popish Purgatory too late, which though it takes its rise from *Origen's* is quite different from it.

As to the worship of God in an unknown language, this is not only condemned in the most express manner by *St. Paul*, as hath been before observed, but is contrary to the practice of the Eastern and Western churches, for many hundred years ; when the *Latin* and *Greek* were as much vulgar or common languages, as any modern languages whatsoever. Pope *John VIII* in the 9th Century, <sup>e</sup> though he at first censured the *Slavonians* for celebrating Mass in their own tongue, and commanded them to do so no more, yet upon better information he wrote to their King a letter, in  
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<sup>d</sup> T. 2. l. 1. c. 2.

Conn. of Trent, p. 587.



which he tells him, that it was not contrary to faith and sound doctrine to say Mass and Prayers in their own tongue, and therefore permitted the Gospel to be read and Prayers said in the *Slavonian* language. Nor was it till 200 years after, that Pope *Gregory VII* forbid the celebration of divine offices in this way, commanding the Prince of that nation to oppose the people herein with all his forces; which gave occasion to numberless cruelties and slaughters.

And finally as to the use of the Scriptures; that they were universally allowed to Christians for their perusal, is evident from their being translated into so many languages, and from the most express testimony of the best writers, during the first twelve hundred years and more after Christ. Nor could there be any other end of prohibiting them, than to retain the people in profound ignorance, and keep them in a quiet subjection to the irrational, unscriptural and antichristian inventions and superstitions of the Priests.

By this account you see that there is no comparison between the antiquity of the Protestant and Popish doctrines; and that the true genuine antiquity is on our side; and that their distinguishing tenets and practices are mere novelties and innovations that have neither the testimony of Scripture, nor the primitive writers of Christianity to defend and support them.

## N O T E III.

The Cardinal's third note is, *a perpetual and uninterrupted duration*. But this is no distinguishing note of the true church, because Idolatry and Paganism may lay a better claim to this note than the Church of *Rome*, which seems to have began from the first ages after the flood, and continues to this very day amongst many nations of the world.

Besides, as the Cardinal allows in his sixth note, that consent in doctrine with the antient apostolick church is another note of the church, it follows that where this doctrine is departed from, there can be no true church of Christ, even though there may remain the Christian name, and some external profession of Christianity. And as it hath been shewn that the church of *Rome* is scandalously departed from the apostolick doctrine, she wants the best note that can be given of her being the church of Christ.

And tho' there is reason to think that there will always be a true church of Christ on earth, yet this doth not depend on any particular churches uninterrupted duration: For particular churches may grow corrupt and utterly cease, as was the case of the seven churches in *Asia*, mentioned in the Revelations, and yet the true faith and church be still preserved amongst others. And, of consequence, the continued duration of the church of *Rome*,

as a body of Men calling themselves by the Christian name, is no proof that the faith of Christ is not perverted and corrupted by her, nor of consequence that she is the true church.

#### N O T E IV.

The next note is *the amplitude of the church, or the multitude and variety of believers in it*; because the catholick church, as the Cardinal observes, must embrace all nations, and kinds of men. But if this be a good note, I am sure the church of *Rome* can't be the true church; because it is not catholick in this respect, there being but few nations in the world comparatively, who embrace her communion. The Pagans and Mahometans are vastly superior in number to the Papists; and if the different denominations of Christians, such as Protestants, Grecians, Armenians, and others that may be named, are added together, who renounce her communion, the multitude will be much larger than the church of *Rome* can boast of.

Besides; if this be a distinguishing mark of the true church, it must be such a mark as is inseparable from her. But this cannot with any truth be asserted: For in our Saviour's time 'twas but a *little flock*, as he expressly calls it; and for several years it was almost wholly confined to the Jewish nation; nor can it be made appear, that there ever was a time when all nations embraced the Christian faith, much less the faith of the church of *Rome*.

The truth is, the number of believers is a purely accidental thing, and the spreading of the gospel entirely dependent on the disposals of providence. Nations that have embraced the gospel, have had it taken from them; witness the famous churches of *Asia* and *Africa*, which are now no more, tho' they were formerly more numerous than all the churches who are within the pale of the church of *Rome*: And others who now have it not, may, in God's good time, be favoured with it; the church, in the mean time, remaining the same, whether more or fewer nations embrace her faith, or enter into her communion.

The time hath been when heresy itself could boast of numbers, and *the world wondered to see itself become Arian*. But Papists will not allow that this is a conclusive argument to prove that the *Arians* were the true church of Christ.

#### N O T E V.

The next note is, *the succession of Bishops in the Roman church from the apostles to the present day*; a note, which tho' of no significancy, is insisted on by many who call themselves Protestants, as necessary to the validity of all sacraments and administrations in the church.

But to all such vain pretences I answer, that the terms of salvation and communion are fixed by God in the gospel of Christ, and that a sincere compliance with them will secure men of the blessings of redemption, independent of  
any

any succession of bishops and pastors from the church of *Rome*, or any other church whatsoever. The circumstances of the Christian world, I am sure, must be very deplorable, if the validity of all administrations in the church depended on so precarious a foundation. For how shall Christians know and be assured that the succession hath never been interrupted? Who will undertake to shew them the chain whole and unbroken? A single link missing, upon this scheme, unchristians them at once, and leaves them to the uncovenanted mercies of God. And can any man of common sense, or that hath any notion of the moral attributes of God, believe this to be the gospel scheme, or that God hath left mankind to such a miserable state of uncertainty? Is there one word of this absurdity in the sacred records? or of the necessity of such a successive ordination to the efficacy of God's word, or securing the benefits of salvation? In vain hast thou shed thy precious blood, O Jesus, thou Son of the eternal God, if there be no virtue in thy sacraments, unless administered by men who can derive their orders without interruption from thy apostles! Must the efficacy of thy sufferings depend on the precarious claims of those who have no records, no certain facts to make them good? Hast thou made the validity of thy ministers services to depend on the orders they receive from the *synagogue of Satan*?

That some of the Popes of *Rome* have been monsters of wickedness, and guilty of the

most execrable crimes, the Papists themselves allow. And were those monsters the bishops of Christ? Could there be no true ministers, no pastors of the Christian church, without their receiving a sanction from such impure hands? Is it any honour to Protestant Episcopacy, to derive all its claims from those who were not only a scandal to Christianity, but a reproach to men?

Besides; How shall we determine the right when the Popedom was divided, and there were two or three Popes together, anathematizing and damning each other? And yet every Christian must be sure from which of these Popes his Bishop hath derived his orders; and, which is as difficult, that this Pope was the genuine successor of the apostles, if the validity of all administrations depend upon this regular boasted succession.

I will venture to affirm that the proof of this is an absolute impossibility; and that if it could be proved, it would signify nothing, because the church of Christ depends not on the succession merely of any order of men, but on the succession and preservation of the Christian doctrine. Could the Popes of *Rome* prove their regular succession from the apostles, yet if they have departed from the apostolick faith; they are not Christian bishops, and therefore their ordinations are no more valid, than if they proceeded from an *Indian* Brachman, or a *Makometan* Dervise. Not to add that the *Arians* heretofore boasted of this succession, as  
doth

doth the *Grecian* church to this day ; who yet will never be allowed by the church of *Rome* to be the true church upon this account.

The sixth note I have already considered.

#### N O T E VII.

The Cardinal's seventh note is, *the union of the members amongst themselves, and with the head, because the church is called one body, one spouse, and one sheepfold.* But if by the union of the members amongst themselves, he means their being called by any other common name than that of Christ, this note is not good ; St. *Paul* having given it as one mark of schism, to say, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas.* And if he means by the union of the members with the head, their union with the Pope as universal bishop, this can be no note of the church of Christ, because this title did not belong to the Popes, and was not assumed by them, till above 600 years after Christ, unless the Cardinal will affirm, there was no true church till the time of *Boniface III.*

Besides, the mere union of persons one with another, is no note of truth or righteousness. The Psalmist complained in his day, *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed.* And yet this confederacy was no proof that their cause was good. In the Christian church *Arians* have been as much united

united as the Catholicks, Pagans have been as much united as Christians, and *Mahometans* are to this day as much as either. But will this prove that heresy is truth, that idolatry is true worship, or *Mahomet* upon a level with the Son of God?

But supposing that unity is a note of the true church, how will this prove the church of *Rome* to be that church? Are there no differences then of importance amongst the members of her communion? Supposing there is not, yet how have they maintained the union they boast of? Why, by violence, and the terrors of the civil power: By massacres, dragging, and the *cruel mercies* of an horrid inquisition: Or else, by keeping their people ignorant of the word of God, that they may not have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand, that they might be converted and saved. And is an union, promoted by such antichristian methods, a note of the true Christian church?

But how vain is this pretence to unity amongst the members of the church of *Rome*. Even those they call heads of their church, have differed from each other. † *Stephen VI.* abrogated the decrees of Pope *Formosus* his predecessor, drew his body out of his sepulchre, cut off his fingers which he used in ordination, and threw them into the *Tiber*; alledging as a reason, that he obtained the Popedom by perjury. *Romanus* the next Pope, abrogated all the decrees of his predecessor

*Stephen;*

† Platina,



*Stephen*; and as *Platina* observes, this quarrel had such bad influence, that every following Pope infringed, or wholly abrogated the acts of the foregoing.

But this is but a small matter. The Christian church was divided for near forty years together, by the factions of the Anti-Popes, there being sometimes two, sometimes three together, each of them asserting that he was the only lawful Pope, and anathematizing the other, and putting the Princes and people who would not acknowledge them, under an interdict.

And as the heads of their church have been thus divided, so also have the members of it too, and indeed are to this day. Thus the Jesuits and Jansenists are as much divided as any Protestants about Predestination and the like articles; the *Dominicans* and *Franciscans* about the immaculate conception of the *Virgin Mary*. Others of them differ about the infallibility of the Pope: Others whether the supreme power resides in a General Council or the Pope; the Synod of *Constance* determining for the Council, that of *Trent* for the Pope: Others finally, about the obligation of the Pope's constitution *Unigenitus*, and the truth of the doctrines contained in it.

And these differences amongst the Papists are some of them of the highest importance in their scheme, and relate to the foundations of the church, and therefore of much greater consequence than any amongst consistent Protestants, who all of them agree in one com-

mon.

mon infallible head of the church, and in one fixed unalterable rule of faith and worship.

N O T E VIII.

The eighth note, and the only one which I shall further mention, is, *sanctity of doctrine; and the church*, as Bellarmine observes, *is called holy, because its profession is holy, containing nothing false as to doctrine, nothing impure as to morals.* As to this note I would observe, that any person, or particular churches assuming the name of holy, doth not prove that it is actually so. For thus the *Jews* amidst their most abominable corruptions, said to others, *Stand by, for I am holier than thou;*<sup>f</sup> who yet were an offensive smoak before God: Nor doth it follow, that because the true church of Christ, in all ages and nations, hath a just title to the character of holy, that therefore the church of *Rome*, or any other particular church, is an holy church; because particular churches may depart from the purity of the Christian profession: And that this is really the case with the church of *Rome*, may be made evident by almost innumerable particulars. Give me leave to mention a few out of many.

The doctrine of the Pope's supremacy, and of his plenitude of power, and of his being the visible head of the church, is not a doctrine of godliness but gain, and hath been  
actually

<sup>f</sup> Isaiah lxxv. 5.

actually abused to the most enormous immorality. 'Tis in itself an impious invasion of the prerogative and legislative power of Christ, who is the sole head of the church, and hath never appointed any visible head or substitute, under him. Under this pretence, Popes have been guilty of the most execrable wickednesses: They have absolved men from the obligations of the most sacred oaths, broken the publick faith, excited subjects to rebellion against their Princes, warranted private assassinations and secret murders, sanctified unnatural conspiracies, and publick massacres; dissolved matrimonial contracts, and justified adulterous and incestuous marriages, and granted absolution to the most notorious and abominable sinners. I have indisputable facts for all these things, which even Papists themselves cannot deny.

Again, the intercession of Saints and Angels, and the adoration they pay to them, and the veneration they give to images, wafers, pictures, relicks, and the like things, is a defiling the temple of God with idols, and in some respects as fordid an idolatry as ever was practised by the Heathens; who indeed some of them worshipped animals to us detestable, but to them useful and beneficial. Whereas Papists bow down to dead bodies, and even the smallest bones or fragments of those bodies; which had they but touched under the *Jewish* dispensation, they must have remained *unclean seven days*.<sup>§</sup> Yea the law was yet severer: *Who so*  
G
ever

§ Numb. xix. 16, 20.

*ever toucheth a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. And the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation.* And yet have I my self seen, the bone of a dead man enshrined in silver, solemnly placed on the pretended altar of God, sprinkled with incense, receiving adoration from a purpled Priest, elevated to the people, presented to an high-born Imperial Princess, and reverently and devoutly saluted by her on her knees, as if her Saviour had been present, and come in person to demand her subjection and homage. Good God! Is this idolatry, this worship to a bone, the religion of Jesus? Is this the purity of the faith and worship of Rome? *O my soul come not thou into her secret, unto her assembly mine honour be not thou united.*

Again, what is there in their doctrine of Transubstantiation but a mixture of absurdity, contradiction and blasphemy? The Priest he pretends to turn his bread into his Saviour's body and blood and soul and divinity, Presently he adores him, and holds him up to the people for adoration. Then he immediately devours him, digests him, and at last casts him out as an unclean thing, modesty forbids me to mention where.

How evidently are the doctrines of purgatory, private masses, auricular confession, priestly absolution, penances and satisfactions, venial sins, and the like falsehoods, all calculated to promote the practice of sin, and render men  
easy

easy in the commission of it? But it would be an almost endless task, to run thro' all these and other doctrines of Popery, and shew you how they are calculated for the church's gain, and to defeat the great design of the gospel revelation, which is to prepare men, by the practice of universal holiness and virtue, for the reward of eternal life. And yet the good Cardinal assures the world, that his catholic church maintains no error, no turpitude, and teaches nothing contrary to reason, tho' it doth many things above it. But thanks be to God, we know their errors, and detest their abominations, and are as sure that they have corrupted the simplicity of the Christian faith, and the purity of the Gospel worship, as we are that the Scriptures are the infallible word of God. And therefore let me, as an inference from the whole,

Exhort you to beware of all approaches to the communion of the church of *Rome*; for if she is fairly and impartially tried by some of her own notes, she must be condemned as a false and antichristian church. I know very well, that there are amongst us men who allow her to be a true, tho' corrupted church, and who derive their own succession of Bishops from those of her communion, and think that the validity of their own sacraments and orders depends on her preserving that succession entire; and who farther freely allow that men may be saved within the pale of the *Romish* church,

according to the terms of the gospel covenant.

And I own that these and such like concessions may be very necessary to the support of some certain schemes, pretences and claims. But I am very certain it is doing no credit, nor bringing any security to the Protestant cause; especially as those who make these allowances to the church of *Rome*, condemn all who dissent from themselves, as guilty of schism, and all their sacraments and administrations as null and void.

But let us take heed, fellow Protestants, of such large and fatal concessions as these; which those of the *Romish* church actually employ to inveigle and deceive men into their communion. They tell them, that Protestants themselves allow their church to be a true one, and that persons may be saved in and by their communion. And if this be so, What effectual reason can be urged to prevail with men to forsake it, or hinder others from embracing it?

But I think nothing is more evident, than that the church of *Rome* cannot be, in any sense, the true church of Christ, because she hath forsaken both the doctrines and worship of that church. Her doctrine is impure, and her worship idolatrous. The gospel she believes and preaches is a quite different one from what was taught by Christ and his apostles, and she hath made void the commandments of God by her traditions. She teaches,  
forgive

forgive the expression, 'tis not mine, but St. Paul's,<sup>h</sup> *doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.* Her coming hath been *after the working of Satan with power, signs, and lying wonders, with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved.* She leads men to other Saviours and Mediators besides the only one which God hath appointed, even Jesus Christ, and boasts of another fund of merits for sinners to depend on, besides those of the crucified Redeemer. She hath absolutely altered the terms of Christian communion and salvation, and teaches men how to commute with Almighty God, and compound for the grossest immoralities of a wicked life. She hath uncharitably excommunicated all who have protested against her corruptions, and is therefore a schismatical as well as an apostate church. She hath altered the institutions of Christ, in opposition to what she owned to be his will, and the practice of the primitive church, and is therefore *self-condemned*, and guilty of heresy as well as schism.

Now is it possible that that church, that idolatrous, heretical, and schismatical church can be the true church of Christ; or if we allow her to be a branch of Christ's church, is she not a branch that beareth no good fruit, or rather, a corrupted, withered, dead branch of

<sup>h</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3.

of the true vine? Or, to use *Bellarmino's* comparison, can she be considered in any other relation to the true church, than as *the hairs, or nails, or evil humours in an human body, i. e.* such things as men cut off and purge out from their bodies, to preserve the decency and life of them? How then can that part of the church, which hath no vital principle herself, give life to her members? How can they be saved by the communion of that church, which hath no more relation to the true church of Christ, than the dead branches have to the vine, or our very excrescences to the human body.

Were there any of the members of that church here present, I would beseech you by the mercies of God, and the love of Jesus, and the compassion due to your own souls, that you would consider what danger you are in, by believing the errors, and conforming to the practices she enjoins. Can any of you imagine that a man can make his God, and a priest turn a wafer into his Saviour? Can you eat your Saviour and God at a morsel without trembling? Can you trust to the mediation of saints and angels, in defiance to the plain doctrine of an inspired apostle, affirming that there is but *one Mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus*? Will you dare to worship pictures of the invisible God; when God himself tells you, you shall neither *make images, nor bow down to them and serve them*? Will you venture to venerate and worship the  
 dead



dead bodies and bones even of faints, who were they living, would reject such adoration with abhorrence? Is not this barefaced idolatry, thus to give adoration, though of an inferior kind, to mere idols, without any warrant from God, yea in direct opposition to his most express order to the contrary? And can these idolatrous practices be vindicated by any other arguments, than those which the Pagans of old used in vindication of their superstitions and idolatries?

At least, let me prevail on such, if any there be here, to make a fair examination, and to try these doctrines and practices by what, your own priests being judges, is the infallible word of God. As Protestants we desire not to be believed for our own word. We appeal to the most authentick antiquity and authority. And we would have you appeal to, and judge by the same; and if your priests and confessors refuse you this liberty, doth it not look like suspecting their own cause? Must it not be because they dare not trust the decision to that sacred and impartial judge? I know they will tell you, that the Scriptures are hard to be understood. Ask them then, why they appeal to Scripture for the truth of some of their own doctrines, and whether there be no passages of Scripture plain, but just those which they quote? If they tell you, 'tis dangerous to read the Scripture, ask them, why then did Christ command us, *Search the scriptures?* Did the Saviour of mankind give this command only to ensnare men into dangerous errors?

rors? Or is this the only infallibility of the word of God, that it will infallibly lead those who honestly read it into damnable mistakes? 'Tis impiety to assert it, and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God, under whose inspiration it was originally written.

How God will deal with those who, in the *Romish* church, are invincibly ignorant of the Christian faith, and destitute of the word of salvation to enlighten them, I will not pretend to determine. I am far from absolutely excluding them from all share in his tender mercies. However, sure I am that Popery is not the religion of Christ, and that idolatry is represented in Scripture as one of those crimes for which *the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience*. And therefore tho' there may be a possibility of their escaping eternal condemnation in that church, it cannot be as members of it, nor according to the settled conditions of the gospel salvation; and we must, I think, leave them in the same state as *Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans*, to the uncovenanted mercies of God, and to the disposals of his infinite wisdom, who will deal with all men according to equity and truth, and accept *every one in every nation, who fears him, and worketh righteousness*. This possibly may in some men's judgment be counted uncharitableness. But I would fain know, whether the worship of an image, a picture, a crucifix, a dead body, or an old bone, be not as stupid idolatry, and as flat a contradiction to the gospel

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pel religion, and as expressly condemned by it, as the idolatries of Paganism? Will any then vindicate Christians in these idolatries, and condemn the Pagans? Or allow salvation to the one, and exclude the other from it? This is judging deceitfully and partially, and is a very inconsistent conduct. Either let them fairly acknowledge, that idolatry is no deadly crime, nor declared inconsistent with the terms of the Christian covenant, or let them equally censure it where-ever they find it.

But as to those who have been bred up in the Protestant religion, and have the liberty of consulting the oracles of truth, for such to embrace the errors and idolatries of the antichristian church of *Rome*; what excuse can be made for their madness? With what plea can they vindicate so shameful an apostasy? Do they not willingly exchange truth for error, and the worship of God for an impure superstition? Can the traditions of men be a surer guide than the oracles of the God of truth? Or can any one think himself safer in a church, whose faith and worship stand upon human decisions, than in those which are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets? Can that church direct us to a better and nearer way to Heaven, than the Saviour himself? If not, *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God will remember her iniquities.*

But I believe I am speaking to few comparatively, who have thus *made shipwreck of their faith and a good conscience*. Protestant Dissenters are too jealous of their liberties, ever to be brought to sacrifice them to the proud claims of ambitious Priests, and too well established in the grounds of the Protestant Religion, ever to exchange it for the fopperies and deceits of *Rome*. You are acknowledged even by her missionaries *to be immovable*, and they reap their harvest from another field.

Go on, beloved in the Lord, and hold your steadfastness to the end. Know your principles, and continue consistent Protestants. Let the spirit of Popery, where-ever you discern it, be your abhorrence. Maintain the liberty of your own consciences, and allow to every one the rights of private judgment. Authority and blind submission are the foundation and very essence of Popery, and the two grand causes to which all its superstitions and abuses are owing; and whoever they are, that plead for this authority over the consciences of others, and inculcate a blind submission to the Priest as the duty of the Christian people, they are, whatever disguises they may wear, enemies to the Protestant religion and liberties, and avow the most dangerous and pernicious principle of all Popery.

Take heed farther of every thing that may give advantage to the common enemy; and particularly of favouring the principles of infidelity, and of that indifferency in religion, which exposes men to be practised upon by cunning

cunning deceivers, and is indeed a scandal and a reproach to the Protestant name and cause. The abusing liberty to licentiousness naturally prepares the way for slavery; and when persons are indifferent to all religions, they will when danger threatens them, interest invites them, or delusive appearances draw them, be ready to receive any. And it will be a plausible argument in the mouths of Popish Priests and Missionaries to seduce others to their corrupt communion: See the effects of this boasted liberty amongst Protestants! The same men who have rejected our communion, have thrown off their Christianity too! They have renounced our religion, and are grown indifferent to all! And though this kind of arguing from men to principles is fallacious and inconclusive, yet it hath a tendency to make unfavourable impressions of the Protestant cause, on the minds of the generality, who will much easier be persuaded to embrace a false religion, than to have none at all.

I therefore beseech you, by all that is valuable to you as Christians and Protestants, that you endeavour to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour, by being exemplary in the practice of every virtue, especially *with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* Let us beware of a censorious, dividing, and uncharitable temper. 'Tis inconsistent with the

fundamental principle of Protestantism, the liberty of private judgment, and with the genuine spirit of Christianity, which inculcates the most extensive benevolence. Differences of opinion there are in the church of *Rome*, and differences there will be in all churches to the end of time. But whilst we adhere to one rule, and interpret that rule as God enables us to understand it, should our differences in lesser matters divide our hearts, or destroy that brotherly affection, which ought to unite us under our different apprehensions? 'Tis one note that the church of *Rome* can be no true church, because she hath no charity; and curses, anathematises and damns all who will not submit to her usurpations. Oh that the same fatal spirit had never enter'd into the churches of the reformation, to disturb their peace, to distress their friends, and give their enemies an occasion of triumph! Were Protestants like the primitive Christians of *one heart and spirit*, did they like them stedfastly continue in the Apostles doctrine, and were they but careful more generally to practise the virtues of the Christian life, the Protestant religion could not fail to triumph over all the cheats and impostures of *Rome*, and the most subtle attempts of her Missionaries to corrupt and enslave us would be absolutely ineffectual.

Finally, if, as we have been informed, Popery is advancing with large strides into the nation, and numerous converts are brought into the communion of the church of *Rome*,  
why

why should not those who are firm friends to the Protestant religion use some of the self-same methods to prevent the growth of Popery, which Jesuits and others use to propagate it. I am well assured, that if the missionaries who are now amongst us make any harvest, 'tis amongst the lower and poorer part of the nation. And to what is this success amongst them owing? To their poverty and ignorance, cunningly applied to, by liberality on the one hand, and books of instruction and devotion (as they are called) on the other. Their necessities are often relieved by the charity of the Popish nobility and gentry; they have coals provided for them, to support them under the severities of the winter; they have persons to apply to under their illnesses, and remedies freely given them, to heal their diseases: And being subdued by the kindness of those who thus minister to them in their necessities, How can they think ill of a religion that thus prompts men to acts of goodness? Especially when artful books are put into their hands, in which the sound of Scripture itself is abused, in defence of doctrines that are a contradiction to the genuine sense of it.

And may we not here learn policy from our enemies? *Fas est & ab hoste doceri.* What should hinder you from being as generous as they? If the poor are most in danger, 'tis every good man's duty to endeavour to prevent their being corrupted. God hath blessed many of you with plentiful

ful fortunes, and how can you better employ them than in the support of liberty and true religion? Your own plenty should render you compassionate to the wants of the poor. And if those of you who are able, would in the several neighbourhoods where you live, consult the necessities of the indigent, by helping them under the rigours of winter, and directing some prudent and careful persons to make suitable application to them, under their bodily disorders; I am persuaded such methods would have their desired success, and the progress of Popery be effectually prevented; especially if Bibles, and some small Books of Devotion, and others containing the grounds of religion in general, and those of the Protestant religion in particular, were seasonably distributed amongst them: As to which latter article, I beg leave to say, that if the Gentlemen in the Dissenting interest are but willing to encourage such a charity, your ministers will be glad, many, I believe all of them, not only to draw up such Books as may be proper, but to put them into such hands as may most need them.

I have done, when I have only added, that if Popery be really increasing, and if even the<sup>1</sup> Prelates of the Establishment are sensible of it; methinks they should be sensible of the necessity of a stronger union amongst all Protestants, and rendered willing by the sense of their own danger, to take away every occasion  
that

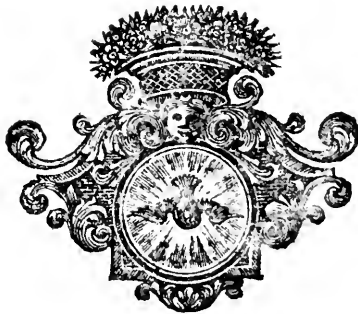
<sup>1</sup> Bishop of London's Letter.



that may divide or discontent them. We are indeed publickly told, <sup>k</sup> *that any contention to shew favour to Dissenters, whilst the nation is alarmed at the growth of Popery, must be a weaknes in those Dissenters who promote it, and perhaps be the only sure means to prevent favour from being extended to them in any future time.* I pretend not to direct those worthy Gentlemen who are in the direction of our affairs, how or when to act: May the God of Wisdom direct them. But as a Minister of the Gospel I will venture to affirm, that no time can be improper to rescue the ordinances of Christ from an abandoned prostitution; and as a Lover of Liberty I beg leave to say, that every time is improper to lay hardships upon faithful subjects, or continue them when laid: As a Protestant, I think there can be no lasting security against the tyranny of Popery, unless we thoroughly renounce all the principles of it, and never oppress men in any instance for their religion and their conscience; and if the danger of its increase be really such as is apprehended, I think all who value the Protestant cause, must be ready to do justice to their Protestant brethren, and thus render them entirely easy: But if this very alarm is made the reason of refusing them this justice, thoughtful men will be too ready to suspect, that 'tis only a political fetch, to keep those silent, who have so long had reason to complain, and to  
 prevent

<sup>k</sup> Courant of January 10.

prevent their application for the recovery of those rights which they have so justly deserved, by their readiness to save even the Established Church in the time of her danger, and by a long and uninterrupted zeal for the Family and Person of his present Majesty, for whose prosperity we daily pray, and to whose government we wish increasing Honour and Success.



*POSTSCRIPT.*



## POSTSCRIPT.

**I** FIND the last paragraph of this Sermon hath given great offence, and been represented as a design to expose and ridicule the Lecture itself. Suspicion imagines every thing, and ill-nature will say any thing, and 'tis almost impossible to guard against either. I have been my self fully convinced that Popery is gaining ground amongst us, and I therefore engaged in the lecture, with no view to act a treacherous part in it, as hath been cruelly reported of me, but to do all I could, with the rest of my brethren, to guard others against the insinuations of Popish missionaries, to pervert them to their antichristian practices and doctrines.

Nevertheless, as the Bishop of *London*, in his circular Letter to the clergy, tells them, that the increase of Popery is not so great as hath been apprehended; and yet as the author of the *Courant*, referred to, urges this increase as a reason why the Protestant Dissenters should make no application for the redress of their grievances, and insolently threatens them if they do: I must have the liberty to say it  
I again,

## P O S T S C R I P T.

again, that thoughtful men will apprehend, that the alarm of the growth of Popery, just at this juncture, to which the Dissenters have been advised and encouraged to refer their hopes of relief, by the gentlemen who have had the management of their affairs, as well as others, is made use of as a *political fetch* to silence and disappoint them; if an occasion be taken from hence to refuse them the liberty of applying, or render ineffectual such an application if made. The *Courant* before mentioned gave rise to the passage complained of; and tho' the observation I drew from it may be displeasing to some, surely it cannot be so to any who are heartily in the Dissenting Interest, or lovers of the religion and liberties of their country. To be censured by such would give me real pain. The censures of others give me neither pain nor fear.

F I N I S.



A S E C O N D  
T R E A T I S E  
O N T H E  
Notes of the Church:  
A S A  
S U P P L E M E N T  
T O T H E  
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

SALTERS-HALL, *January 16, 1734.*

Being the Substance of two SERMONS  
preach'd at the *Wednesday* Lecture at the *Old*  
*Jury, Jan. 22, and 29.*

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By S A M U E L C H A N D L E R.

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Omnes confitentur, in sola vera Ecclesia esse veram fidem,  
veram peccatorum remissionem, veram spem salutis  
æternæ. *Bellarmin. de Nor. Eccles.*

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(Price Six Pence.)





## I TIM. iii. 15.

*These things I write to thee,---that thou mayst know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.*



Having in a former discourse, though delivered in <sup>a</sup> another place, considered the scripture characters of the Church of Christ; and several also of those marks which Cardinal *Bellarmino* lays down as the notes of the true Church, in order to prove that this character belongs to the Church of *Rome*; I beg leave here to resume that subject, because I then left it imperfect. The Cardi-

<sup>a</sup> Salters-Hall, Thursday, Jan. 16, 1734.

nal's notes which I then considered were these: 1. The name Catholick assumed by the Church of *Rome*. 2. Antiquity. 3. Perpetual and uninterrupted duration. 4. The amplitude, or multitude, and variety of believers. 5. The succession of Bishops in the Church of *Rome*, from the Apostles to the present times. 6. Agreement in doctrine with the antient church. 7. The union of the members amongst themselves, and with the head. 8. Sanctity, or holiness of doctrine. As to these, I have shewn, either that they are no marks of the Church of Christ; or that if they are, they do not belong to the Church of *Rome*.

#### N O T E IX.

The Cardinal's ninth note is, *Efficacy of doctrine; for the true Church alone, says he, possesseth that doctrine which converteth the Soul.*<sup>b</sup> But, upon a little consideration, it will appear, that this note is far from serving the Cardinal's purpose: For the efficacy and success of doctrines, may be ascribed to various causes.

Sometimes to the natural intrinsic excellency of the doctrines themselves; their being evidently agreeable to truth and rea-

<sup>b</sup> *Efficacia doctrinæ, sola enim vera Ecclesia habet doctrinam,—convertentem animam. Cap. 12.*



son, and tending to promote valuable and worthy ends: To these causes, the success of the gospel religion was owing upon its first publication, though preached by men contemptible, as to outward appearance, who had neither arms nor eloquence to enforce them on, or recommend them to the world; yea, though the doctrines they preached had no temporal advantages to recommend them, but the profession of them was almost sure to be attended with persecution, poverty, and death. And this success of the gospel, as it was partly owing to its natural excellency and goodness; its approving it self to the reason and consciences of mankind; and its evident tendency to promote the highest happiness of men, in the knowledge, service, and acceptance of God; was, amongst many others, one good argument of its truth, and agreeableness to the will of God. Whereas the peculiar doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, cannot possibly have any efficacy upon these accounts; because they are many of them absurd and contradictory to all the principles of reason, and almost all of them calculated to promote the power and profit of the Priests, and to bring the Church of God into the most abject and deplorable slavery.

The doctrine of Transubstantiation is an insult upon common sense, an objection  
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which <sup>c</sup> *Bellarmino* urges against some of the principles of the *Lutherans*, to shew they cannot be true: For, how can that be the body and blood of Christ, which our sight, smell, feeling, and tasting, assure us is nothing more than a wafer, or piece of bread? How can the individual body of Christ, which is but one, and which is now in heaven, be multiplied into a thousand bodies at once, and be in the same instant in a thousand places, and eaten a thousand times over upon earth, and yet, at the same time, remain whole and uneaten in heaven? How is it possible that Christ, who instituted the Sacrament, could give himself to his disciples with his own hands, see himself eaten, swallowed, and devoured by them, without being eaten, swallowed, and devoured at all; be at the same time broken, and unbroken, within his Apostles, and without them; be at the same instant solid as bread, and liquid as wine; be as big as a man, and as small as a morsel of bread? Was ever invention so monstrous as this? Ever any doctrine compounded of such palpable and stupid absurdities? Is it not an outrage upon every thing called sense or reason?

<sup>c</sup> Aperte repugnat veritati, ut Augustinus scribat, injuriam facere humanis sensibus qui hoc dicunt. De Not. Eccles. Not. 8.

Again, the worship of images, pictures, dead mens bodies, relicks, and the like things, is a contradiction to the plainest dictates of truth and reason, which lead us to the adoration and worship of God, the supreme and ultimate object of worship; who cannot be represented by any sensible appearances, nor approve of any veneration given by rational beings to dead inanimate objects, *that have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor tongues to speak with.*

I am willing to allow, that the worship paid to these things is relative only, or given to them for the relation they have to the objects they represent: So also was the worship paid by many Heathens<sup>d</sup> to the images, temples, and altars, of their Gods; which notwithstanding the Scriptures condemn as a very heinous sin, and monstrous impiety: And with the highest reason; because dead and lifeless images, or pictures, can be no proper representations of the living, spiritual and invisible God; and therefore not worthy of any relative veneration,

<sup>d</sup> Πειραμένῳ δε αἰ τι περὶ τῶν θεῶν εὐσεβὲς διανοεῖσθαι, καὶ μέγα τινῶ ἀποβλεπόντων εἰς τὰ ἱερά τῶν θεῶν, καὶ τὰ ἀγαλμάτια τιμῆς καὶ οἰαίησθαι, σεβομένῳ ὡς περὶ ἀν εἰ παροντίας εἴρα τῶς θεῶς. Ἀγαλμάτια γὰρ καὶ βωμοί, καὶ πυρῶ ἀσέβη φυλακῆν, καὶ πάντα ἀπλῶς τὰ τοιαύτη συμβόλια, οἱ παλαιοὶ ἐδέξοντο τῆς παρυσίας τῶν θεῶν, ἐκ ἵνα ἐκεῖνα θεῶς νομισώμεν, ἀλλ' ἵνα δι' αὐτῶν τῶς θεῶς θεραπεύωμεν. Julian, p. 293. Edit. Spanhem.

because those images, or pictures, cannot in the nature of things have any possible relation to him, or convey to the mind any true idea of him.

As to the images and pictures of Christ, the making and worshipping them, is an absurd and irrational superstition. For besides that, there is no warrant for this in the New Testament records, 'tis impossible to make any true representation of him, as exalted to the right hand of glory, or that an idol made by the statuary or carver, and called by his name, should deserve that outward prostration, or inward veneration, which is due to Christ himself; the wood, the stone, and metal, having no more intrinsic excellency, and bearing no more likeness, or relation to Christ, after the artificer hath formed it, and called it by his name, than when growing in the tree, or buried in the bowels of the earth.

And, as to the images and pictures of the *Virgin Mary*, and the Saints, together with their dead bodies and relicks, the worshipping them is, if possible, worse folly and superstition than the other; because there is no reason or precept for worshipping those persons themselves, and by consequence, none for worshipping their images, remnants of their bodies, or any thing that belongs to them. And if the worshipping them without warrant, yea, in opposition  
to

to the plainest intimations to the contrary, is real idolatry; what name of reproach must the worshiping or venerating their images and relicks deserve? This practice of worshiping dead bodies, and scraps of bodies, is more stupid and absurd than almost any thing to be found amongst the *Pagans*; who, though they often deified their dead heroes, yet either buried their bodies, or let them remain quiet and undisturbed in their graves and sepulchres; and on this account *Julian* reproaches the Christians of his time, because *they* <sup>e</sup> *turned to the worship of the dead and their relicks*. And in another place, <sup>f</sup> he says, *Who can sufficiently abhor your practice, in adding so many new dead persons to him who formerly died? You have filled all places with sepulchres and monuments, though 'tis no where commanded you to kneel before and worship them; yea, in opposition to the words of Jesus, Matt. xxiii. 27.*

Other instances might be mentioned, such as worshiping in an unknown tongue, and keeping the Scriptures from the knowledge of the people; because common sense

<sup>e</sup> Ἐπὶ τῆς νεκρῶν καὶ τῶν λείψανων μετὰ εἰδωλολατρίας.  
Julian, p. 43.

<sup>f</sup> Πολλὰς ἐπεισαγωγὰς τῶν παλαιῶν νεκρῶν τῆς προσφάτης νεκρῶν, τίς ἂν πρὸς ἀξίαν βδελυξήσῃ; πάντα ἐπληρώσατε ταφῶν καὶ μνημείων, καὶ τοὶ οὐκ εἰρήναι παρ' ὑμῖν ἔδαμε τοῖς ταφοῖς προσκυλινοῦν καὶ περιεπεῖν αὐτοῖς, &c. Cyril. Cont. Jul. p. 335.

and reason evidently assure us, that there can be no rational devotion without knowledge ; and that if the scripture be the word of God, and contains a revelation of the divine will to all mankind, all mankind must be concerned to understand it, and must by necessary consequence have a right to read and search it.

And as these and the like doctrines are evidently absurd and contradictory to the principles of reason, so they are plainly calculated, not to promote any real, wise and valuable purpose, but to aggrandise the power of the priests, and to be a lasting fund of riches to the clergy. What an high opinion must the people have of their priests, if they can be brought to believe, that by muttering a few words, they can change a morsel of bread into their Saviour and God? That they can grant them dispensations and indulgences, and authoritatively absolve them from all their guilt? That they can deliver them from all the pains of Purgatory, and send them strait to heaven by the repetition of a few masses for their souls? How large are the revenues that flow from the profitable doctrines of Purgatory, masses, priestly absolutions, penances, and the like superstitions? How vast the influence, which the priests and confessors have over private persons, families, and nations, by auricular confessions, when

when they are let into the secrets of mens conduct and consciences, and have a power to enjoin them what discipline, and penances, and satisfactions they please? The truth is, the whole system of Popery is a scheme of ambition and worldly policy, calculated not to promote knowledge and virtue, and the happiness of mankind, but the dominion and grandure of the priests, at the expence, and upon the most certain ruins of each of these dear and valuable interests. So that let the efficacy of their doctrines be what it will, it can be no evidence that their church is the church of Christ; because that efficacy cannot proceed from the intrinsic excellency of these doctrines, their conformity to truth and reason, and their tendency to promote the real interest and happiness of mankind.

The efficacy of particular doctrines, however absurd and false, and particularly of those of the church of *Rome*, may be very easily accounted for by reasons, that will reflect but little honour upon the success that may attend them. When doctrines are invented suitable to the corrupt passions and affections of mankind, such doctrines as tend to render them easy in their vices, and reconcile salvation with the immoralities of a wicked life; 'tis no wonder that even the generality of mankind, who are led more by the instincts of sense, than

the dictates of reason, should be found to countenance and embrace them; for as *Bellarmino* observes under this very note <sup>s</sup>, *What difficulty is there to instill poison into a man, who is ready prepared to take it?* Hence *St. Paul* ascribes the prevalence of error to this very cause. Thus he tells the *Theſſalonians*, that God would send a strong delusion, that those should believe a lye who had pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 10, 11, 12. And in his 2<sup>d</sup> epistle to *Timothy*, he says, *evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*, Chap. ii. 13.

Some of the doctrines of *Mahometanism* were thus made palatable to the inclinations of those, to whom that impostor addressed himself; and that this is really the case with many of the doctrines of Popery, hath been shewn under a <sup>h</sup> former head.

Again, the prevalence or efficacy of corrupt doctrines, is oftentimes owing to deep ignorance, and the want of means of better information. To this the superstitions and idolatries of *Paganism* were in a great measure to be attributed. This was one reason of the successes of *Mahomet*, and of the efficacy of his doctrine amongst the

<sup>s</sup> Quæ enim difficultas est instillare venenum homini parato ad id fumendum?

<sup>h</sup> See Note VIII.



*Arabians*; and the Papists well know that their own errors and antichristian practices are supported by the same foundation. They have deprived the people of the sacred scriptures, and of all other books that may tend to their information. They rigorously prohibit all inquiries and disputes about religion, and inculcate an implicit faith in the dictates of the church, and represent it as an heinous sin, so much as to question or doubt about the truth of her decisions. And is it any wonder that error should flourish under the protection of ignorance?

Add to this the great subtleties and many arts they make use of to propagate their doctrines; *viz.* those pretended miracles which they boast of in the church of *Rome*, whereby they impose on the credulity of the weak multitude, and instill into their minds an high veneration for the greatest absurdities and corruptions they have introduced into the house of God. Thus to persuade them that the consecrated wafer is the body and blood of Christ, they have invented stories of wafers dropping blood when they have been pierced and cut by wicked hereticks; lively representations of which, in pictures, I my self have seen publicly hung up in their churches, for the admiration and establishment of the deluded people. To confirm them in the worship of images, they tell them of their sweating, moving  
their

their eyes, bowing their heads, and performing many wonderful cures; which are either the tricks of cunning priests, or owing to satanical delusions; it being impossible that God should perform any miracles for the establishment of so impious a superstition. In like manner the liquefaction of St. *Januarius's* blood, the miraculous cures which have been said to be wrought by relicks, and the like rogueries of the priests, are arts to keep up an impure veneration for dead bodies, bits of bones, and the fragments of crosses and tattered garments. Thus also they have feigned apparitions of spirits tortured in Purgatory, desiring the prayers of the living; and of other spirits delivered from pain and prison by their prayers and masses; to propagate the notion, and establish the people in the gainful doctrines of Purgatory and masses. It would be endless to mention all the instances of this kind that may be produced, and the numberless frauds that have been used to impose on the people; many of which have been discovered to the shame and confusion of the authors and practisers of them.

Besides this, they frequently endeavour to support and colour over their doctrines by the sound of scripture-expressions; or by altering the words, and corrupting the sense of it. Thus, to prevent their peoples abhorrence of image and idol worship, they

have sometimes taken away the second commandment; and, to keep up the number of ten, have divided the tenth into two. To prove the doctrine of Transubstantiation, they urge the literal sense of the words, *This is my body*. And by the same way they might prove that Christ is a door, and a vine; and that God himself is possessed of all bodily parts and passions. To prove that holy order is a sacrament instituted by Christ, they cite those words, *Do this in remembrance of me*; which a child may see do not relate to Christ's granting his apostles a power to consecrate the bread and wine, but to their eating the bread in remembrance of him. In support of the doctrine of Purgatory, they urge, *He himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire*; to which they have added, in some of their versions, *by the fire of Purgatory*. Innumerable such abuses may be easily seen by those who will be at the pains to consult their confessions and catechisms.

And to render all these arts, and the like, the more effectual, the *Romish* priests pretend great compassion for the souls of people, and boldly tell them there is no salvation out of their church; that, as Protestants, they are in a damnable state; that Protestants allow salvation in the communion of the church of *Rome*; that they are divided amongst themselves, and that they

censure

cenſure and condemn each other for their differences; and to render all theſe arts the more effectual, they ſtrengthen them with money and gifts, and other the like appearances of charity.

And finally, where all theſe things will not do, they have other methods, not leſs powerful to convince and convert gainſayers, and ſecure the deſired efficacy to their doctrines. 'Tis well known that heresy amongſt the Papiſts is a capital crime, and puniſhed in the moſt dreadful manner that the art of man can invent; and that, according to them, it conſiſts in believing any thing contrary to the received opinions of their church, or not believing in all matters as the church believes. Now how is it poſſible that what they call heresy, which is in reality truth and righteouſneſs, ſhould ever ſpread amongſt them, when they ſcruple no methods of injuſtice and violence to ſuppreſs it in its riſe, and prevent its growth? This hath been their way in all ages, either to convert men by force, or deſtroy all oppoſers of their errors and ſuperſtitions. Thus they propagated and ſupported them in *Great Britain* by fire and faggot; in *Ireland* by the maſſacre of above one hundred and forty thouſand Proteſtants; in *France* by publiſhing cruſadoes againſt hereticks, deſtroying their cities, and murdering thouſands for their religion and conſciences;

sciences; and by the *Parisian*<sup>i</sup> massacre, for which, tho' contrived and carried on, and executed with diabolical perfidiousness and cruelty, a jubilee was appointed at *Paris*, and solemn thanks returned to God, as tho' it had been a sacrifice acceptable to him. And not only thus, but as *Thuanus*<sup>k</sup> tells us, they received the news of it at *Rome* with transports of pleasure; and the Pope and Cardinals instantly repaired to *St. Mark's*, to thank God for so great a favour conferred on the See of *Rome*, and appointed a jubilee over the whole Christian world, for this slaughter of the hereticks in *France*. And I have now by me an oration of *Antony Muretus*, in praise of *Charles IX.* pronounced at *Rome* before Pope *Gregory XIII.* in which he<sup>l</sup> blesses that memorable night in which this accursed slaughter was committed,

extols

<sup>i</sup> Thuanus, Vol. III. p. 140. Edit. Buck.

<sup>k</sup> Ibid. p. 152.

<sup>l</sup> O noctem illam memorabilem, et in fastis eximiam alicujus notæ adjectione signandam! quæ paucorum seditiosorum interritu, regem a præsentis cædis periculo, regnum a perpetua civilium bellorum formidine liberavit. Qua quidem nocte stellas equidem ipsas luxisse solito nitidius arbitror, et flumen Sequanam majores undas volvisse, quo illa impurorum hominum cadavera evolveret et exoneraret in mare. O felicissimam mulierem Catharinam regis matrem, quæ cum tot annos admirabili prudentia parique sollicitudine regnum filio, filium regno conservasset, tum demum secura regnantem filium adspexit! O regis fratres, ipsos quoque beatos!— O diem denique illum

C

lum

extols the king, queen-mother, and brethren of the king, for the share they had in this execrable villany; and calls the Pope himself *most blessed Father*, for his going in procession *to return thanks to God and St. Lewis for the welcome news when brought to him*. And even to this day they support their superstitions by dragoonings, imprisonments and death in that kingdom; and in *Spain*, and *Portugal*, and *Italy*, by the accursed severities of an Inquisition.

You see here the causes of the efficacy of Popery; and is it any wonder it should prevail, under such methods to propagate it? Or can it be any proof that the church of *Rome* is the church of Christ, because her doctrines are successful, when that success is owing to such violent and bloody measures? <sup>m</sup> *Bellarmino* himself, when urged with the success of *Mahometanism*, rightly objects, that *the great numbers who*

lum plenum lætitiæ et hilaritatis, quo tu, Beatissime Pater, hoc ad te nuncio allato, Deo immortalis, et Divo Hædovico regi, cujus hæc in ipso pervigilio venerant, gratias acturus, indictas a te supplicationes pedes obristi! Quis autem optabilior ad te nuncius adferri poterat? aut nos ipsi quid feliciter optare poteramus principium pontificatus tui? *Muret. Orat.* Vol. I. p. 197, 198. *Edit. Lubec.*

<sup>m</sup> Mahometani autem traxerunt quidem multos; sed terrore armorum, non vi et efficacia doctrinæ. Quare ipsemet Mahometus in Alcorano, c. 18, 19. docet, bello cogendos homines ad fidem. *De Not. Eccles.* cap. 12.

*embraced*

*embraced it, were drawn over by the terror of arms, not by the force and efficacy of its doctrine; and that Mahomet himself taught in his Alcoran, that men are to be forced by war to the faith.* If this be an objection against *Mahometanism*, it must be equally so against Popery; which teaches and useth the same methods of propagation, and hath spilt more blood in support of her Antichristian doctrines, than hath been ever spilt by the *Mahometan* princes merely on account of their religion. So that the efficacy of the doctrines of *Mahometanism* and Popery, is owing to the same measures of cruelty and persecution; and therefore, if mere success or efficacy of doctrine be a sign of the church of Christ, *Mahometans* have as much a claim to that sacred character as the Papists.

There is indeed a very powerful influence which Popery generally hath on the minds of men, which is not much to the reputation and credit of it. For when once this false religion hath got hold of their minds, it renders them obstinate, and averse to all information and farther knowledge, and enemies to the very means of their conviction and salvation: It fills them with a censorious, uncharitable spirit, and with rancour and malice towards all who differ from them; it too often prepares them for the most execrable villanies, and changes the natural sentiments and dictates of com-

passion and tenderness into an unrelenting hardness of heart, and an infernal satisfaction in the punishments and miseries of others. For as *Dr. Geddes* observes of the *Portuguese*, tho' all other malefactors besides hereticks are greatly lamented and pitied by them when they suffer death; yet when hereticks are roasted in lingring fires, and crying out under their exquisite tortures, *their sufferings are beheld, by persons of both sexes and all ages, with such transports of joy and satisfaction, as are not to be met with on any other occasions whatsoever.* Such is the spirit of their religion! such the dreadful efficacy of their doctrine!

Whenever these are the natural effects of any principles, nothing can be more certain than that they must be contrary to truth and religion. And, indeed, nothing can be more fallacious than to argue from the prevalence of any doctrines to the truth and divine authority of them: For the *Mahometan* religion is much more universal than that of Christianity to this day; and amongst Christians, *Arianism* could once boast of its successes, and of having proselyted many nations and kingdoms. And at this day, How many nations embrace the reformation, and the doctrines of the Protestant religion? And therefore, if the mere efficacy of doctrine be a certain note of the church of Christ, the Papists must allow that



that we are as much the true church of Christ as themselves; and they have no other way to extricate themselves out of this difficulty, but by saying with <sup>n</sup> *Bel-larmine*, that *Hereticks only deceive men, but cannot convert them to the faith*, which is shamefully to beg the question, but not to answer the objection; and Protestants may with the highest reason retort the Cardinal's words upon himself. The Papists only deceive men, but cannot convert them to the faith. Papists *have indeed the scripture*, but will not suffer it to be read by the people, *and have not the true sense of scripture: Nor is it any wonder that they sometimes pervert Protestants; for men are prone to go down into the broad and easy way which Popery opens; and God suffers it to be so, because of their ingratitude, who having been once enlightned, have not brought forth good fruits, answerable to the light they have received* °.

<sup>n</sup> Majorem partem Gothorum fuisse ab Arianis deceptam. Non igitur convertunt homines ad fidem hæretici, non possunt. *Ibid.*

° Hæretici habent quidem scripturam, sed non habent verum sensum scripturarum.—Neque etiam mirum est quod Catholicos pervertant, nam proni sunt homines ad descensum, ad viam latam et facilem quam illi apperiant. Et Deus id fieri finit propter ingritudinem eorum, qui semel sunt illuminati, et lumini accepto bonis operibus non respondent. *Id. Ibid.*

To conclude this head, the mere efficacy, or want of efficacy in any doctrine, proves nothing what the nature of it is. As error it self hath often-times amazing success, and gains over innumerable profelytes, so truth is often-times despised and rejected; and yet remains truth, though she hath few or none to follow her. Even our Saviour himself was wickedly treated by the *Jews*, and he had but few who received him, or embraced his doctrine. His Apostles after him were opposed and persecuted, and the number of converts they made, but comparatively small with the rest of mankind. And yet they were the messengers of God, and their religion founded on truth, and worthy the acceptation of all mankind; and the reason why their doctrine had no more efficacy and success, was not any defect in its intrinick excellency, or want in the evidence which attended it; but the sinful prejudices and vicious passions of men themselves, who being enemies to righteousness were the enemies of truth, and therefore enemies to the pure and uncorrupted doctrines of Christianity.

#### N O T E X.

The next note is, *the holiness of the lives of the authors, or first fathers of our reli-*

*Sanctitas vitæ auctorum, sive primorum patrum nostræ religionis. De Not. Ec. Cap. 13.*

*gion;*

gion; such as the patriarchs and prophets, then apostles and teachers, and lastly the founders of religious orders; who, as Bellarmine affirms, were pious, chaste, and sober, and endowed with all manner of virtues; whereas Hereticks are all of them very bad persons, and <sup>9</sup> not one of them good.

But I am apprehensive that the Cardinal will not do his church much good by this note: For as Protestants we acknowledge no other authors of our religion but Jesus Christ and his apostles, the holiness of whose lives is a great recommendation of the doctrines they taught; and consequently by whomsoever that doctrine is embraced, they may glory in this, as one evidence amongst others of its divine original; and therefore this is so far from being a note that any one particular church is more the church of Christ than another, that it is an honour which all churches may boast of, who maintain their doctrines in their original purity.

As to all others, we renounce them as the authors of our religion. For in the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants: And though the fathers and doctors of the church may be allowed, some of them, to have been excellent and good men; yet they were fallible and liable to errors, and had their defects and blemishes as well as

*Ex hereticis nullus est bonus. Ibid.*

virtues.

virtues. It were easy to shew this of some of the first writers in the Christian church. Now the real sanctity of good men is no vindication of their errors, and of consequence no argument that the church of *Rome* is the true church, if she hath embraced their errors. The truly primitive fathers however knew nothing of her distinguishing doctrines, and therefore she hath no more countenance from them than she hath from the scriptures of infallible truth. And if the holiness of such fathers add any credit to any cause, this honour will accrue to the Protestant churches, who embrace all the principles they taught from the word of God, and reject their errors because contrary to that word.

As to the ancient hereticks, such as *Theobutes*, *Simon Magus*, *Valentinus*, *Marcian*, *Montanus*, *Arius*, and others mentioned by *Bellarmino*, and censured by him as proud, and violent disturbers of the church; Protestants neither acknowledge their authority, nor embrace their heresies; and therefore whatever were their particular vices, as Protestants are not their patrons, defenders, and imitators, they reflect no more dishonour upon them or their principles, than they do upon the clergy and members of the church of *Rome*.

\* See Note II.

And when the Cardinal adds, that *the sects of his age*, meaning the different parties of the reformation, *sprung from ambition, pride, envy, and hatred*; if this was true, 'tis nothing to the purpose. For if the first reformers were influenced by these motives, yet if they really preached the religion of Christ, may we not say with St. Paul: *Some preach Christ even of envy and strife, and of contention; supposing to add affliction to my bonds? What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached: And therein I do rejoice; yea, and will rejoice*, Phil. i. 15—18.

And indeed the question is not how the reformation came in, or by what kind of instruments it was carried on? but whether the reformation is the cause of truth and genuine Christianity? Whether the main doctrines of it can be proved to be the doctrines of Christ and his apostles? If they can, the Protestant religion will be the true religion; to whatsoever causes the preaching of it was originally owing, or whatsoever may be the characters or personal faults of the first reformers. *Peter* himself denied his master with oaths and curses, and was guilty of great dissimulation, and reprov'd for it by St. *Paul*; and yet these personal blemishes were no just reflection upon the cause of Christianity. Not to add, that God in his providence is oftentimes pleas'd to make use even of bad men to accomplish his own designs, and to over-rule even their vices to subserve the purposes of his wisdom and goodness.

It may therefore be allowed that *Luther* had his faults. And who is without them? But

doth any consistent Protestant pretend to justify him in them? Or do his personal failings prove that he was not to be commended for bravely opposing the corrupt doctrines and practices of the church of *Rome*? But when the Cardinal adds, that *Luther's ambition, and not being able to bear that the publishing the Pope's indulgences should be transferred from the monks of his order to the Predicant friars*, gave rise to his own sect; this is neither candidly nor truly said. *Luther* himself ascribes another reason of his conduct in opposing the indulgences, *viz. 'because the unbounded licence of preaching indulgences occasioned many errors, was ridiculed by some in the taverns, and exposed the holy priesthood of the church to scorn. Yea Maimburg himself, who wrote against Luther, acknowledges that there were very scandalous abuses committed in the affair of the indulgences; and that it cannot be denied but that this gave occasion to Lutheranism'*. An abundant justification of *Luther's* conduct this, in the opposition he began to the church of *Rome*.

But was *Luther* as proud and imperious as the Cardinal makes him; are there no blemishes, no vices chargeable on the great men, doctors, and founders of orders in the church of *Rome*? We must as Protestants be excused from an over high opinion and veneration for them, because

<sup>c</sup> *Istas positiones omnes coegit me ponere, quod viderem alios falsis opinionibus infici, alios per tabernas ridere, et sanctum sacerdotium ecclesie manifesto ludibrio habere, occasione tam effusae licentiae predicandarum veniarum. Seckendorf. l. 1. Sect. 13. §. 27.*

<sup>d</sup> *Seckend. l. 1. Sect. 6.*

we know that many of them were weak and superstitious men, who placed religion in unnecessary abstinences, whimsical severities, and useless ceremonies, more than in real piety, and substantial virtue. Others of them are canonized for saints, only for their blind attachment to the See of *Rome*, and the corruptions of that church; and their zeal against the pure and uncorrupted doctrines of Christ, and the professors of them. Others of them were insolent bloody-minded and cruel persecutors; such as St. *Francis* and *Dominick*, who introduced the Inquisition, and were the occasion of innumerable violences and murders. Such men may pass for saints in the church of *Rome*, which sanctifies the most outrageous wickednesses, when committed for her benefit and support; but with others, who have not divested themselves of all humanity, they will be abhorred and detested, as the plagues and curses of mankind.

Amongst these holy men and doctors, in which the church of *Rome* glories, 'tis pity the Cardinal hath not produced the Popes, those visible heads of their hierarchy, those holy successors of St. *Peter*, under whom, as we are told, the whole Christian flock is united. But the reason of the Cardinal's silence on this head is obvious. He well knew the men, and that he had nothing to boast of in their lives and characters. *Platina* <sup>u</sup> expressly calls many of them short-liv'd monsters; and tells us, that they obtained the Popedom by bribes, that they departed from the steps of *Peter*,

<sup>u</sup> Christ. I. p. 325.

were influenced by ambition, and governed by the most implacable resentments and hatreds. So that if the church of *Rome* is to be judged of by the characters of her Popes, she must be esteemed as the most wicked, degenerate, and profligate church in the whole world.

As to the Protestant laity, it must be acknowledged that many of them are very corrupt, and live very unsuitable to the privileges they enjoy. But when the Cardinal adds, *ex hæreticis nullus est bonus, no heretick is good*; this is a specimen of his charity, and needs no answer. There were, I question not, too much reason for the complaints of the first reformers against many who pretended to embrace the reformation; but were those of the *Romish* communion less criminal? *Myconius*, who was pastor and superintendant of *Gotha*, gives the following account of the miserable condition of the church before the reformation\*. “ The Antichristian Papacy  
 “ was so abominable and foul a beast, that it  
 “ could not be sufficiently described by *Paul* and  
 “ *John*. The passion and satisfaction of Christ  
 “ was treated like *Homer’s Odyssees*, as a mere  
 “ history. Nothing was mentioned about works  
 “ really good; these were mean things. All  
 “ methods were invented to bring in money to  
 “ the priests and monks: They that gave most,  
 “ were sure to merit eternal life. Rapes and  
 “ adulteries were common. These were small  
 “ crimes, easily to be expiated by the papal in-  
 “ dulgence. Whores and whore-mongers came

\* Seckend. l. 1. sect. 2.



“ to purchase the grace of it.” And as to the priests themselves, the canons, monks, and others of the clergy, in the town of *Gotha*, the same author says of them, “ They were esteemed sacred, and such as could merit heaven for us. “ But their behaviour was so very vile and profligate, as that nothing in the whole world could exceed it: For being prohibited matrimony, and not having the gift of continency, they filled the city with rapes, adulteries, and sodomitical crimes.” I forbear to mention many other testimonies of the like nature, and shall only add, that though, to the reproach of Protestants, there are many of them very corrupt and immoral; yet their vices are far from exceeding those of the Papists, even those that are committed at *Rome* it self, not only by the laity, but by their very cardinals, bishops, and priests. So little reason have they to boast of the holiness and virtue of those of their communion.

#### N O T E XI.

*Bellarmino's* next note is, *The glory of miracles*. And this mark he divides into two parts: 1. *That miracles are necessary for the confirmation of a new faith, and extraordinary mission.* 2. *That real miracles are effectual and sufficient for this purpose*<sup>v</sup>. From the first of these, the Cardinal infers that the Protestants have not the

<sup>v</sup> *Gloria Miraculorum. Sunt autem duo fundamenta præmittenda. Unum, quod miracula sint necessaria ad novam fidem, vel extraordinarium missionem. Alterum, quod sint efficacia et sufficientia. Ibid. Cap. 14.*

true church amongst them ; and from the latter, that the true church is the church of *Rome*. Let us consider each of these a little distinctly.

1. Miracles are necessary for the confirmation of a new faith and an extraordinary mission, and that therefore Protestants cannot be the true church ; because, though they preach a new faith, and are not sent by the ordinary prelates, they have no miracles to confirm their doctrine or mission. This is roundly said, but it hath the misfortune to be partly false, and partly nothing to the purpose. For,

1. 'Tis not universally true that miracles are necessary for the confirmation of a new faith ; *i. e.* of principles contrary to such as have been long receiv'd, and embrac'd by the generality of mankind ; in which respect, principles of everlasting truth may be said to be new : For the main principles of all true religion are founded in the very reason and nature of things, and demonstrable to the minds of all impartial considerers by the strongest arguments, and need not the help of miracles to confirm them, and can never be made one jot more certain and true than they are in themselves, though ever so many wonders should be wrought in support of them. Thus the being and perfections of God, that he, and he only, is to be worshiped and adored, that his worship must consist in purity of heart, and holiness of life, rather than in external rites and ceremonies ; and that moral virtue is more excellent in it self, and acceptable to God, and conducive to the happiness of mankind than immorality and vice : These, and the like great arti-  
cles

cles of religion, stand upon the certain and unalterable foundations of reason and truth, and are easily discoverable by mens reasonable powers without any help of revelation, if they will make a right and impartial use of them ; and though miracles may be sometimes proper to awaken mens attention to the consideration of these things, yet they need not miracles to ascertain their truth and certainty, or to oblige men to believe and embrace them. And therefore, whosoever teaches such principles as these, he deserves to be believed and credited for the sake of the doctrines themselves, though he neither pretends to a divine mission, nor gives the proper testimonials of it by real and undoubted miracles.

Nor doth the prevalence of contrary errors, and their having been long embraced by nations and kingdoms, make any alteration in the case: For tho' the doctrines of true religion, when first published, will appear new to those, who have been brought up in old superstitions, which have been strengthened and confirmed by long practice, and universal example ; yet when they are agreeable to, and may be demonstrated by the most evident reason, their appearing new can be no argument against their truth ; and as they have truth and reason thus to support them, 'tis absurd to expect or demand miracles to confirm them. And therefore, though Protestants make no pretences to miracles for the confirmation of their doctrines, and though when they first preached them, they were so far new, as they were contrary to those errors of Popery, which had universally ob-

obtained for several ages ; yet as they were many of them agreeable to the most certain principles of reason, reason was sufficient to demonstrate their truth, without any supernatural evidence whatsoever ; and to expect the testimony of miracles in proof, that angels, and dead men, and dead bodies, images and pictures, old relicts, crosses, and the like things, are not to be worshiped, is as idle and vain, as to demand miracles to prove, that a man is not God, a bone is not a living man, or a wooden cross the person who was crucified and died upon it. Again,

2. Though the Protestant religion was a new faith when first preached, in respect of those corruptions which had for so many ages before prevailed in the church of *Rome*, yet there needed no miracles to confirm and establish it ; because in reality it was no new faith, but the ancient doctrine of the gospel, which *was at first preached by the Lord himself, and afterwards by his holy apostles, God himself bearing them witness, by diverse gifts and miracles, and signs of the holy ghost* ; by which it was abundantly proved to be the doctrine of God, and upon which account all farther proof became entirely needless. The reformation introduced no new gospel, but was only a revival of the old one ; it only cleared the religion of Christ from those corruptions and idolatries, and absurdities, with which the follies and superstitions of men had blended it. And for this work they had sufficient authority and assistance without any help of new miracles, *viz.* the infallible word of God, which contains an authentick account of the religion of Christ

Jesus, and of that original evidence with which it was so gloriously confirmed. What need then of farther miracles for the proof of what God had already set his seal to? Was not that which was given by Christ and his apostles abundantly sufficient? If it was, Protestants have solid evidence to appeal to in confirmation of their religion, even the unquestionable miracles of Christ and his apostles in the first age of the church, which are the sure foundation of the Christian faith, and the only unquestionable evidence that can be safely depended on.

But now what miracles have the Papists to boast of, or that they can alledge in favour of their distinguishing doctrines; when those doctrines themselves were none of them ever so much as heard of in the Christian church for above two whole centuries, and many of them not till seven, eight, or nine hundred years after the publication of the gospel? As their doctrines were never taught by Christ and his apostles, their miracles could be no possible confirmation of them; and by consequence, their faith, as it is truly a new faith, never preached by the prophets of the old testament, nor by the apostles of the new, many ages later than the gospel doctrine, and introduced upon the ruins of it, must have had miracles to support and confirm it, by the Cardinal's own principles; and therefore cannot be receiv'd as the doctrine of God, because it hath not had that miraculous confirmation, which he himself allows every new faith ought to have. Farther,

3. Though I will not pretend to say, that the reformation was a real miracle, yet it was brought about in so unexpected a manner, and by such extraordinary methods, as will justify any sober person in ascribing it to the influence and conduct of divine providence. It came into the world just as Christianity did, in a time of the grossest ignorance and darkness. It was propagated just as that was, by preaching, reason, and argument, and by the sufferings and blood of its confessors and martyrs. The first promoters of it were comparatively mean men, that had neither birth, nor riches to recommend them. It was first published in a corner, and yet had afterwards an amazing success through almost all the nations of *Europe*; so that it might well be compared to the leaven, and the mustard-seed in the gospel. It was opposed as the gospel was by the powers of this world, and all the methods of the most cruel and bloody persecutions. And yet it triumphed over all opposition, prevailed against long established corruptions, and all the arts and violences of men to crush it in its infancy; 'till at last it became the religion of nations and kingdoms, and continues to be so to this day, notwithstanding the numberless endeavours that have been made use of wholly to extirpate and destroy it. And doth not the hand of God appear in all this? May we not truly say, *this is the Lord's doing, and 'tis wonderful in our eyes?* If the efficacy of any doctrine be a note of the true church, surely, as Protestants, we have some claim to it; especially as this efficacy hath been only owing to the nature of the doctrine

doctrine we preach, and not to any subtleties or violences that we have practised on mankind to embrace and receive it.

4. As to the mission of the first reformers to preach the doctrines of the gospel, in opposition to the corruptions of Popery, as they did not pretend to preach any thing but what was contained in the sacred writings, and as they never assumed the character of *extraordinary messengers from God*, the testimony of miracles became absolutely needless. They were generally speaking men of learning and abilities, capable of understanding the original records of Christianity, and therefore capable of explaining those records to others, and preaching those truths which they themselves believed. And this was furniture and qualification enough for the mission to which they pretended; and indeed every man, who is thus qualified, hath a right to preach the gospel of Christ, and to oppose with all his might those corruptions which deform or destroy the church of God.

Though therefore, it is certainly true, as *Belarmine* says, that *the first reformers were not sent by the ordinary prelates*, will it follow from thence, that they had no right to preach the gospel? By no means. For how came those prelates to be *the senders general*? How came they to have the sole right to commission men to *labour in the word and doctrine*? We demand a copy of their warrant and commission for this purpose from Christ or his apostles, and they must excuse us from believing them upon their own word.

The apostle writing to the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse, exhorts them: *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another*<sup>a</sup>. And again, *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*<sup>a</sup>. In his epistle to the Thessalonians, he commands them: *Warn the unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, quench not the spirit, despise not prophecies, prove all things, and hold fast that which is good*<sup>b</sup>. And in his second epistle: *We command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed*<sup>c</sup>. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews tells them, *for the time, i. e. considering how long they had been converted, ye ought to be teachers*<sup>d</sup>. St. James, writing to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, lets them know, *If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death*<sup>e</sup>; by which he supposes one Christian capable of converting another, who errs from the truth, from the error of his way, and saving his soul. St. Peter calls the scattered strangers a royal priest-

<sup>a</sup> Colos. iii. 16.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Thess. v. 14—21.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. v. 12.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 6.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14.

<sup>e</sup> James v. 19, 20.



hood<sup>f</sup>, and commands them, *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, as of the ability which God giveth<sup>g</sup>.* And finally, St. John tells those he wrote to: *Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God<sup>h</sup>.* These, and many other like passages that might be mentioned, are warrant enough for any serious and understanding Christians to teach, admonish, and, if they can, to convert others who have erred from the truth, to try the spirits of those who pretend to be teachers and prophets, and to oppose them if they find them to be antichristian and erroneous spirits. And therefore, though the first reformers had no mission from Popish prelates and bishops, they had what is much better, an abundant warrant from the sacred writings, to protest against, and warn men of the corruptions of the church of *Rome*, and to preach to as many as would hear them, the doctrines of pure and undefiled Christianity.

The bishops and prelates were almost all of them in a confederacy against righteousness and truth. The corruptions of religion were the things by which they maintained their luxury, pomp and avarice; so that it was manifestly against their interest to encourage a reformation, or commission men to promote it. Must therefore Christianity ever remain under those corrup-

<sup>f</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 9.    <sup>g</sup> Id. iv. 10, 11.    <sup>h</sup> 1 John iv. 1.

tions, because it was the secular interest of the bishops and clergy to support them? Must no men preach the pure and uncorrupted religion of Christ, because the bishops refused to send them; and the whole gospel become ineffectual to convert and save men, because the ordinary prelates made their profits from their ignorance, vices, and ruin? Ridiculous supposition! to imagine, that God hath made the religion of his Son to depend on the mission of interested, designing priests; and the preaching of his gospel to be subject to the pleasure of those who are enemies to the purity and governing design of it. The mission of bishops and prelates is in it self a trifling circumstance, of little or no importance, of which there is little or no mention in the sacred writings; and if men are otherwise qualified by the providence and grace of God, by sufficient knowledge, by strong inclination, and a real undissembled piety, to preach the gospel, they have one of the best commissions from God that they can desire, to engage in this sacred work, without any need of miracles to confirm their mission; because every man hath a natural right to propagate truth and righteousness, and 'tis every Christian's certain duty to promote the religion of God and the Redeemer, as he hath ability and opportunity; though all the prelates in the world should refuse to authorize him; or, in the language of the church, by imposition of hands to ordain him. But thus much as to the first part of this note. I now come,

2. To consider the other part of this argument, *viz.* the miracles which the Papists boast

of in confirmation of their religion, and as wrought by, and in favour of their church; or to prove that it is, in reality, the true church of Christ.

1. And here let it be observed, that whatever miracles can be supposed to prove, they can never prove the truth of real absurdities. They can never prove that the whole is more, or bigger than it self; *i. e.* that one individual single body is, or can be ten thousand bodies, and present in ten thousand places at the self-same time. They can never prove that a single body is it self, and different from it self; *i. e.* that a wafer, under the accidents of bread, is really a man; much less that it is God, the eternal, uncreated God; because these are self-evident contradictions, and therefore incapable in their very nature of being proved by any kind of evidence whatsoever.

2. Again, miracles can never prove the truth of doctrines contradictory to each other, or of doctrines contrary to such as have been already sufficiently proved by real and uncontested miracles; because this is absolutely to destroy the very evidence it self, and making it equally to serve the purposes of truth and falsehood; nothing being more plain, than that contrary doctrines cannot possibly be on both sides true. If therefore it is a true doctrine, and hath been confirmed by the testimony of God himself, that *there is but one mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus*; no miracles can prove that angels and saints are mediators as well as Christ, because these are two opposite contradictory

dictory doctrines, one of which must be necessarily and unavoidably false. And farther,

3. Miracles can never prove that idolatry and superstition is the true and acceptable worship of God; that images, and pictures, and relicks, and the like dead and senseless things, are objects of worship; both because 'tis absurd to suppose it, and contrary to common sense and reason; and because God can never give a sanction to his own dishonour, countenance what is contrary to his own glory, or command men to give that worship to the creature which is not their due, but due only to himself the eternal and blessed Creator. And therefore, as these absurdities, contradictions and impieties, are all adopted into the faith of the church of *Rome*, 'tis impossible that any real miracles can have been wrought by God in vindication of them, or indeed that they can be so much as capable of any demonstration or proof. 'Tis in vain therefore that the Papists appeal to the miracles of Christ and his apostles, which were wrought only in confirmation of those doctrines which were taught by Christ and his apostles; and not as proofs of those corruptions, which they have introduced into his church, to the disgrace of Christ's religion, and the manifest perversion of the great design and real tendency of his gospel. Since therefore the miracles of Christ and his inspired apostles were wrought in confirmation of doctrines contrary to those taught by the church of *Rome*, that church wants this proof of the truth of her doctrines, and of consequence this note of her being the true church.

What

What must we say then of all those miracles of which the church of *Rome* boasts, for a succession of many ages? I answer, that supposing any real miracles have been wrought in vindication of her corrupt doctrines and practices, the workers of them are by no means to be regarded and hearkened to; no, not if he who did them were an angel from heaven, because the gospel of Christ Jesus is immutable, and the men are pronounced accursed who willingly pervert it.

'Tis laid down by *St. Paul*, as one mark of the great apostacy from the Christian church, and of the character of *the man of sin, and son of perdition, that his coming should be after the working of satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those that perish*<sup>i</sup>. And of consequence, this power, and these signs and wonders, are not to be regarded as we value our salvation, and would not be given up of God to *strong delusions to believe a lye*. Hence our blessed Lord cautions his disciples: *There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs, and wonders: But, behold, I have told you before: Wherefore, believe it not*<sup>k</sup>.

So that if the Papists teach you another gospel than what the apostles preached, believe them not; no, not if they perform unquestionable signs and wonders. You may assure your selves those signs could never be done by the influence of that holy spirit that guided the apostles, who is the spirit of truth, and can never contradict

<sup>i</sup> 2 Theff. ii. 9.

<sup>k</sup> Matt. xxiv. 24, 25, 26.

his own testimony, nor confirm a religion contrary to Christ's. And therefore, if the miracles boasted of by Papists, as wrought in confirmation of their errors, were real; they were unquestionably *lying wonders* of the working of Satan; wonders wrought in confirmation of a lie; or else the delusive impositions of that evil spirit, to deceive and pervert those, *who have pleasure in unrighteousness, and will not receive the love of the truth that they may be saved.*

The truth indeed is, that many, if not all, of the pretended miracles of the church of *Rome*, are the inventions of idle, superstitious monks; or the impostures of crafty designing priests, to create in the people a reverence for their own corruptions, and to bind them the faster in obedience and subjection to themselves. The legends of their saints abound with the most palpable absurdities, and romantick impossibilities; their miracles have no characters of probability attending them, nor any authentick vouchers to support them. Many of them have been proved to be mere frauds and cheats, and others of them may be performed by men of common ingenuity and dexterity. So that there is no proof of real miracles having been ever wrought amongst them; and therefore, 'tis with as little truth and modesty, that they boast of the glory of their miracles, as of the purity of their doctrine.

## NOTE XII.

The Cardinal's twelfth note is, <sup>1</sup> *The light of prophecy; for as Christ promised the church the gift of miracles, so also he did the gift of prophecy, in the third chapter of the prophecy of Joel.* To this, a short answer will be sufficient.

1. That prophecy can no more prove than miracles, that false doctrines are true, or that the idolatry of the church of *Rome*, is the true religion of Jesus Christ.

2. That the prophecy of *Joel* doth not in the least assure the church that the gift of prophecy should be a permanent gift: Yea, *St. Peter* seems to assert the contrary, when he tells the *Jews*,<sup>2</sup> that the effusion of the spirit on the apostles at the feast of *Pentecost*, was that which was spoken by the prophet *Joel*<sup>m</sup>, i. e. it was the real accomplishment of that prediction by him; and therefore, the continuation of that gift beyond the apostolick age, was not necessary to that accomplishment; and therefore no necessary mark of the true church.

3. If prophecy be a necessary note of the true church, it certainly follows that the church can never be, in some part or other of it, without this gift; because whenever it wholly ceases, then

<sup>1</sup> Lumen propheticum. Sicut enim Christus promittit, Ecclesie donum miraculorum, ita etiam, *Joel* iii. promittit donum prophetie. *Cap.* 15.

<sup>m</sup> Acts ii. 16.

one essential mark of the true church ceases too ; and consequently the church of *Rome* can never make out her claim to this character. Because *Bellarmino* himself doth not undertake to prove that his church was never without it, and only mentions three persons, *St. Bennet*, *St. Barnard*, and *St. Francis*, who had it since the time of *Austin*, *i. e.* about the compass of one thousand two hundred years. And therefore, this gift can be no essential mark of the true church, nor the want of it amongst Protestants any proof that they are not a part of it ; or else the church of *Rome* herself can have no pretensions to this character, which, for the greatest part of above one thousand two hundred years, appears to be evidently destitute of it.

4. Nor indeed is there any solid proof that they, to whom they attribute this divine gift, ever possessed it. The many fabulous legends they have invented, and the base methods they have taken to support their errors, render all the accounts of the prophecies of their pretended saints justly liable to suspicion. Men may sometimes make very probable guesses of future things ; because of a certain concurrence of affairs, which render such events highly probable, without ever deserving the character of prophets, or indeed having a title to the character of good men.

5. The religion of Protestants, which is the religion of the bible, was deliver'd by men really possess'd of a prophetick spirit, and by consequence, hath the confirmation of prophecy as well as miracles. Whereas, the distinguish-



thing doctrines of the church of *Rome* were none of them preached by apostles or prophets, and are not to be found in the sacred writings, and thus have neither the evidence of miracles or prophecy to support them. I may justly add on this head,

6. That amongst Protestants, there have been diverse good and pious men, who have spoken of future things with great clearness, and which have actually accordingly come to pass; and who therefore have at least as much a right to claim the honour of this prophetick inspiration, as any persons whatsoever that can be mentioned in the church of *Rome*.

#### N O T E XIII.

The next note is, <sup>n</sup> *The confession even of adversaries in favour of the church of Rome; whereas the Catholics are never found to praise, or commend the doctrine, or life of hereticks: But this mark proves nothing more, than that Protestants have more charity, or less prudence than the Papists. If Protestants commend any thing that is commendable in any of the writers of the Romish church, they act according to the rules of justice and charity, how much soever they differ from them in the essentials of religion. And if Papists in general censure, and reproach, and revile all Protestants, whatever be their vir-*

<sup>n</sup> Confessio adversariorum. Nunquam inveniuntur Catholici laudasse aut approbasse doctrinam aut vitam ullorum hæreticorum. *Cap. 16.*

tues and excellencies, merely because they differ from them in their religious principles, 'tis an argument that they have neither justice nor charity in them; and consequently can be no argument that they are the church of Christ.

Besides all consistent Protestants unanimously condemn the church of *Rome* as guilty of heresy, schism, and great corruptions in the doctrine and worship of Christ; and though some may allow her to be the true church, notwithstanding all her gross abuses of the christian religion, they are generally such as have favour'd the superstitions of *Rome*, and shewn a very good inclination to become reconciled to it. This was true of *Laud* and his brethren in the time of *Charles I.* and of all those of the clergy in the present time, if any such there be, who are his favourers and followers. They want to maintain the character of God's ambassadors, and the notion of a lineal descent from the apostles, as their successors in power and dignity; and therefore, the church of *Rome* must be a true church to convey the succession down to them, though she hath scarce a single mark of the church of Christ belonging to her.

But the praises of such men are of as little efficacy, as the curses of the church of *Rome*. They neither of them prove any thing at all: And 'tis mere trifling with the world to put the approbation of mortal men against the censure of scripture, and the sentence of the spirit of God. The doctrine and practice of the church of *Rome*, are expressly condemned by the oracles of truth; and therefore, it signifies nothing  
though

though the whole world should justify or commend her.

N O T E XIV.

The next note is, ° *The unhappy exit, or death of those who have opposed the church of Rome.* Thus the Cardinal tells us that *Luther* and *Oecolampadius* died suddenly, *Zuinglius* was killed in war against the Catholics, *Caroloftadius* was killed by the devil, and *Calvin* was eaten up of worms, and died cursing and blaspheming: There is need of but few words to shew the impertinence and inconclusiveness of this mark.

For the arguing from the manner of mens death, to the goodness or badness of the cause and principles they have espoused, hath no foundation in reason or scripture, and can proceed from nothing but superstition or presumption. 'Tis mere superstition to imagine, that God goes out of the common method of his providence to punish the sins of particular persons; or that the accidents which prove fatal to them, and generally happen according to the ordinary course of things, are inflicted on them as judgments for extraordinary offences. 'Tis also great presumption, as it implies a bold and rash determining concerning those secret methods of the divine conduct and government, which can never be known without an immediate revelation.

° *Infelix exitus, seu finis eorum qui ecclesiam oppugnant. Cap. 17.*

'Tis also contrary to the plainest determinations of the sacred writings, and the judgment of the spirit of God contained therein. The wise man tells us, *That all things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and the wicked, to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: As is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath*<sup>p</sup>. And again, *There be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; and there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous*<sup>q</sup>. Sometimes righteous and good men are cut off by an unexpected stroke: *For there is a just man that perishes in his righteousness*<sup>r</sup>; whilst wicked men live in prosperity, and prolong their days: *For there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in wickedness*.

The truth of these observations may be proved by many facts, and therefore, were all the instances mentioned by the Cardinal just as he represents them, they would prove nothing of what he alledges them for, *viz.* that the churches of the reformation are not the churches of Christ, or that the first reformers were evil men and hereticks.

But he is mistaken in his facts, or hath wilfully misrepresented them. Of *Luther*, he says, that he died suddenly in the night, having cheerfully, and in good health, eaten a plentiful supper in the evening: But this is not true; for *Luther* had been in a declining state of health for several months before his death, and had

<sup>p</sup> Ecclef. ix. 2.

<sup>q</sup> Id. viii. 14.

<sup>r</sup> Id. vii. 15.

lived in the constant expectation of, and preparation for it. The evening before he died he supped with his friends, and talked cheerfully with them both upon serious and other affairs. In the intervals of his pains he cried out, *O heavenly father, though I must be taken out of this life, yet, I certainly know that I shall dwell for ever with thee, and that no one shall take me out of thy hands.* And after a solemn confession of his faith in Christ, the agonies of death came on him, and folding his hands together, he gently breathed out his last, and died.

This is the relation of *Justus Jonas*, who was present at his decease, as given by *Seckendorff*<sup>f</sup>, and utterly destroys the credit of the story of his dying a sudden death: But supposing he had thus died, what argument is this of a punishment from God? A sudden death to a good man is so far from being an instance of the divine displeasure, that 'tis rather a very desirable circumstance, rather to be asked of God, than deprecated as a judgment; not to add, that the preservation of *Luther* for so many years, from 1517, when he first began to preach against indulgence, to the year 1546, when he died, in opposition to the endeavours of his enemies to destroy him, is a much stronger proof that his cause was owned, and he himself under the special protection of God, than the pretended suddenness of his death, had it been fact, could have been, that 'twas a punishment inflicted on him by God, for his opposing the usurpations, idolatries, and absurdities, of the church of *Rome*.

<sup>f</sup> Lib. 3. Sect. 36. §. 133.

As to *Zuinglius*, 'tis acknowledged that he died in war, in defence of the religion and liberties of his country: And is such a circumstance to his dishonour, or an argument of his falling a sacrifice to the divine vengeance, or of the badness of the cause for which he fought? What then shall we say to *Josiah*, king of *Judah*, concerning whom the sacred historian writes: *He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left* <sup>1</sup>. And yet this pious prince was slain in war by *Necho* king of *Egypt*: But did this prove that the superstitions of *Egypt* was the true religion, in opposition to that which God himself had established amongst the *Jews*?

As to *Oecolampadius*, he died, as *Melchior Adams* informs us, in a very gentle and desirable manner, not suddenly, but after fifteen days illness, of an ulcer upon the *Os Sacrum*; repeating from beginning to end the fifty first *Psalms*, a little before his death; and with his last breath crying out, *Lord Jesus save me*, in the presence of ten of his brethren, who agreed in this account of him <sup>2</sup>.

As to *Caroloftadius*, the story of his being killed by the devil is ridiculous, and hath no authority to support it; the epistle of the ministers of *Basil*, mentioned by the Cardinal, having never been produced, and being no where to be found. *Petrus Boquinus*, who was at the funeral of *Caroloftadius*, hath exposed this vile

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xxxiv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Melchior. Adams. vit. Germ. Theolog. p. 57. Edit. Francof.

forgery ; and tells us, that he died, amongst many others, of the plague, which then cruelly raged in *Germany*, and at *Basil*, on *Christmas-day* ; and that he was honourably attended to his funeral by great numbers of the academy \*.

As to *Calvin*, the Cardinal's whole account is an impudent imposture ; and *Bolzec*, from whom he takes it, a man neither of morals or credit sufficient to attest it. He bore an irreconcilable hatred to *Calvin*, for having been imprisoned at *Geneva*, and banished from the territories of it, upon account of something he had delivered about predestination. He was originally a *Carmelite* friar, and turned Protestant and Physician, and afterwards returned to Popery again, and prostituted his wife to the canons of *Autun* in *Burgundy* : An admirable witness of this infamous story of *Calvin's* death !

*Beza*, who was a minister himself at *Geneva*, and administered the sacrament to *Calvin* a little before his death, tells us he was naturally of a thin consumptive constitution, which he greatly impaired by long abstinence, and indefatigable study and labour. He died of a complication of distempers, though the immediate cause of it was an *Asthma*. A little before his death, the *Syndicks* and *Senators* paid him a visit, to whom he gave an affectionate and christian exhortation. The month of *May*, in which he died, he spent almost in continual prayer, with eyes lift up to heaven, when the *Asthma* had almost stopped his voice ; oftentimes repeating the words of *David*, *I was silent, O Lord, because thou didst it*. *May* the 19th, he supped with his brethren,

\* Melchior Adami. p. 87.

the ministers, and told them he should never more sit with them at table ; and from that day, to the 27th of the same month, when he died, he lay as one almost dead, and at last departed in the most gentle manner, without almost a sigh or groan, retaining his senses and reason to the last : This is *Beza's* account, who was with him almost continually in his sickness, and at his death, and is an abundant confutation of the scandalous and vile account of *Bolzec*, and *Bellarmino* from him. And, tho' any man of honour and candour would have been ashamed to have retailed so impudent a piece of scandal ; yet, to do the Cardinal justice, nothing less could be expected from him, who lays it down as a certain fact, *That no Catholicks are ever found to praise or approve the doctrine, or life, of heathens or hereticks* <sup>v</sup>.

But, supposing the Cardinal's stories to have been all true ; yet, if such unfortunate deaths prove the badness of the first reformers cause, How justly may the argument be retorted on the Papists ? How many of the very heads of their church have died sudden, violent, infamous deaths ? *Platina* tells us, that Pope *Leo V.* was deposed by *Christopher*, and died in jail thro' grief ; that *John XI.* was taken by the Souldiers and stifled to death with a bolster ; that *John XIII.* a wretch, who, from his youth, had been addicted to the vilest lusts, was taken and killed in the very act of adultery ; that *Benedict VI.* was strangled or famished to death in *St. Angelo's* castle at *Rome* ; that *John XXII.* who promised himself a long life, was crushed to death by the fall of a new chamber at his palace at *Viterbo* ; with many other instances

<sup>v</sup> De Not. Ec. Cap. 16.



of the like nature, that might be mentioned, if such kind of arguments were any thing to the purpose. But I proceed to,

N O T E XV.

Which is *the temporal felicity, conferred by God on those, who have defended the church; for,* says he, *catholick princes have never heartily adhered to God, but they easily triumphed over their enemies*<sup>2</sup>. And for the proof of this he produces many instances out of the Old Testament, of *Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David,* and others; and of *Constantine, Theodosius,* and others, under the New Testament dispensation: But, that this is a very uncertain and fallacious note, will appear by a little consideration; for, if temporal felicity be a note of the true church, it must be such a note as is peculiar to, and inseparable from it, and as never doth or can agree to any false and antichristian church whatsoever; for no demonstration can be plainer than this, that if temporal felicity oftentimes belongs to the false church, it can never be a discriminating note, or mark, of the true one.

Now, though *Moses,* and *David,* and other good princes amongst the *Jews,* had very signal successes from God; and, though an adherence to true religion and virtue, hath a tendency to secure princes and nations the divine protection and blessing; yet, that good princes have not been always successful against bad ones, is evident from the instance before mentioned of *Jo-*

<sup>2</sup> Felicitas temporalis, divinitus iis collata, qui ecclesiam defenderunt. Nunquam enim catholici principes ex animo Deo adhæserunt, quin facillime de hostibus triumpharent.

*fiab*, who was slain by the idolatrous King of *Egypt*; and from the *Maccabees*, of whom *Judas Maccabæus* was slain fighting against *Bacchides*, and his army routed: *Jonathan*, his brother, was treacherously seized and slain by *Tryphon*: *Simon*, his brother, was traiterously murdered by *Ptolomy* his son-in-law; whereas the Cardinal produces the *Maccabees*, as instances to prove the temporal prosperity of good princes, and their triumphs, by the help of God, over their enemies.

But, supposing no instances could be produced of *Jewish* princes, but what had been prosperous, were not the kings of the *beathen* nations altogether as successful? How often were the *Jews* themselves oppressed, beaten, enslaved, and carried into captivity by them? What were the successes of their most fortunate princes in comparison of those of *Tiglathphilesar*, *Salmanasar*, *Nebuchadonosor*, and others, to whom they were successively tributaries and subjects? Now, if temporal felicity, successes, victories, largeness of empire, and multitude of riches, are marks of the true church, we must not look for the church amongst the *Jews*, but amongst the *beathen* nations and princes, who could oftentimes boast of this note, and possessed it in a much more remarkable manner than the *Jewish* princes and nation ever did.

Besides, if temporal felicity be a mark of the church, where was the church of God in the days of *Elijah*? *Abab* was an idolatrous prince, and a great encourager of idolatry in his kingdom; and the *Jews* were so universally in the kings measures, that *Elijah* complains to God: *The children of Ijrael have forsaken thy*

covenant, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away<sup>a</sup>. 'Tis true God tells him, *I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him*<sup>b</sup>. But they were oppressed, and persecuted, and had not one mark of temporal prosperity to prove them to be the church of God.

Much less can such prosperity be a discriminating mark of the christian church. The Cardinal, elate with his own purple, titles, emoluments, splendor, and riches, forgot, surely, the circumstances and doctrine of Jesus Christ; that he himself was despised and rejected of men, and at last crucified and slain by wicked and ungodly hands; and that he taught, that whosoever would become his disciple, *must take up his cross and follow him*.

Nor had the apostles of our Lord any thing of the glare of worldly grandure and prosperity to attract the eyes and allure the hopes of mankind: No, they *approved themselves the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, and distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, and in fastings*<sup>c</sup>. And as to the generality of those they converted, St. Paul tells the *Corinthians: Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish, weak, base, and despised things of the world, that no flesh should glory in his presence*<sup>d</sup>. And as to

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings xix. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Id. Ver. 18.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 4; 5.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. i. 26, &c.

their doctrine they taught, *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution<sup>c</sup>; and that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God<sup>e</sup>.*

And accordingly for three hundred years, at least, the christian church had not much of this mark of the Cardinal's belonging to her, but was exposed to, and harrassed by perpetual persecution, when almost every year produced new confessors and martyrs, and the very name of a Christian was made criminal. How then can that be a discriminating mark of the church of Christ, which that church wanted for three hundred years? Or are the essential marks of it altered since that time? Protestants will expect some good authority for this before they will easily believe it: Besides, what will become of this note in the days of antichrist, when as the Cardinal allows, *such will be the cruelty of the persecution under him, as to hinder all the publick exercises of true religion<sup>e</sup>?* If this be true, and yet if, as he affirms against *Sotus<sup>h</sup>*, that most cruel persecution shall not wholly extinguish the faith and religion of Christ; then the true church will and may subsist without temporal prosperity, even in circumstances of the most dreadful persecution; and therefore, the Cardinal, as he begins his notes with a mere name, ends them with a manifest contradiction, affirming temporal prosperity to be a distinguishing note of the true church, when, at the same time, he allows it can and will subsist without it.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 12.

<sup>e</sup> De Rom. Pont. l. 3. c. 4.

<sup>f</sup> Acts xiv. 22.

<sup>h</sup> Id. Ibid. c. 17.

As to all the instances he brings of the prosperity of Christian princes, they are nothing to the purpose ; since it may be easily proved, that Catholick princes have often come to violent ends, and been very unfortunate in their wars. *Henry III.* and *IV.* of *France*, were both murdered by assassins : *Mary*, Queen of *Scotland*, lost her head upon the block : And *James* the second of *England*, a zealot for *Popery*, was forced to abdicate his crown, and died in exile : How many victories have been gained over Christian princes by the *Turks*? How many by Protestant hereticks over Catholick kings? Queen *Elizabeth*, an heretical queen, triumphed over the invincible *Armada*, and baffled all the power of *Spain*, and had a glorious reign of above forty four years continuance : *Lewis XIV.* of *France*, that most Christian king, had his armies often defeated, and all his lawrels taken from him ; and might have been deprived of his kingdom too by an heretical general, had it not been for the treachery of faithless men, who betrayed their country, and were hastily introducing a Popish pretender. *Italy* it self, the seat of the beast, is at this day the seat of war ; and Catholick princes are devouring each other, whilst the chief Protestant powers are looking on at a distance, and their subjects enjoying the blessings of peace and plenty. So fallacious is this argument of temporal felicity, and so little conclusive for the cause of him that brings it. And thus have I gone through these fifteen notes ; and shewn you that many of them are impertinent and false, and no notes at all of the church of Christ ; and that those of them that are good, do not belong to the church of *Rome* : So that, as she hath

no true marks of the church of Christ belonging to her, she ought to be esteemed and avoided by all as an antichristian church.

And truly she hath the marks of such a church evidently belonging to her. Had St. *Paul* been witness to the insolence and impiety of the Popes, those heads of the church of *Rome*, he could not have given a more exact description of them, than he hath done in *the man of sin, and son of perdition* <sup>i</sup>.

1. He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or is worshiped, 2 *Thess.* ii. 4.

2. He sitteth as God, in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God, *Ibid.*

3. His coming is after the working of satan, with power, and signs, and lying wonders, and all deceiveableness of unrighteousness, *Ver.* 9, 10.

4. The seat of this beast is mystical *Babylon*, *Rev.* xviii. 5. that great city,

5. Which hath seven heads or mountains, *Rev.* xvii. 9.

6. In which dwells the woman, that great whore, which is arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, *Ver.* 4.

7. That sits upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, *ver.* 3. Such as, *Lord God, Most Holy Father; Optimus, Maximus, Greatest and Best.*

8. That reigneth over the kings of the earth, *Rev.* xvii. 18.

9. That sits upon many waters, which are the people, multitudes, and nations, and tongues, that she hath bewitched with her idolatries, *Ver.* 15.

10. Which hath gotten drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, *Ver.* 6.

11. Upon

11. Upon her forehead this name is written, MYSTERY, *Rev.* xvii. 5. Transubstantiation.

12. The merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies, *Rev.* xviii. 3. by the sales of indulgences, masses, relicks, *agnus Dei's*, and the like merchandize of the priests of *Rome*.

13. She deals in slaves and souls of men, *Ver.* 13.

14. She teaches doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving, *1 Tim.* iv. 1, &c. And,

15. She hath beguiled men by a voluntary humility; and hath introduced and established the worship of Angels, *Colof.* ii. 18. and the honouring *Mabuzzims*, i. e. the souls of dead men, with gold, and silver, and precious stones, and valuable things, by the invocation of saints, veneration of their relicks and images, both which are adorned in the church of *Rome* in the most sumptuous and costly manner.

These fifteen notes I would oppose to the Cardinal's, and I, in my conscience, think they every one belong to the church of *Rome*: And as these are evidently the marks of Antichrist, of that beast which it was prophesied should ascend out of the bottomless pit, let us all take heed how we worship or receive her mark: *For, if any man worship the beast, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation*<sup>k</sup>. And when we think of the souls of those which

<sup>k</sup> *Rev.* xiv. 10.

*she hath slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held, let us, in abhorrence of this impiety and cruelty, cry out: HOW LONG, O LORD, HOLY AND TRUE, DOST THOU NOT JUDGE AND AVENGE THEIR BLOOD, ON THEM THAT DWELL ON THE EARTH !*

Adhere therefore, my brethren, to the Protestant religion, I mean the religion of the New Testament, which contains the whole of the Christian scheme, and is your surest guide to salvation and happiness. If, indeed, you are in love with slavery, and would have lordly priests tyrannize over your consciences, your persons, and estates; if you choose ignorance instead of knowledge, superstition and idolatry instead of pure and acceptable religion, and regard more the inventions of men than the commands of God, Popery is the religion ready for your acceptance: But, if you love your God, your Redeemer, your souls, your bodies, your children, your estates, and country, Popery must be your abhorrence, which is a religion only fit for slaves and fools; who have sacrificed all the valuable interests of mankind, or have not sense sufficiently to prize them. Be thankful to God therefore for the privileges you enjoy; educate your children firmly in the principles of civil and religious liberty. Walk worthy your obligations and privileges, that God may not be provoked to withdraw his protection from you, nor to give you up into the hands of men, who where ever they prevail bring ruin and slavery, inquisitions and tortures with them; and whose true character it is, **THAT THEIR TENDER MERCIES ARE CRUELITIES.**

**F I N I S.**



THE  
SUPREMACY  
OF  
St. P E T E R

AND THE  
Bishops of *Rome* his Successors:

CONSIDER'D IN A

S E R M O N

Preached at *SALTERS-HALL*,  
*January 23, 1734-5.*

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By *DANIEL NEAL*, M. A.

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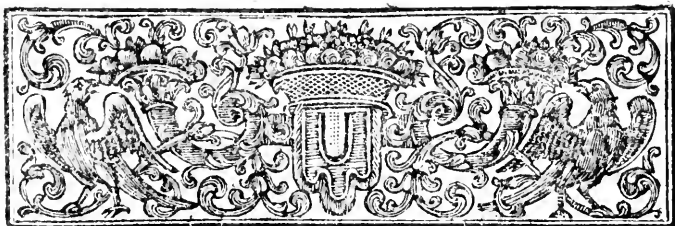
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M A T T. xvi. 18, 19.

18. *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*
19. *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*



W H E N the Christian religion was first preached among the Gentiles, it prevailed by its own divine excellence and purity; but in process of time, the ambition and avarice of men deformed its native beauty, and weakened its influence, by blending it with worldly power, till by degrees the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which consists in righteousness and peace, was changed into a temporal monarchy over the bodies and souls of men under one sovereign Pontiff, who arrogated the title of *Successor of St. Peter*, and *Vicar-General of Christ upon Earth*.

When the *Roman* empire became Christian, the EMPERORS assumed the supreme power in ecclesiastical affairs, and maintained it some hundreds of years.<sup>a</sup> They confirmed the elections of bishops, called councils, and established their canons by an Imperial edict: They appointed judges for religious causes, and deposed bishops that were lapsed into heresy. *Eusebius* therefore, in the life of *Constantine*, calls him *κοινος ἑπισκοπος*, the general bishop, or director of all things relating to the external polity of the church. But when the empire was divided and broken, by the irruption of the barbarous nations, the bishop of *Rome* started his claim to a primacy of jurisdiction over all Christian bishops; and taking advantage of the distractions of the empire, entirely threw off the Imperial yoke, about the IXth or Xth century, and assumed an absolute authority, not only over the Clergy, but over Kings and Emperors, and the whole Christian world, in all causes civil and ecclesiastical. Some ages after, there was a fierce contest about the supremacy of the Pope over the whole *collective body of the church*.<sup>b</sup> And tho' this point was not absolutely determined in the council of *Trent*, *Bellarmino*, the celebrated *Romish* champion, and his followers, have declared it unlawful to appeal from the sentence of the Pope to any future general council.

'Tis

<sup>a</sup> *Spanh. Ec. Hist.* p. 1102.

<sup>b</sup> *Sec. xv.*

'Tis a vast and boundless empire of superstition and slavery that is formed upon this usurpation; persons of all ranks are bound to believe whatever the Pope decrees, and to obey all his *bulls* on pain of damnation. If sovereign princes dare resist him, or refuse obedience to his arbitrary and imperious dictates, the trumpet is sounded to sedition, subjects are absolved from their allegiance, and commanded to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in fetters of iron. If his Holiness is pleased to interdict whole kingdoms, the publick worship of God must cease, and their temples be shut up till they return to their duty ----- Vast contributions have been raised, and immense sums paid annually into the Pope's coffers, by *Peter's-pence*, *the first fruits and tenths of the clergy*, the sale of *indulgences*, *Agnus Dei's*, and other holy wares of the like kind, for the support of his unrighteous dominion. It was usual in *England*, before the reformation, to levy a *tenth*, and sometimes a *fifth* of all ecclesiastical livings, for the service of the church, or some expedition into the Holy Land, which considering the vast number of Religious Houses in those times, produced an incredible revenue. Upon a computation, made by order of king *Henry III.* in the year 1245, it appeared, that more money was carried out of *England* annually by the Pope's authority, than all the revenues of the crown put together. And without doubt, the

the whole riches of the nation had been conveyed away thro' this channel, beyond recovery, had not the statutes of *Provisors* and *Premunire* taken place. ---- Fierce and bloody wars have been kindled in the Christian world by his direction, not to mention the more compendious ways of dispatching hereticks by poison or murdering now and then an hundred thousand in cold blood, as in the massacres of *Ireland*, *Paris*, and the valleys of *Piedmont*. Our nation has been a remarkable example of all these in their turns. Never did Popery triumph with less controul in all its false and bloody colours, than in this island for several hundred years. And when the all-wise Providence of God raised up those glorious instruments of the Reformation; who delivered us from such barefaced usurpation, our holy mother the church became as merciless as she had been tyrannical and insatiable, and in the greatness of her charity excommunicated our rulers; dissolved the government, and doomed our fore-fathers, with all their posterity, to temporal misery, and eternal perdition.

How monstrous and groundless soever this empire may appear, it has had the most publick and solemn sanctions of their church.

In the *Lateran* council, it was decreed,  
 “ That the *Roman* High-Priest holds a primacy  
 “ cy over the universal church, as successor of  
 “ St. *Peter*, prince of the apostles; that he is  
 “ the true lieutenant of Christ, and head of  
 “ the church; the father and doctor of all  
 “ Christians,

“ Christians, to whom all power is committed  
 “ to feed, direct, and govern the Catholick  
 “ church under Christ.” Hence he claims  
 the sole right of defining points of doctrine,  
 and deciding controversies of faith, without  
 liberty of appeal, even to a general council;  
 and of binding and loosing, opening and shut-  
 ting the gates of heaven at his pleasure. To  
 secure these powers, with many others of the  
 like extravagant nature, he exacts the most  
 solemn oaths from his clergy, and particular-  
 ly from the bishops, who swear, “ To be  
 “ faithful and obedient to St. *Peter*, and to  
 “ the holy *Roman* church, and our Lord the  
 “ Pope his successor, to receive and execute  
 “ all his commands, to discover all plots and  
 “ conspiracies against him, to preserve and  
 “ defend the royalties of St. *Peter* to the ut-  
 “ most of their power, and to persecute and  
 “ oppose all hereticks, schismaticks, and re-  
 “ bels to our said sovereign lord the Pope, or  
 “ his successors.”<sup>d</sup> So that all clergymen of  
 the church of *Rome*, not born within the  
 verge of the Ecclesiastical State, are subjects of  
 a foreign power, and bound by the most sa-  
 cred ties to lay violent hands on all who  
 profess a religion different from their own.----  
 Nor is less care taken to secure the allegiance  
 of the Lay-converts, who upon their reception  
 into the *Romish* communion, are obliged to  
 make the following solemn profession of their  
 faith; “ I acknowledge the holy, catholick,  
 “ apostolick,

<sup>d</sup> *Spanh. Ecc. Hist.* p. 1830.

“ apostolick *Roman* church, for the mother  
 “ and mistress of all churches, and I promise  
 “ true obedience to the bishop of *Rome*, suc-  
 “ cessor to St. *Peter*, prince of the apostles,  
 “ and vicar of Jesus Christ; and I do un-  
 “ doubtedly receive and profess all other  
 “ things defined and declared by the sacred  
 “ canons, general councils, and particularly  
 “ the council of *Trent*, and I do anathema-  
 “ tize all things contrary thereunto, and all  
 “ heresies which the church has condemned,  
 “ rejected, and anathematized.”

This is the current doctrine of the *Roman* church, which no man can reject without being reputed an enemy to the Apostolick See, and is esteemed of such importance, that Pope *Boniface VIII.* in one of his decrees has declared and pronounced it of *necessity to salvation*: Cardinal *Bellarmino* says, the doctrine of the supremacy is a *fundamental article* of their church: And we must concur with them in allowing this to be the basis of the whole controversy, and if well established, that their church is built upon a *rock*; but if it stands condemned by the concurrent testimony of Scripture, antiquity, and reason, the foundations of Popery are blown up, and the unwieldy fabrick falls to pieces.

Let us therefore consider, *First*, the evidence by which this extravagant claim is supported:

And then, the arguments that are brought to encounter it.

First,



First, *We are to consider the evidence which the Papists produce to support the above-mentioned supremacy.* Had our Lord appointed a vicar-general on earth, we might expect to meet not only with his name in Scripture, but with the time and manner of his instalment, and with the deed of conveyance to his successors, in the most plain and significant words; or at least that it should be read in every page of antiquity: But if the most ancient fathers of the church consent in any thing, it is in a general silence about this matter: The whole stress of the evidence is therefore laid upon the following obscure and metaphorical passages of Scripture,

The principal of which is in the first verse of my text; *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.* Here they argue (in their late profession of faith for the reception of converts into the church) “from the very  
 “ name of *Peter*, or *Cephas*, which signifies  
 “ a *Rock*; which name our Lord, who does  
 “ nothing without reason, gave to him who  
 “ before was called *Simon*, to signify that he  
 “ should be as a *rock* or *foundation* upon  
 “ which he would build his church.” But some learned men interpret the *rock*, of the confession of *Peter's* faith, mentioned a verse or two before, where our Lord having asked his disciples, whom men said he was, addresses to his apostles; *Whom say ye that I am?* *Simon Peter* answered and said, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.* Whereupon, after

a commendation of his faith, our Lord replies, v. 16. *I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon THIS ROCK, that is, upon the confession thou hast made of me, I will build my church.* This interpretation is countenanced by many doctors and fathers of the antient church. St. *Chrysoſtome*, in his comment upon the place, ſays, Upon the rock, that is, upon the faith of Peter's confession, I will build my church. And again, He did not build the church upon the man Peter, but upon his faith.<sup>e</sup> *Theodoret*, St. *Auſtin*, and ſome of the Popiſh writers themſelves, are of this mind.<sup>f</sup>

But admitting, with St. *Cyprian* and others, Peter himſelf was the rock, What reſemblance is there between a rock and a governor? at leaſt, What aſſurance can we have, that the metaphor precisely imports this ſenſe, when it may as fairly be interpreted to another? The rock of the church may ſignify its foundation or beginning, and thus it may have a particular reſpect to St. Peter, who laid the foundation of the firſt Chriſtian church at *Jeruſalem*, by his excellent ſermon, *Acts* 2d,<sup>g</sup> and made the firſt Gentile converts in *Ceſarea*, according to the inſtructions he received afterwards, by a viſion from heaven.<sup>h</sup> And this was all the honour he claimed, when ſtanding up in the council

<sup>e</sup> *Chryſoſt.* in John i. 50.

<sup>f</sup> More teſtimonies to this purpoſe may be ſeen in Dr. *Barrow's* learned treatiſe on the Supremacy, p. 56, &c.

<sup>g</sup> Vid. *Whitby* in loc.

<sup>h</sup> *Acts* x. 9, &c.

cil at *Jerusalem*, he said, *Men and brethren, ye know that a good while ago God chose me out among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should bear the word.*<sup>h</sup> But in this work *St. Peter* could have no successor, because that would be in effect to say, the foundations of the Christian church were not yet laid, which was fully accomplished above sixteen hundred years ago.

But if by the *rock* we are to understand the foundation upon which *the church's faith is built*, it can have no particular reference to *St. Peter*, because the Scripture represents our Lord himself as the foundation and corner stone of his church: *The stone which the builders refused (says the Psalmist) the same is become the head of the corner.*<sup>i</sup> Which passage our Saviour applies to himself, *Matt. xxi. 42.* And it is an honour in which he will not be rival'd, for *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ.*<sup>k</sup> But next under him, the twelve apostles are the foundations and pillars of the Christian church, who were equally commissioned to preach the Gospel to all nations, and furnished with extraordinary abilities and powers for that purpose: *Ye are built (says St. Paul to the Ephesians) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, i. e. upon their doctrine, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.*<sup>l</sup> Here is no particular mention of *St. Peter*, which

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one

<sup>h</sup> Acts xv. 7.<sup>i</sup> Psal. cxviii. 20.<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 11.<sup>l</sup> Eph. xi. 30.

one might reasonably have expected, had he been prince of the apostles. *You say the church is founded on Peter, (says St. Hierom) but the same is built upon all the apostles. The twelve apostles were the immutable pillars of orthodoxy, the rock of the church, (saith another antient author). And St. Basil adds, That Peter was but one of the mountains upon which the Lord did promise to build his church.*<sup>m</sup> This is the language of all antiquity; and whatever rank Peter might hold among the apostles, or what peculiar regards he might claim from his countrymen the Jews, as the *apostle of the circumcision*, it is certain he did not equal the apostle Paul among the Gentiles: St. Paul was properly their apostle, and he glories in it; *I am the apostle of the Gentiles (says he) and Grace was given me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles:*<sup>n</sup> In this province he laboured more abundantly than the rest,<sup>o</sup> and with greater success, striving to preach the Gospel where Christ had not been named, lest he should build upon another's foundation; on which account he certainly deserves the highest honours.

But if after all, the Papists will build their church upon the *supremacy of St. Peter*, let them remember that upon this very *rock* it has once split; the *supremacy* being the first point of controversy that made way for the Reformation. This cut off the *British* Islands from

<sup>m</sup> *Ibid.* Barrow, p. 58.

<sup>n</sup> Rom. xi. 13.

<sup>o</sup> Rom. xv. 20.

from that idolatrous communion, and seems to make a reconciliation impracticable. Had this been given up, *England* and *Rome* had been united more than once since that time; but this keeps her wounds open, and is, in my humble opinion, that stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, which will one time or other fall upon her, and grind her to powder.

The second passage to support the supremacy of *St. Peter* follows in the latter part of my text; *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* “Where (says the late Catechism) under the figure of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, our Lord ensured to *Peter* the chief authority in his church; as when a king gives to one of his officers the keys of a city, he thereby declares that he makes him governor of that city.” Are the keys then the ensigns of supreme authority? The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had them in our Saviour’s time, and yet were subject to the High-priest; and ’tis no unusual thing for masters of families to entrust their keys with servants without authorising them to dispose of their treasure. The plain meaning of the passage is this: The *kingdom of heaven* is the kingdom of the Messiah, and the *keys* are *St. Peter’s* commission to open the gates of it to the *Gentiles*. It follows, *whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*; that is, what-

whatever you shall declare to be forbidden under pain of my displeasure, shall render the offender obnoxious to my wrath; and whatsoever things ye shall loose on earth, tho' once required by the law of *Moses*, men shall be allowed to do them without incurring my displeasure. But whatever is meant by this grant, nothing was peculiarly promised to *St. Peter*, because in other places it is given in common to all the apostles, *Matth. xviii. 18. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever YE shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever YE shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* Again, when our Lord appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, *he breathed upon them, and said, Receive ye the holy Ghost; as the Father has sent me, even so I send you; whosesoever sins YE remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins YE retain, they are retained.*<sup>p</sup> The apostles had the discerning of spirits, and the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost to direct their judgments in the exercise of their extraordinary powers; and if his *Holiness of Rome* can convince the world, he is possessed of the same infallible Spirit, I think all mankind should kiss his slipper, and apply to him in the most humble manner, for an admission into the kingdom of heaven.

A third passage insisted upon by the advocates for *St. Peter's* supremacy is *Luke xxii. 31, 32. The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have thee, that he might winnow thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy*

<sup>p</sup> John xx. 23.

*thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* In which text (say the Romanists) “ our Lord not only declared “ his particular concern for *Peter*, in praying “ that his faith might not fail, but also committed to him the care of his brethren, the “ other apostles, in charging him to confirm “ and strengthen them.” The words have a manifest reference to St. *Peter*’s denial of his master in the high-priest’s hall, when his faith was in such danger of failing, that if our Lord had not looked upon him, it might never have recovered; but when he should be restored, he exhorts him to confirm and strengthen his brethren, who, not being able to abide the like trial, forsook their Master and fled, when he was apprehended in the garden. What relation this can have to St. *Peter*’s supremacy over the rest of the apostles, or to the pretended jurisdiction of his successors over the whole christian world, is hard to discover. The primitive Christians encouraged each other to suffer martyrdom; and the confessors and martyrs in Queen *Mary*’s days strengthened and confirmed their brethren in prison, by conference, by exhortations and prayers, without claiming an authority over their faith. Men must be reduced to very great extremities, when they build so weighty a fabrick upon so slender a foundation.

The last passage of Scripture insisted on is *John* xxi. 15, 16, 17. where our Lord, in allusion to *Peter*’s having denied him thrice, commands

mands him three times *to feed his lambs and his sheep*. In which text (says the late Catechism) “our Lord in a most solemn manner thrice committed to St. *Peter* the care of his whole flock, of all his sheep without exception, that is, of the whole church.” Who could imagine unlimited sovereignty could be contained in this harmless precept! And what is there in it peculiar to *Peter*? Was not the same commission given to all the apostles, when they were commanded to teach all nations? And is not the like charge given to every bishop or pastor of the church? When the apostle *Paul* took leave of the elders of *Ephesus*, he commanded them to take heed of the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers *to feed the church of God*<sup>9</sup>, which he had purchased with his blood; and St. *Peter*, in one of his catholick epistles to the strangers that were scattered abroad thro’ *Pontus, Galatia* and *Cappadocia*, exhorts the *elders among them to feed their several flocks*; taking the oversight of them not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

This is the whole evidence by which this important doctrine is supported. If then it should be admitted, St. *Peter* was *one of the chief of the apostles*, as being the eldest and first in order, and that he stood high in the esteem of our Lord, on account of his courage and boldness in his cause; yet it does not appear

<sup>9</sup> Acts xx. 28.



pear from the texts above-mention'd, or any other, that an *authority* was given him over the rest of the apostles; much less that he was constituted head of the universal church, and vicar-general of Christ upon earth.

We proceed, in the *second place*, to produce the arguments from scripture and antiquity, which demonstrate the falseness of this claim.

And first, *There is not the least mention of such an officer in scripture.* If Peter had been appointed primate of the apostles, with jurisdiction over the whole christian church, is it consistent with the wisdom and goodness of God not to mention it in express words, especially if the knowledge of it is of the utmost importance to the very being of Christianity, and the eternal happiness of mankind? But is any thing like this recorded in the whole New Testament? Surely St. Paul must have been guilty of a very great omission, when he was enumerating the several officers of the Christian church, not to mention the CHIEF: For he says no more, than that our Lord gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.<sup>r</sup> And more expressly in his epistle to the Corinthians; God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, and after that miracles and gifts.<sup>s</sup> If our Lord had constituted a supreme head, should it not rather have been, he hath set some in the church; first, a Pope; secondarily, apo-

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stles,

<sup>r</sup> Ephes. iv. 8, 11.

<sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 28.

files; thirdly, *prophets*; and then *pastors* and *teachers*? But *St. Paul* knew no such officer.

Secondly, *Our Lord himself* has frequently declared against a superiority among his apostles. When there was a strife among them who should be greatest, he presently puts an end to it, not by naming the person, but by assuring them he intended no such thing. *The kings of the earth exercise lordship over their subjects; but ye shall not be so; but he that is greater, [i. e. in gifts or knowledge] let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that does serve.*<sup>t</sup> When two of the apostles, *James* and *John*, affected a pre-eminence above the rest, by desiring to sit, one at our Lord's right hand, and the other at his left in his kingdom, he rejected their suit, and check'd their ambition, <sup>u</sup> by telling them they knew not what they asked; and *when the other ten heard it, they were moved with indignation.*<sup>w</sup> At another time, when a dispute arose among them who should be greatest, as soon as our Lord heard of it, *he sat down and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.*<sup>x</sup> And in his sermon against the *Pharisees*, he says to his disciples, *Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.*<sup>y</sup>

Thirdly, *Neither did the apostles after our Lord's ascension into heaven admit it.* There is no instance in the New Testament of *St. Peter's*

<sup>t</sup> Luke xxii. 24.    <sup>u</sup> Mark x. 37, 38.    <sup>w</sup> Mat. xx. 24.

<sup>x</sup> Mark ix. 35.

<sup>y</sup> Matth. xxiii. 8.

ter's setting himself up for head of the church, or laying his commands on the rest of the apostles, but rather the contrary. When the apostles at *Jerusalem* heard that the people at *Samaria* had received the word, they sent *Peter* and *John*<sup>z</sup> to pray for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost; who, in obedience to their orders, readily undertook the journey, and discharged their trust. Nor did *Paul* and *Barnabas* appeal to *St. Peter* in the controversies that arose between them about the necessity of circumcision; but refer'd the question to all the apostles and elders at *Jerusalem*, who when they had consider'd it, return'd an answer,<sup>a</sup> not in the name of *PETER*, by divine appointment prince of the apostles, and lieutenant-general of *Christ* upon earth; but in the common name of the apostles, elders, and brethren.<sup>b</sup> Nor does *St. Peter* in his writings affect an authority over his brethren; there is nothing of the style or spirit of a

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<sup>z</sup> Acts viii. 14.<sup>a</sup> Acts xv. 2, 23.

<sup>b</sup> The fathers in express terms assert all the apostles to be co-ordinate in power and authority. *St. Cyprian* says, *Hoc erant utique & cæteri apostoli quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi & honoris & potestatis.* The other apostles were that which *Peter* was, invested with an equality of honour and power. *St. Chrysostom* says, that *St. Paul* sheweth that each apostle did enjoy equal dignity, in *Gal. ii. 8.* and comparing *St. Paul* to *St. Peter*, he calls *St. Paul*, ἰσὸν αὐτῷ, equal in honour to him; adding, πλείον γὰρ εἰδέν ἐγὼ τέρος, for I will not as yet say any more, in *Gal. i. 8.* *St. Cyril*, *Hierom*, *Dionysius*, *Isidore*, and all the fathers of the three first centuries use the same language.

sovereign Pontiff in his catholick epistles, but the softest and most condescending language, like one that would be thought to be least of the apostles rather than the greatest. *The elders that are among you I exhort, who also am an ELDER, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.*<sup>c</sup> And tho' St. Paul was born out of due time, and did not see our Lord in the flesh, yet in nothing was he behind the very CHIEF of the apostles;<sup>d</sup> and with regard to St. Peter, he withstood him to the face; which is more than the stoutest Cardinal would venture to do, to his pretended successor at Rome. But,

Fourthly, *It does not appear that St. Peter was bishop of Rome.* I will not affirm, with some learned criticks, that St. Peter never was there, but it is more than probable he was not their bishop. *Baronius* and other Popish writers affirm, that St. Peter became bishop of Rome in the second year of *Claudius Cæsar*, A. C. XLII, and sat in the episcopal chair 25 years. And the late Catechism says, "He translated his chair from *Antioch* to Rome, and died bishop of that city." But they do not tell us how he became so; whether our Lord appointed him their bishop, or the apostles ordained him, or the people elected him, or he thrust himself into the office. Nor is there any account of it in scripture, or the ancient fathers. We read in the New Testament of St. Peter's being at *Jerusalem*, at *Antioch*,

<sup>c</sup> 1 Pet. v. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Gal. ii. 11.

at *Babylon*, and at *Corinth*, but not once of his being at *Rome*, unless *Babylon* stands for that city, which the *Romanists* are not willing to admit upon other occasions. We are told of his travels thro' *Cappadocia*, *Sicilia*, *Pontus* and *Bythinia*, and most Parts of *Asia*; and yet, according to *St. Luke*, the chief of his famous acts were done in *Palestine*: so that if he was bishop of *Rome*, it must be allowed that for the most part he was a *non-resident*. But is it possible to suppose that *St. Peter* resided at *Rome* as bishop of that city, and that *St. Paul* in his epistle to the *Romans*, written fifteen years after his supposed translation, should not salute him among the rest of the brethren, whose names he mentions in the sixteenth chapter? Nor in his epistle to the *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and second to *Timothy*, all written from *Rome*, where he lived two whole years in his own hired house; not once send his salutation among others to the several churches? He was certainly not at *Rome*, when *St. Paul*, writing from that city to the *Colossians*, says that *Tychicus*, *Onesimus*, *Aristarchus*, *Marcus* and *Justus* were alone his fellow-labourers, which had been a comfort to him; <sup>f</sup> nor when *St. Paul* made his first defence before *Cæsar*, and said, *That no man stood with him, but all men forsook him*; no, nor at his second appearing before *Nero*, when the time of his departure was at hand; <sup>g</sup> for having sent the salutations of all  
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<sup>e</sup> Vid. *Spanheim*, p. 536, 537.

<sup>f</sup> Col. iv. 11: <sup>g</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 16, 21.

the brethren to *Timothy*, and particularly of *Eubulus*, *Pudens*, *Linus* and *Claudia*, he takes no notice of *Peter*; which is unpardonable, if he was then bishop of the city. The writers of the first age are also silent upon this head. Many legends and fabulous reports were raised of *St. Peter* after his death; but (says the learned *Joseph Scaliger*) from the end of the Acts of the apostles to the time of *Pliny* the younger, (who lived under the Emperor *Trajan*) there is nothing certain in the history of the church.

Besides, 'tis hardly credible that *St. Peter*, being the *chief apostle*, and a *general officer* in the church, should condescend to become bishop of a single city, and is as great a disparagement to his character, as if the general of an army should lay down his commission to become captain of a private company; for the *two Offices* are hardly consistent in one person. The apostles were commissioned to preach the gospel in all nations, but a *bishop* is to reside in his diocese, and feed the particular flock committed to his charge. If then *St. Peter* was an *apostle*, he could not perform the duty of a *bishop* by residing in one city or neighbourhood; and if he was a *bishop*, he could not discharge the office of an *apostle* by travelling into distant countries. So that here is a failure in the foundation; for if *St. Peter* was not *bishop of Rome*, 'tis impossible the present Pope should be his successor. But,

Fifthly, *If we should admit that St. Peter was bishop of Rome, the grant of the supremacy might be only personal, and terminate with himself.*

*self*. For it is agreed on both sides, that the Scripture makes no mention of *Peter's successors*; and we all know the apostolical office did not descend to after ages. The Catechism says, “ that it is evident by the unanimous consent “ of the fathers, and the tradition of the “ church in all ages, that the commission “ given to St. *Peter* descended to the Popes or “ bishops of *Rome*.” But I may venture to challenge all that is between this and *Rome* to prove such consent; the fathers never dream'd of an universal monarch over the whole church, and are entirely silent about it; but if they were not, neither their authority, nor the dark and obscure tradition of later ages ought to avail against scripture and reason. Does it follow, because Christ said to *Peter*, *upon this rock I will build my church*, that therefore he meant it of his successors; when there is no intimation of an entail throughout the whole New Testament, nor any communication of his apostolical gifts? Besides, if St. *Peter* was bishop of *Antioch* seven years before his pretended translation to *Rome*, why should not his successors in that See have the better claim? For the story of his translation by a special command from Christ, is an exploded fable; but none of the bishops as yet put in their claim to the supremacy. When the Empire became Christian, the bishops of the chief cities claimed the first rank among their brethren, but *His Holiness* of *Rome* had no higher title than *Dominus frater*, and *Comminister*, a *Brother* and *Fel-*  
*lowe-*

*low-Servant*, for several ages. Pope Gregory I. who lived six hundred years after Christ, <sup>f</sup> abhorred the title of *Oecumenical* or *universal Bishop*, calling it a diabolical usurpation, and the forerunner of antichrist; and he gives these reasons for it in his Epistles, because it was never given to St. *Peter*; because none of the bishops of *Rome* till that time had assumed it; because it was contrary to the canons, to the decrees of the fathers, and an affront to Almighty God himself. The Bishop of *Rome* then did not presume to call councils by his own sovereign authority, nor sit as judge in controversies of faith, much less to depose sovereign princes; nay, he had not so much as a casting voice, nor so small a preference as to sign the *Canons* always in the first place. The four first general councils were convened by the express command of the *Roman Emperors*, who presided in person, or by their deputies; but the Pope's supremacy was not thought of for above 500 years after Christ, nor obtained after many struggles till almost a thousand.

*Sixthly*, If we should grant for argument's sake, that the supremacy descended to St. *Peter's successors* in the See of *Rome*, we shall find it almost impossible to derive the succession in an uninterrupted line through the several ages of the church. And yet the Popish catechism says, that "those only who can derive their lineage from the apostles are the heirs of the apostles, and consequently they alone can claim  
" a right



“ a right to the scriptures, to the administration of the sacraments, or any share in the pastoral office; it is their proper inheritance which they have received from the apostles, and the apostles from Christ.” Let us therefore examine this line, upon which the validity of all Christian administrations depends; if this should fail or be interrupted, the whole Christian church is lost, for nobody can then claim a right to the scriptures or any part of the pastoral office.

Now the successors of *St. Peter* should certainly be *good men*, and endued with an apostolick spirit. *A bishop* (says the Apostle) *must be blameless, vigilant, sober, and of good behaviour, not given to wine or filthy lucre.*<sup>g</sup> But has this been the general character of the *Roman Pontiffs*? Have not some been reputed magicians and necromancers,<sup>h</sup> and others undoubted monsters of iniquity? Witness the *Alexanders*, the *Hildebrands*, the *Gregorys*, the *Bonifaces*, whose lewd and flagitious lives are hardly to be parallel'd in history. *Baronius* their own historian confesses, that for a succession of 50 Popes, not one pious or virtuous man sat in the chair; some were advanced to the papal dignity at 10 or 12 years of age; others have been murderers and whoremongers, not to mention the accounts in history of a female Pope. Are these the heirs of *St. Peter*, and vicars of Christ upon earth? Can the apostolical or sacerdotal character be convey'd thro' such impure canals? How prophane was that saying of Pope

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<sup>g</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 2.

<sup>h</sup> Acts & Mon. V. I. p. 675.

*Leo X. Quàm lucrosa nobis est fabula Christi!* <sup>i</sup>  
*What a rare market have we made of this fable of*  
*Jesus Christ!* “ And indeed (says archbishop  
 “ *Tillotson*<sup>k</sup>) there is not a more compendious  
 “ way of persuading men that the Christian  
 “ religion is a fable, than to set up a lewd and  
 “ vicious man as the oracle of it.”

The successors of *St. Peter* should be *found*  
*in the faith*, because our Lord hath pray'd that  
 their faith should not fail. And yet, notwith-  
 standing their confident pretences to infallibi-  
 lity, several bishops of *Rome* have been con-  
 demned and deposed for heresy, <sup>l</sup> their own  
 general councils being judges. But if the  
 writings of the New Testament be the standard  
 of orthodoxy, what a monstrous train of do-  
 ctrines have they introduced contrary to, and  
 subversive of the faith once delivered to the  
 faints! ---- But I forbear descending to parti-  
 culars, lest I should encroach on the province  
 of my worthy brother who next succeeds me,  
 and who is much more equal to the service.

Further, the true successors of *St. Peter*  
 should be *chosen by the proper persons, and in a*  
*disinterested manner*. In ancient time the cler-  
 gy and people of *Rome* elected their own  
 bishops, the order of *Cardinals* not being  
 known in the Christian church for almost a  
 thousand years; nor were they the sole Ele-  
 ctors, till the constitutions of *Pope Gregory X*,  
<sup>m</sup> above 1200 years after Christ. But suppo-  
 sing the choice to be in them, let us view the  
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<sup>i</sup> Spanh. p. 1891.      <sup>k</sup> V. II. p. 251.

<sup>l</sup> *Pope John XXIII.* and others.      <sup>m</sup> Spanh. 1709.

Conclave and observe whether the Holy Ghost sits on every head and directs every vote. Is there no criminal ambition? No bribery and corruption? Are there no simoniacal practices? Do not the interests of the several potentates of *Europe* govern the ballot as much or more than the exemplary piety and capacity of the candidates? If the world is not very uncharitable, the intrigues of the Conclave exceed the most refined policy of all the courts of *Europe* together.---- Blessed Jesus! Are these the guardians of thy doctrine, the pillars of thy church and kingdom? Can persons advanced by such infamous methods be thy representatives or successors of thy holy apostle?

And after all the regulations that have been made in the choice of a Pope, by confining the election to the Cardinals, by shutting them up in their cells, and allowing none to converse with them till two thirds are agreed, yet the line of succession has been notoriously broken.----For several years there was no Pope at all, then two or three together, <sup>n</sup> who divided the profits, and spent them in all kinds of rioting and debauchery. *Onuphrius* in his lives of the Popes reckons up 30 schisms in the *Roman* church, and *Baronius* admits 22, the most considerable of which in the 14th Century continued 50 years; one Pope residing at *Rome*, and his brother Pope at *Avignon* in *France*, each anathematizing the other, and condemning his decrees. Now in every schism, one at least must be the usurper; if the Popes

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at *Rome* were the rightful successors of *St. Peter*, all the holy orders conferred by those at *Avignon* must be null; and if we should trace this back through twenty or thirty divisions, I doubt the line of succession would be lost long before we come up to *St. Peter*; so that if the right of the scriptures, and administration of the sacraments be the proper inheritance of those only who are heirs of the apostles, by an uninterrupted lineage, it may reasonably be questioned whether there be any Christian church or clergyman in the world; but thanks be to God the Christian religion does not hang upon so slender a thread.

*Seventhly*, We may argue against the supremacy, from *the extent of the office which it is not possible for a single person to discharge*. The duty of an universal Pastor is to *govern and feed the whole church*; but who can manage universal empire? What Atlantick shoulder can sustain the burden of dispensing justice to the whole world? What strength of body or vigor of mind can go through the business of hearing all appeals, of deciding all controversies, and of rectifying all disorders in the whole universe? For God has promised *to give his Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his Possession.*<sup>o</sup> If therefore our Lord had intended such a general officer in his church, he would have furnished some persons with superior abilities to the rest of mankind to fill the chair; But is any such peculiar genius found amongst them?

them? To say this may be done by *Legates* or *Nuncios*, is nothing to the purpose, because the Pope only is infallible, and therefore all appeals are referred to himself. Besides, how vast must be the expence, how great the delay of justice, and how tedious the journeys for men to travel with their suits from all parts of the habitable world to *Rome* for a decision? If the government of a kingdom of moderate extent, be as much as one wise prince can manage; or if a small diocese be sufficient to employ the time and labours of a faithful bishop; how impossible must it be for a clergyman advanced in years, in the decline of life, and under visible decays of body and mind to direct and govern the Christian world.

The other branch of the episcopal function is *to feed the sheep*; this was given in charge to *St. Peter*, and is incumbent upon all his successors. If his *Holiness* therefore would discharge his pastoral duty, he ought not to sit in his chair at *Rome*, but travel through the unbelieving nations, in order to their conversion. Were the shepherds of *Israel* cursed, <sup>p</sup> *because they eat the fat, and cloathed themselves with the wool, and killed them that were fed, but did not feed the flock?* What then must be the portion of an universal bishop that never preaches at all? Does the Pope visit his diocese, or labour in word or doctrine? Does he feed his flock with knowledge and understanding? No, but he takes away the key of knowledge, and having obliged the people to shut their eyes, puts  
into

<sup>p</sup> Ezek. xxxiv. 3, 4.

into their hands pardons, indulgences, and consecrated toys, fitter to please and quiet froward children, than to furnish a reasonable mind with religion or virtue.

Now if we lay these things together, and consider, the silence of the sacred records and genuine remains of antiquity about a supreme visible head; the uncertainty of St. *Peter's* being Bishop of *Rome*, and of the supremacy's being granted not only to him, but his successors, upon which their whole title depends; the character of those who have sat in the Papal chair; the impossibility of deriving their lineage from St. *Peter* thro' so many schisms and divisions; and the extent of the office, which is beyond the limits of a finite capacity to discharge, it will amount to a demonstration that the hierarchy of the church of *Rome* is built upon the *Sand*, and that their Popes have no better a claim to an apostolical supremacy over the Christian world, than to their extraordinary gifts and powers.

I shall conclude this discourse with the following remarks.

First, That *Jesus Christ is the only supreme head of his Church.* This is the constant language of scripture, *One is your master, even Christ.*----<sup>a</sup> *He is the head of the body, the church, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.*----<sup>r</sup> *God has put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church.*----<sup>s</sup> *I would have you know, (says the apostle to the Corinthians) that the head of every man is*

<sup>a</sup> Col. i. 18.

<sup>r</sup> Eph. i. 22,

<sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 3.

*is Christ, and the head of Christ is God.* Should it not rather have been, the head of every man is the Pope, and the head of the Pope is Christ? But no head upon earth is capable of governing such a body, nor may any man assume this honour to himself; the Son of God alone is equal to this high station, who holds the stars in his right hand, and by virtue of the immensity of his presence, is capable of governing and feeding the diffusive body of his church in every part of the world, *Which being united to him their head, by joints and bands, receiveth nourishment, and encreaseth with the increase of God.* Let no man therefore dare to take the sceptre out of his hand, and place it in the hands of a frail man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Kings and Princes may be protectors of the church, and defenders of its faith from oppression and violence within their dominions, but Christ only is our living head.

Secondly, *The unity of the Catholick church does not consist in its relation to one visible head, but in its union to Christ.* All that profess true faith in *him*, and love to his disciples, and who adorn their profession by undisssembled piety and virtue, are members of that one mystical body of which he is head; for *there is but one body and one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thro' all, and in you all.* <sup>u</sup> “ There  
 “ is no mention in scripture, or primitive an-  
 “ tiquity, of an union of all Christians under  
 “ one

<sup>t</sup> Colof. ii, 19,  
 P. 293,

<sup>u</sup> *Barrow* of Unity of the Church,

“ one political head, (says the judicious Dr.  
 “ *Barrow*) nor does it consist with the na-  
 “ ture and genius of the gospel kingdom,  
 “ which is not of this world, but disavows  
 “ politick artifices, and fleshly wisdom; it dis-  
 “ countenances the imposition of all new laws  
 “ and precepts, but such as are necessary for  
 “ order and edification; it disclaims all world-  
 “ ly power and dominion, and is to be go-  
 “ verned by gentleness and meekness, argu-  
 “ ment and persuasion: Whereas if it was a  
 “ political body, (says the Doctor) it must be  
 “ the reverse of all this; it must be supported  
 “ by riches and wealth, by force and violence,  
 “ by courts of judicature and penal laws. All  
 “ which things do much disagree from the  
 “ original design of the Christian church,  
 “ which is averse from pomp, doth reject do-  
 “ mination, does not require craft, wealth,  
 “ or force to maintain it, but did at first, and  
 “ may subsist without any such means.”

Thirdly, *A supreme jurisdiction and autho-  
 rity over the Christian church is the very mark  
 and character of the man of sin and son of per-  
 dition; who is said, “ to oppose, or exalt him-  
 self above all that is called God, or that is wor-  
 shipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple  
 of God, shewing that he is God.* Kings and Em-  
 perors, in the language of scripture, are called  
*Gods*, on account of their sovereign authority  
 and power; but his *Holiness* of *Rome* has de-  
 clared the *spiritual power* to be above the *tem-  
 poral*; and has shewed that he is *God*, not  
 only



only by accepting the titles of Deity, as <sup>x</sup> *Most holy Father; Lord God; Priest of the World, and Vicar General of Christ upon Earth*; but by treading on the necks of Emperors, by kicking off their crowns with his foot, and obliging them to hold his stirrup, when he mounted his horse: The Emperor *Henry IV.* with his Empress and little children waited three days and three nights barefoot, at the gates of the Pope's palace for absolution, and after all lost his territories, which the haughty Pope gave to *Rodulphus*, with this inscription about the crown: <sup>y</sup> *Petra dedit Petro, Petrus Diadema Rodulpho: The Rock gave the Crown to Peter, and Peter gives it to Rodulph.* If we take a view of his Holiness in his Pontifical Grandeur, we may see him sitting in the Temple of God, upon a Throne high and lifted up, with a triple crown on his head, a triple cross in one hand, and a naked sword in the other; with the keys of the kingdom of Heaven at his girdle, and a seven-fold seal, in token of the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Ghost; surrounded with Cardinals arrayed in purple, attended with ambassadors from all nations; and when he appears in publick, multitudes lie prostrate in his presence, and pay him the most sacred and divine worship. Can this be the successor of *poor Peter*, who told the lame man at the gate of the Temple, that silver and gold he had none? Or is it not rather the character of that *Anti-christ, whom God has threatned to consume*

E

sume

<sup>x</sup> Acts & Mon. V. I. p. 10. Spanh. p. 1897.

<sup>y</sup> Ib. V. II. p. 202.

*flame with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.*

Fourthly, *How dangerous must it be to continue in a church, the validity of all whose administrations depends upon an uninterrupted succession from St. Peter; for if the line should fail, or be broken, the whole Christian world must return to Heathenism, and be left to the uncovenanted mercies of God. Surely if our Lord had designed to hang the whole of his religion upon this chain, he would have preserved it entire, and made every link of it visible to the satisfaction of the whole world; but as things now stand, all is uncertain; a Christian can never be satisfied that he hears the word of God from the lips of one that has a right to interpret it, or receives the holy sacrament from the hands of one that can derive his orders, in a direct line, from the apostles. It is therefore unaccountable that any who call themselves Protestants, should be fond of deriving the validity of their Sacerdotal Functions thro' this impure and corrupt channel, which has been so often cut off from its fountain, and is so far from the apostolick purity, that it seems for several ages to have had no other parent, than *the mother of barlots, and abominations of the earth.* The Protestant religion is a much safer way of salvation, which admits persons duly qualified and solemnly separated to the pastoral office, to be rightful ministers of Jesus Christ, and entitled to administer all Christian ordinances with efficacy, wherever the providence of God shall cast their lot.*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *We may observe the vassalage and slavery of the Romish communion, which requires an absolute subjection of soul and body, to the sovereign will and pleasure of the Pope.* Men must not judge for themselves, but take every thing upon the word of the Priest, who will insure their salvation at the peril of his own. The inspired apostle *Paul* never claimed this privilege; he would have <sup>2</sup> *Every one persuaded in his own mind, and if they differed, to do it in love*; he disclaims a dominion over the people's faith; and the apostle *Peter* forbids the Elders who had the oversight of the flock, <sup>2</sup> *to lord it over God's heritage.* But is this the manner of the church of *Rome*, which requires a blind and implicit faith from all her members, and commands us to lay aside our understandings in order to become good Christians? Strange! That men should have liberty to exercise their reason in the common affairs of life, and be obliged to shut their eyes and be stark blind in matters of faith; nay, the Papiſts require us not only to lay aside our understandings, but to believe in direct opposition and defiance to them; for if the Pope should decree virtue to be vice, and vice virtue, we are bound in conscience, (says Cardinal *Bellarmino*) to believe it. Is there any thing like this among the most barbarous Nations?

But not content with abusing our consciences they deprive us of our estates and liberties; Popery and slavery are inseparable; and an Inquisition in the church is a sure mark of slavery

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. v. 3.

in the state. The liberties of *England* grew up with the Reformation and will certainly die with it ; when Popery got possession of the *British* throne in the person of King *James II*, our laws were presently suspended, our charters taken from us, and our whole constitution subverted : the knife was then at our throats, and the only choice that seemed left, was to turn or burn. The populace were alarmed, and Protestants shook their chains and groaned for a deliverer, which God of his infinite mercy sent us in the person of the great King *William III*, who without violence or blood delivered this nation from Popery ; and all *Europe* from the chains and fetters, that a great and successful tyrant had prepared for them.

It follows from hence, *in the last place, that an open toleration of the Popish religion is inconsistent with the safety of a free people and a Protestant Government.* Every *Roman-Catholick* having professed allegiance to a foreign power must be an avowed enemy to his King and country. It is therefore made death by a very severe law for any priest to pervert any of his Majesty's subjects to Popery, or for any private person to be willingly reconciled to the *Romish* communion, because as often as Popery gains a profelyte, the King loses a subject. The words of the statute<sup>b</sup> are these, which I the rather mention because their laity may not be acquainted with them : “ All persons pretending  
 “ to have power, who shall absolve, persuade,  
 “ or withdraw any of the Queen's subjects  
 “ from the religion now established, to the

“ *Romish* religion, or move them to promise  
 “ obedience to the See of *Rome*, being there-  
 “ of lawfully convicted, shall suffer as in case  
 “ of high-treason.----And if any person after  
 “ the end of this parliament, be willingly ab-  
 “ solved, or withdrawn as aforesaid, or wil-  
 “ lingly be reconciled, or shall promise any  
 “ obedience to any pretended prince, poten-  
 “ tate, or usurped authority from *Rome*, then  
 “ every such person their procurers and coun-  
 “ sellors being thereof lawfully convicted, shall  
 “ be taken, tried, and judged, and shall suffer  
 “ as in cases of high-treason.” So that, *not*  
*only every priest, but every new convert to Popery*  
*is a traitor, and a dead man by the laws of his*  
*country*; the most sacred obligations being then  
 judged an insufficient security, from men who  
 had delivered up their consciences into the hands  
 of those who pretend to bind and loose men from  
 their sins, and to absolve them from the most so-  
 lemn oaths, or dispense with them, for the  
 service of the Catholick cause.---Far be it from  
 Protestant Dissenters to plead for persecution  
 or sanguinary laws, or even negative discouragements  
 for religious principles not subversive of  
 the foundations of society and civil government.  
 Every faithful subject ought to be protected  
 in his *religious* as well as *civil rights*, but if  
 men’s religion teaches them rebellion; and  
 every convert to Popery is by principle an ene-  
 my to the constitution of his country, and a  
 friend to the *Pretender to his Majesty’s crown*  
*and dignity*; surely the government may pre-  
 serve itself. Besides ’tis a known maxim of  
 Popery,

Popery, and was decreed in the sixth session of the council of *Constance*,<sup>d</sup> that *no faith is to be kept with Hereticks*, or Protestants; and our histories abundantly testify that where they have had power they have religiously observed it, as appears by the violation of the *Edict of Nantes* in *France* against the faith of the most solemn treaties; the massacres of *Paris* and *Ireland*, in which no ties of nature or friendship could prevent the staining their hands with the blood of their nearest Protestant relations; not to insist upon their many plots and conspiracies against the reformed religion in *England*, and particularly that wherein King, Lords, and Commons assembled in Parliament were to be blown up at once: only I must observe, that all the conspirators were absolved, and *Garnet* their provincial, who performed the office, is commended by *Bellarmino* as a man of incomparable sanctity and holiness of life.

But they tell us their natures are now changed, and their principles not so fierce and bloody as formerly. Are they so? *Then may the Ethiopian change his skin and the leper his spots.* Have we already forgot the late cruelties at *Thorn* the numbers of *Palatines* that were driven from their native country purely for religion about 20 years ago, and the present usage of the *Saltzburghers* by their spiritual tyrant?----I would not fill your heads with imaginary dangers; but this I am sure of, great industry is used by numbers of priests (even in defiance of a law that makes it death) to undermine the Protestant religion. Bribes are given, and large

<sup>d</sup> Spanh. Ec. Hist. p. 1845,

promises

promises of support and encouragement to the meaner people; catechisms and books of devotion are privately dispersed; Mass-houses are erected in several parts of the city and suburbs, and priests officiate almost with open doors; they insinuate themselves into private families, and kindly relieve the necessitous and distress'd, on condition of their living and dying in the bosom of the Catholick church. These are the new methods of conversion. But shall Protestants be asleep while the Enemy is cutting away the ground from under their feet? Have we any concern for the reformed religion, for the liberties of our country, and for the welfare of our dear children and posterity? Let us then stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Let Churchmen and Dissenters lay aside their jealousies of each other, and bend their united forces against the common enemy. And may the wisdom of the legislature be directed to such measures consistent with the laws of Christianity, and the natural rights of mankind, as may strengthen the Protestant interest and effectually prevent the growth of a religion which would rob us of all that is dear to us as Men and Christians!

The ministers of Christ are obliged more especially to appear in the front of the battle, not only to animate their people and arm them against the approaching danger, but to endeavour the delivering these deluded souls out of the snare of the Devil, by persuading them to read the Holy Scriptures, and use the understandings God has given them to distinguish between truth and error; and by praying that  
 God

God would enlighten their minds, and give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth: but if after our most fervent prayers and kind endeavours for their conversion, they will shut their eyes, and go on blindfold in a religion that has neither scripture, reason, nor common sense to support it; if they will profess allegiance to a foreign tyrant, and vow the destruction of their King and Country, when their superiors shall command them to the service; we may then lawfully join in that form of prayer and thanksgiving appointed by Parliament for the fifth of *November*, before it was altered by archbishop *Laud*. “ ---Be  
 “ thou still, O Lord, our mighty protector, and  
 “ scatter our cruel enemies which delight in  
 “ blood; infatuate their counsels, and root  
 “ out that *Babylonish* and antichristian Sect,  
 “ which say with *Jerusalem*, Down with it,  
 “ Down with it to the ground.----And to that  
 “ end strengthen the hands of our gracious  
 “ King, the nobles, and magistrates of the  
 “ land, with judgment and justice, to cut off  
 “ those workers of iniquity, whose religion is  
 “ rebellion, whose faith is faction, whose  
 “ practice is murdering of souls and bodies;  
 “ and to root them out of the confines and li-  
 “ mits of this kingdom, that they may never  
 “ prevail against us, and triumph in the ruins  
 “ of thy church; and give us grace by true and  
 “ serious repentance to avert these and the like  
 “ judgments from us, for thy dear Son’s sake,  
 “ our only mediator and advocate;” to whom  
 be glory in the churches throughout all ages  
 world without end. *Amen*.



The Church of *Rome's* Claim of AUTHORITY and INFALLIBILITY examined.

I N A  
S E R M O N

Preached at

*SALTERS-HALL,*

January 30th, 1734.

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By *GEORGE SMYTH, M. A.*

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With ADDITIONS.

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## 2 Cor. i. 24.

*Not for that we have Dominion  
over your Faith, but are Help-  
ers of your Joy : For by Faith  
ye stand.*

**I** APPEAR before you this Day, to charge the Church of *Rome* with boldly usurping, and tyrannically exercising, that *Dominion* over the Faith of **C**hristians, which the Apostle in the Text so expressly disclaims, and which he never once exercised in all his Life. If I can make good this Charge, I shall at once vindicate some of the Redeemer's unalienated *Prerogatives*; and defend some of the most sacred *Rights* of the **C**hristian World, against this Church which so insolently violates them.

It will not surely be said, that though *St. Paul* was not invested with this *Dominion*, yet that *St. Peter* was; and that therefore Popes as his Successors, and Vicars general of Christ upon Earth, may justly exercise it. For besides that *St. Paul* was an Apostle; speaks here in that Character; and when

he owns, *WE have no Dominion over your Faith*, seems to disclaim it not only for himself, but in the Name of all the Apostles and Ministers of Jesus Christ, of what Rank and Eminence soever in the Christian Church; besides this, I say, He tells us in two several Places of this very Epistle, that he was *in nothing behind the very chiefest Apostles* \*; and yet certainly he must have been far behind one of them, at least, if St. Peter was appointed supreme Head of the Church, and was entrusted with that AUTHORITY, and endowed with that INFALIBILITY, which his Successors now pretend to.

These are the *Powers and Privileges*, which the Church of Rome says she is invested with: It falls to my Share to examine them; and I hope to convince you before I have done, that never were any Claims more unjustly made, or more weakly and slenderly supported.

Her Claims upon the Foot of *Authority* are many, and of different Kinds; but as I have neither Time nor Inclination to extend the Subject of this Discourse further than was designed, when I was desired to treat of it; much less to invade the Province of any Person engaged with me in this Service; I shall confine my self to that *Authority* which she claims in *matters of Faith*; and then go on to enquire into her *Infallibility*.

The former may, I think, be fairly stated; and will, I believe, be fully confuted, under the following Propositions.

1. That the Church hath Authority to settle the Canon of Scripture, and to determine what Books

\* 2 Cor. xi. 5. and xii. 11.

are, and what are not Canonical, in such manner as that, by Vertue of her Authority, all Christians are obliged to receive those which she receives, and to reject those which she rejects.

II. That the Authority of Scripture as to us (*quoad nos*) and the Regard we are to pay to it, depends upon the Authority of the Church, which delivers these Scriptures to us, and declares them to be the Word of God.

III. That the Church hath Authority to interpret and give the Sense of Scripture; which Interpretation all Christians are obliged to receive and submit to.

IV. That since many Things which ought to be believed, are not at all contained in Scripture, the Church hath Authority to decree these as necessary to Salvation; and all Christians are thereupon obliged to believe them.

V. That she has a Right to judge and determine authoritatively, all Controversies relating to Matters of Faith; so as that all Christians are obliged to submit to her Decision.

If upon hearing these Claims made, you should be dispos'd to ask, (as any honest inquisitive Person would naturally do) Pray where is all this Power and Authority lodg'd? who is invested with it? who is to exercise it? you will be told the Catholick Church; meaning their own Church of Rome: and with this answer they have taught their own Votaries to rest satisfied. But we Protestants, who know that general answers are often deceitful and evasive, and that this in particular is so; are not thus to be put off. For tho' at present we should  
pass

pass by the Absurdity of calling a Part the whole ; I mean of Calling that the Catholick Church, which to say the best of it is but a part, and that a very corrupt one too, of the Catholick Church ; we must beg to be a little more particularly informed. This Catholick Church means either some one or more Persons, in whom this Authority is vested: Is it then diffusively in the Church Universal, *i. e.* in all Churches thro' out the World? Or is it in the Church Representative, *i. e.* in a General council? Or is it in the Church Virtual, (as they express it) *i. e.* in his Holiness the Pope? The Advocates of *Rome* are as much perplex'd how to answer, and as little agreed in the Answers they give here, as we shall find them to be presently, when we come to ask the same Questions, with relation to their pretended *Infallibility* : And as they will be there urg'd more at large, I at present take no further notice of them but go on to shew you ; That no one Man, no set or number of Men on Earth, has any just claim to the Authority we are speaking of. In order to which I'll briefly consider the Particulars which have been mention'd ; and since several of them may (in another view) fall under the notice of some other of my Brethren ; I will take what care I can to keep to the Point of *Authority* ; and not to repeat or anticipate, what has been, or may be, more pertinently said by them.

I. It is pretended that the Church hath Authority to settle the Canon of Scripture, to determine what Books are, and what are not Canonical ; in such manner as that by vertue of her Authority, all Christians

fians are obliged to receive those which she receives, and to reject those which she rejects. And here you are to observe, that it is not their enquiring, and judging, and determining for themselves what Books are canonical, that we complain of: For this is a Privilege which we think all capable persons may claim; We exercise it our selves, and should be far enough from blaming them for doing so too. But that which we complain of is, their taking upon them to Determine this Point for all the World, and their discouraging all private Examination, and condemning with a dreadful Curse, all Contradiction to their Decrees concerning it. For so the Council of Trent has done. Whose words are as follows; “ The Synod hath seen  
 “ fit to annex to this Decree, a List of the sacred  
 “ Books; lest a Doubt should arise in any one’s mind,  
 “ which they are that the Synod receives”; and then follows the Catalogue it self of all the Books both of the Old and New Testament, which we Protestants own, with an Addition of Six Apocryphal Books to the Old Testamant: after which they thus go on: “ If any one does not receive these entire Books,  
 “ and every part of them, as they are wont to be  
 “ read in the Catholick Church, and are contained  
 “ in the Ancient Latin Edition, for sacred and Ca-  
 “ nonical, let him be Anathema” \*. One would expect that, after such a Positive Determination, and such a dreadful Sanction added to it, they should have some very good Title to produce for their Authority, and some very strong Reasons for their admitting all these Books into their Canon. As to the Latter, their reasons are all taken from what Councils and

\* Conc. Trid. Sess. 4. Decret. de Canon Scrip uis.

Fathers have said of this matter; particularly the 3d Council of *Carthage*, at which *St. Austin* was present; wherein (it is pretended) the very same Books were decreed to be Canonical, that are mention'd in the Council of *Trent's* Catalogue. In answer to which, it might easily be shewn, that Councils and Fathers, are both for number and weight, against them: That the design of this 3d Council of *Carthage* was, not to determine what Books were Canonical, in the sense in which that Word must be understood in this Dispute; but only to declare what Books might be profitably read in the publick Assemblies of Christians: That *St. Austin* himself when he calls the apocryphal Books Canonical, plainly means no more, then that as they contain useful Precepts and Instructions for Life and Manners, they may be publickly read to the Edification of the Church; but without any Design of setting them upon an equal foot with those which are Canonical in the highest and strictest Sense of the Word. That these Books themselves, contain so many idle Fables, gross Absurdities, plain Inconsistencies, and palpable Contradictions; as could never have been dictated by the Spirit of God, and far outweigh all the Reasons that can be produc'd for admitting them into the Canon. All this and a great deal more might be unanswerably urg'd, but I choose to keep close to the Point of *Authority*: for tho' their Catalogue had been precisely the same with our own; yet as we dare not assume to ourselves, so we can never allow to any body else, Authority to oblige all Christians under Pain of Damnation to receive precisely the same number of Books as Canonical.



nonical. Let us enquire therefore how this *Authority* is supported. Their Proof stands thus: The Testimony of the Church is the only means by which it can now, or could at any time be known, which Books are Canonical Scripture and which are not; the Church therefore must have *Authority* to determine in this Case. And all Christians must be oblig'd under the dreadfulest Penalty to stand by her Determination: Now tho' I am far from thinking that this is the *only* means; yet since I am ready to grant that (if it be rightly understood) it is one very good means, by which a Judgment may be form'd in this matter; I will at present take no notice of this defect in the Argument; but only consider what sort of a Proof this is, of the *Authority* claim'd. When the Bible is first put into the Hands of Children, they are told by their Parents and Instructors, that it is the Word of God: When they grow up to ripeness of Judgment, they may if they please, find that Christians in all Ages from the Apostles down to their own Times, have been so far agreed in this Point, that their concurring Testimony, is one proper reason to induce us to believe so too. But how does this prove the *Authority* we are talking of? Is there no difference between being a credible Witness in a Cause, and being an authoritative Judge? May I not prudently attend to, and weigh, nay, believe the Truth of a Man's Testimony, without being oblig'd to stand by his Sentence and Determination, as a Judge? We receive the Testimony of the Church in all Ages, because it appears to us credible, and because (all Circumstances consider'd) we think it utterly improbable

ble that so many Persons shou'd either themselves be deceiv'd, or conspire to deceive us; but it does not follow by any means, that therefore we are to submit to the Determination of the Church (much less the particular Church of *Rome*) as an authoritative Judge. It is farther pretended,

II. That the Authority of Scriptures (*quoad nos*) as to us, and the regard we are to pay to it, depends upon the *Authority* of the Church, which delivers these Scriptures to us, and declares them to be the Word of God. This Point, I confess, is not any where that I know of, expressly and *in terminis*, decreed by the Council of *Trent*: But the ablest defenders of the Church of *Rome*, have either expressly asserted it; or said that, from which it necessarily follows. *Hosius*, in justification of a bold Fellow who had said, that without the Testimony of the Church the Scripture wou'd be just of the same value and authority with *Æsop's* Fables, tells us that it was *pié dictum*; For that without the Church's Testimony, Scripture wou'd be of no great weight. Another declares that were it not for the Authority of the Church, He wou'd give no more credit to *St. Mat.* than to *Livy*. *Bellarmino* says, that if you take away the *Authority* of the Church of *Rome*, the whole Christian Faith may be question'd as doubtful \*. And in another Place (for these things don't drop from them by chance, and una-

\* Nam si tollamus auctoritatem præsentis Ecclesiæ, & præsentis Concilii, in dubium revocari poterunt omnium aliorum Conciliorum Decreta, & tota Fides Christiana. — Et præterea omnium Conciliorum veterum & omnium dogmatum firmitas, pendet ab Auctoritate præsentis Ecclesiæ. *Bellarmin.* de Effectu Sacram. Lib. 2. Cap. 25. § *Tertium Testimonium.*

wares.) The Scripture Traditions and all Doctrines whatsoever, depend on the Testimony of the Church, without which all are uncertain \*. There are others of them (nay, and some of these themselves, at other times) who talk a little more modestly, in appearance at least, tho' in effect they say much the same things. They distinguish the Authority of Scriptures *quoad se*, and *quoad nos*, i. e. in itself, and as to us. They own that the Authority of Scripture *quoad se*, is sacred and divine, and independent of the Church; but that as to any Authority it has, *quoad nos*, with respect to us, it neither has, nor can have any but what depends upon the Authority of the Church: And if it does not follow from hence that all the regard and reverence we owe to Scripture stands upon the foot of the same Authority, I shall despair of ever knowing what a just Consequence is. I could quote to you, *Stapleton*, *Bellarmin*, and *Melchior Camus*, and a great many more, to prove that this is the Doctrine even of their moderate Writers: But as I apprehend this will not be deny'd, I choose to shew you that how plausible soever this distinction may appear, there is really nothing in it to the purpose; and that tho' there were, yet that it is utterly false that the Church has any such Authority upon which the Authority of Scripture as to us depends.

1. The distinction has no meaning pertinent to the present purpose; nor is there any difference (as

\* Nam cum Scripturæ traditiones & omnia plane dogmata, ex Testimonio Ecclesiæ pendeant; nisi certissimi simus quæ sit vera Ecclesia, incerta erunt prorsus omnia. *Bellarmin. de Eccl. Milit. L. 3. C. 10. §. ad hoc necesse est.*

to the matter in Hand) between the Authority of Scripture *in itself*, and *as to us*. For what are we to understand by the Authority of Scripture *in itself*? So far as I find, what they say to explain it, amounts to no more than this; that the Scriptures are sacred and divine, and proceed from God as their Author: All which is very true; and it is as true that the Authority of the Scriptures results from their being thus sacred and divine; but their being so, is not (properly speaking) their Authority: For all proper Authority is relative to those who owe regard and subjection to it; and thus, the Authority of Scripture is that Power or Vertue which it has (as being the Word of God) to oblige us to believe and practice what it declares and enjoins: Which (if Words have any meaning) is its Authority *as to us*. So that either this is a distinction without a difference; or at least it is quite impertinent to the matter in debate. But tho' it were never so proper and pertinent, I add,

2. It is utterly false that the Church has any such Authority, upon which the Authority of Scripture *as to us* depends. For we have seen already, that this Authority of Scripture arises from, and therefore must depend upon, its being the Word of God. This, and not the authoritative Declaration of the Church that it is so, is what gives it its binding Force, even *as to us*. Well, but still it is asked over again, How do you know that these Scriptures are the Word of God but by the Testimony of the Church? So that after all, Recourse must be had to her Authority. To which I answer over again, That as I have other Proofs besides the Testimony of the Church, by which I am induced to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God; so  
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the Testimony of the Church is so different a thing from its Authority, that I may credit the former in this case, without submitting to the latter. St. Paul says to the *Ephesians* (what is equally true of the whole Christian Church) *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone* †; i. e. not the Persons of the Prophets, Apostles, and Jesus Christ, but the Doctrines and Truths taught by them, and contained in the Scriptures, are the Foundation on which the Church is built: All the Authority and Privileges therefore with which this Church is invested, must stand upon the same Bottom; i. e. upon Scripture: And to say Truth, hither they refer us for the Proof of them. Is this consistent with their saying, That the Authority of Scripture, *as to us*, depends upon the Authority of the Church? What, does the Church receive Authority from Scripture with one Hand, and give Authority to Scripture with the other? Do the Foundation and Superstructure change Places, and mutually become both to each other? In defiance of these, and a great many more such Absurdities, it is still insisted on that the Church has this Authority. And *Stapleton* will tell you, That though *Hermas's Pastor* is indeed an Apocryphal Book, yet the Church might if she had pleased have decreed it to be a Canonical one, and obliged her Children to have received it as such. What shall we say to such an Assertion? I am not the first who has been led by it, to call to mind what *Tertullian* and *Chrysostom* say, upon Occasion of the Senate of *Rome's* Authority to judge

† Eph. ii. 20.

and determine, what Gods should be owned and worshipped by the *Romans*. The former says, *Among you, Deity is examined into just as Men please; and unless the God whose Deity they are enquiring into pleases them, he shall be no God for them* \*. The latter says, That the *Roman Senate* has *this Dignity or Privilege, to vote for, and admit into the Number of their Gods* †. May it not be said in the same manner of *Rome Papal*, That unless Scripture pleases them it shall not be Scripture; and that what Books shall be, and have the Authority of, Scripture, is to be carried by their Votes, and determined by their Decree? But the Claim (insolent as it is) calls for a graver Answer: Take the following one. *Hermas* either did, or he did not, write the Book called *Pastor* under divine Inspiration; and consequently, it either was, or was not, Canonical (*i. e.* an authoritative Rule of Faith and Manners) as soon as he had published it, and before the Church had determined any thing about it. If it was, there was no need of the Authority of the Church to give Authority to the Book; for by the same Reasons by which it was proved to be written by Inspiration, it was proved to be of divine Authority: If it was not, no Authority in the World could make it such. You will please to observe, That the same Reasoning will serve, as to all Books, whether really or pretendedly belonging to the Ca-

\* Apud vos de humano arbitrato divinitas pensatur; nisi homini Deus placuerit, Deus non erit. *Testul. Apol. C. 5. p. 6. Ed. Rigaltii, Ann. 1624.*

† Ταύτην εἶχε ἀξίαν [marg. ἐξουσίαν] χειροτονεῖν καὶ ἰσχυρίσασθαι θεός. *Chrysof. Op. V. 3. p. 686. Ed. Saub.*

non ; and effectually disprove any Interest that the Authority of the Church has in this Matter. I go on to the Third Proposition.

III. That the Church hath Authority to interpret and fix the Sense of Scripture ; and that all Christians are obliged to receive and submit to her Interpretation. Thus the Council of *Trent* hath decreed, That “ it belongs to the Church to judge “ of the true Sense and Interpretation of Scripture, “ and that no Person shall dare to interpret it in “ Matters relating to Faith and Manners, to any “ Sense contrary to that which the Church has held, “ and does still hold, or contrary to the unanimous “ Consent of the Fathers \*. In which Words we are referred, you see, to the Church, and to the unanimous Consent of the Fathers, for the true Sense and Interpretation of Scripture. Now to pass by the ridiculous Absurdity of referring private Christians to the Decrees of Popes or Councils, or to the Writings of the Fathers, which they have neither Leisure nor Skill to consult ; I would fain know how it is possible for the most learned and laborious Man in the World to come at the Sense of Scripture this Way ? Has the Church it self (mean by it what you will) always been uniformly of the same Opinion, as to the Sense of all the Texts of Scripture, which she has interpreted ? If this should be pretended, the contrary may easily be shewn. Take any one Text of Scripture, about the Sense of which Protestants and Papists disagree, and I will defy any Man alive to prove, that the Fathers unanimously agree in that Interpretation of it, which the Pa-

\* Conc. Trid. Sess. 4. Decret. de Edit. & usu Sacr. Libr.

pists contend for, against the Protestants. How then is it possible to find the Sense of Scripture this way, when the Church it self has not always, and in all Points, been of the same Mind; when the Fathers are far from always agreeing with themselves, or with one another; and when the Doctrines and Interpretations of the Church of *Rome* on the one Hand, and the Fathers on the other, are in many Instances so widely different? But that which is more directly to my present Purpose, is, to shew that though we could come at that Interpretation of Scripture which the Church holds, and the Fathers agree in; though this might afford a favourable Presumption that such Interpretation is right; yet it does by no means follow from hence, that the Church may authoritatively fix the Sense of Scripture; or that no Man may in any case (be the Reasons never so good) differ from or reject her Interpretation. Our Adversaries charge us with Pride and Disobedience, a Spirit of Faction and Rebellion, for not blindly submitting to the Decrees of the Church: But the Charge is an unjust one. They know, or may know (for it has often been declared) that we are ready to pay all proper Deference to the Judgment of wise and learned Men: And when a great Number, and a long Succession of such, can be shewn to have agreed in the Interpretation of any Texts of Scripture; especially if such their Agreement appears to have proceeded from sober Enquiry, and thorough Conviction, without Prejudice or corrupt Biass; we own that great Regard is to be had to them, and that such their Interpretation is not lightly to be rejected or departed from:

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But still we cannot submit to them as *Lords of our Faith*: We are ready to hear them and learn of them; but we can see no Reason why they should be to us instead of Christ, or expect from us that implicit Submission which is due to him only, and those commissioned by him, and inspired by his Spirit. He that is any thing versed in the Writings of the *Papists*, has often found them boasting of their *omnes, semper, & ubique*; The whole Church, all the Fathers, at all Times, and in all Places, agreeing in their Doctrines and Interpretations of Scripture. They have been often answered (and I believe Protestants are still of the same Mind) that as to any Points in which they can shew *such* an Agreement, we will not oppose or contradict them. But then as we know that such Agreement can never be shewn, in any of the Points in Difference betwixt them and us; so we take leave farther to declare, that even in this case, our giving in to, and not opposing Points so agreed, would be owing to a rational Persuasion, that things so universally maintained must be true, and not to an Opinion of any proper Authority the Persons so agreeing have over us in these Matters. You see then that we are ready to pay to Church and Fathers all proper Deference and Regard; and where they have Reason or Scripture on their Side, we have no Inclination to disagree with them. But it is *Authority* which is claimed; it is blind Submission that is required; without which all the rest (it is pretended) signifies nothing. Let us see then upon what this *Authority* to interpret Scripture for us, and this Demand of implicit Submission from us, is founded. Is it up-

on Scripture ; or any Promise there given them, of an *infallible* Guidance by the Spirit of God, in these Matters ? Their Proofs of this sort, will be considered and confuted when I come to the Point of *Infallibility*. Is it that they have greater natural Abilities or acquired Advantages, for interpreting Scripture, than Protestants have ? Besides, that this can never be proved, and need not be granted ; we are firmly persuaded, that such Freedom of Enquiry as Protestants plead for, and exercise in interpreting Scripture, is an Advantage for coming at the true Sense of it ; which those of the Church of *Rome*, who are bound down by the Decree of Popes and Councils, and the Opinions of Fathers, must necessarily want : And after all, supposing they had these superior abilities and advantages ; though upon this account it might be fit to attend to, and consider whether the Sense they fix on Scripture be the true one ; yet it would by no means prove them to be *Authoritative* Interpreters. Is it that they use proper Means, take fitter Methods to come at the Sense of Scripture than we do ; and that therefore their Authority in this Matter, should be owned and submitted to ? We say they do not ; but however let any impartial Person judge between us. We think the proper methods to be taken for this Purpose, are to consult the Scriptures in the Original Languages ; to compare the more obscure and difficult Texts of it, with those which speak of the same Matters more plainly and intelligibly ; not to understand any particular Texts of Scripture in such a Sense, as contradicts, or is inconsistent with, the whole Design and Tenour of it ; to attend diligent-

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ly to all such Circumstances of Persons writing or written to, Time, Place, &c. which may give Light to the Matter we are enquiring after ; in short, the very same Methods which all Men of Sense take, to understand Writings of any other sort, in which they meet with difficulties : And he that on account of the Importance and Sacredness of the Matters enquired into, shall add fervent Prayer to the Father of Lights, and his utmost Care to keep his Mind free from Lust, Passion, and corrupt Prejudices ; as he may reckon upon it, that he will not be left ignorant of any Truth necessary to Salvation, nor suffered to fall into any damnable Error ; so he bids fair for coming at the true Sense of Scripture, even in Matters of less Moment.

But all these methods (say our Adversaries) are insufficient, and have been found unsuccessful; those who pretend to make use of them still differ in their Interpretation of Scripture. I Answer, that tho' they may differ in matters of less Importance, yet there is no Reason to think that those who honestly use these methods, shall ever be suffer'd to err in any Points absolutely necessary to their Salvation. Let us see however, what are those better and surer methods which they follow : *Stapleton* reckons up four of them : the Rule of Faith, (of which Tradition is a part); the Practice of the Church; the Sense of Scripture in which the Fathers agree; and the Sense decreed by Councils: These you are to follow and you cannot err; and these are the only sure methods of Interpreting Scripture. As to the first of these, the Rule of Faith; so far as they mean Scripture by it, we are agreed; for they know we own

Scripture to be the best help to interpret Scripture. But when they take in unwritten Tradition as a part of the Rule of Faith, and tell us that Scripture is to be Interpreted by that; we reject it, as being for many reasons utterly unfit for any such Purpose: particularly as being it self much more obscure, uncertain, and doubtful, than Scripture which is to be interpreted by the help of it. And then as to the other three methods prescrib'd; surely nothing was ever more impertinent; it is a direct taking for granted, the Point in debate: the Enquiry is, what are the best methods of Interpreting and coming at the Sense of Scripture? the answer is, Follow the Church, Fathers, and Councils: *i. e.* don't Interpret or judge of the Sense of it, (tho' this is the very thing propos'd to be done) but blindly follow the Interpretation and Sense of it, which others have Authoritatively determin'd beforehand. For tho' these are called methods or means of interpreting Scripture; and by our being directed to them for that purpose, one might be apt to conclude that we were to fix the Sense of Scripture by the use of these means; and to judge how far they are or are not useful for that purpose; yet I can assure you that no such thing is intended or will be allow'd; so far from it, that the Council of *Trent* (as you have heard) has decreed, that no man shall dare to interpret Scripture to any Sense, contrary to that which the Church holds, and the Fathers agree in: And let who will set about the work of interpreting Scripture, tho' he be never so well qualify'd for it; at his peril be it, if in matters of Faith or Manners, he departs a hair's breadth from what is before determin'd to be the true Sense of it. So that  
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you see after all, when they talk of private Persons Interpreting Scripture, and seem to direct to what they call proper methods of judging of the true Sense of it; they really mean no such thing, nor will allow any such Priviledge to any body but their own Church: nay, if they would Speak consistently, they must all of them own, what a very powerful party among them assert and maintain; that the Authority of interpreting Scripture is inherent in his Holiness the Pope: for their Rule of Faith, is that which the Pope approves; their Usage and Practice of the Church, is what he pleases to observe himself, and direct others to observe; the Interpretation of the Fathers, is what he sees fit to follow; and the Decrees of Councils are then only binding, when he has graciously vouchsaf'd to confirm them.

There is another Argument upon which they lay very great Stress, in proving this Authority of the Church to interpret Scripture. I will just mention it here, tho' it will be more fully consider'd and answer'd under the head of *Infallibility*. It is thus: Scripture (they tell us) is an *unsens'd Letter*, ('tis their own Expression). It has no determinate meaning or signification of its own; and in order to understand it rightly, it is necessary that some body shou'd have Authority to interpret and fix the Sense of it: This Power (they say) Christ has given to the Church; and who so fit for it? Who so likely to make a good use of it? That we may not be impos'd upon by this specious Argument; It must be remember'd that there is a wide Difference between interpreting Scripture by the best helps, and in the best manner we can; and doing it authorita-  
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tively, so as to oblige the Consciences of Men to receive and submit to our Interpretation, without varying from it or daring to contradict it. The former we say the Christian Church, and every Member of it, may do, and are allow'd and encourag'd by their Saviour to do it: Nay, if they set honestly about it, they may hope for and reckon upon such divine Assistance, as will secure them from any such mistakes as will prove damnable at last: The latter, is what neither this nor any other Argument in the World will ever prove. For any Man to say that Scripture is an *unsens'd Letter*, which has no certain sense or meaning till the Church determines what that sense or meaning is; is talking either very impertinently, or very impudently: If they intend by it, that the Words or Letters of Scripture, as written or printed on Paper, are mere arbitrary marks, and have no meaning in them; it is utterly impertinent: For this is equally true of all the Books and Writings in the World; it is as true of their interpretation of Scripture when committed to Paper, as of Scripture itself. If they intend by it, that the Letters and Words of Scripture are not fitted to convey to, or excite in our Minds, any certain and determinate meaning; it is horridly impudent: It is a bold affront to the blessed God, and an unworthy disparagement of the Revelation he has vouchsaf'd us in his Word. Are we then to think, that tho' Men can by writing or speaking convey their meaning to each other, with all the certainty that is needful; yet that the blessed God cannot? Or shall we say, that tho' he could, yet he would not? Even when he was giving us a Book  
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which could be of no use to us any farther than it is understood ; concerning which he himself declares that it is profitable to all necessary purposes, and able to make us wise to Salvation. In short, if this authoritative claim is a just one, Scripture (for ought I see) deserves this, and all the rest of the disparaging things, they have said about it : For upon this Supposition, it can be of no use to us, nor have we any need of it : If it has no determinate meaning till the Church by Inspiration fixes one, to what purpose was it to commit the divine will to writing ? For any good end it answers, it seems to us, God might as well constantly, or as occasion offer'd, have reveal'd his Will to Popes and Councils, to be by them handed out to particular Christians ; as be oblig'd still to reveal the true sense and meaning of those writings. The supposition therefore upon which this Argument proceeds, is you see both impudent and false ; and the Consequence drawn from it, that therefore the Church may and can *authoritatively* and *infallibly* interpret these unmeaning Scriptures, is of a Piece with it ; as I shall shew you more fully by and by. I go on to a fourth Claim.

IV. That since many Things which ought to be believed and done, are not at all contained in Scripture, the Church hath *Authority* to decree and enjoin these Things as necessary to Salvation ; and all Christians are thereupon obliged to believe and practise accordingly. I readily own, that upon some Occasions, the *Popish* Writers themselves will some of them say Things utterly inconsistent with this Claim. Thus, *e. g.* *Bellarmin* tells us in one Place  
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of his Writings (though it plainly contradicts what he himself says elsewhere) That no Propofition can be [*de fide*] an Article of Faith, but what is revealed in Scripture \*. Others of them have in Words exprefly difclaimed all Power in the Church to coin new Articles of Faith. But it will be eafy to fhew you, that many of them claim this Authority for the Church ; and that all of them hold fuch Principles from which it muft neceffarily follow ; tho' when it ferves their Purpose they would feem to difclaim it. Many of them exprefly claim it : Thus, *e. g. Melchior Canus* fays, There are many Things belonging to the Faith of Christians, which are neither manifefly nor obfcurely contained in the facred Scriptures. *Stapleton* will tell you, That many Things neceffary to be believed, in order to Salvation, are not comprehended in the Scriptures, but are recommended to us only by the Authority of the Church. And elfewhere, That the Church may propofe and define Matters of Faith, without any evident, or fo much as probable, Testimony of Scripture. I might add many more, if it were needful : But I go on, to fhew you, That they all hold fuch Principles from which it neceffarily follows, that the Church has Authority to decree many Things as neceffary to Salvation, which the Scripture takes no Notice of. They all maintain, that Tradition unwritten, is a part of the Rule of Faith, and *to be received with the fame pious Affecti-*

\* Sciendum eft enim, propofitionem fidei concludi tali fyllogifmo.

Quicquid Deus revelavit in Scripturis eft verum : Hoc Deus revelavit in Scripturis : Ergo hoc eft verum. Bellarm. De Verb. Dei L. 3. C. 10. Refp. ad Arg. 15.



on and Reverence, that is due to Scripture \*. Now by the Help of this same Tradition, they know a Power of Things, of which our Bibles say never a Word. And as you heard before concerning Scripture, that its Authority, *as to us*, depends upon the Authority of the Church, and that it has no certain meaning other than what the Church is pleased to put upon it, and propose to us to be believed; So they tell us as to unwritten Traditions too, that tho' they come either *from the Mouth of Christ himself, or were dictated by the Holy Spirit, and have been handed down by a continued Succession* †; yet that they receive all their Authority from the Church: *i. e.* If these Traditions relate to Matters of Faith, no Man is obliged to believe them; or if they relate to Manners, no Man is obliged to observe them, as necessary to Salvation; 'till the Church has declared and proposed them to be so: But then, as soon as ever the Church has interposed with her Authority, to propose and declare them as necessary to Salvation, immediately they are so. Would you think it? To believe the perpetual Virginity of the blessed Virgin shall be an Article of Faith; and to fast in *Lent* shall be a pious Practice, necessary to Salvation; if the Church pleases to propose and declare them such. On the other Hand; To believe that *God is in Christ Jesus reconciling the World unto himself*, and to pray to God in the Name of *Christ Jesus*; shall neither of them be necessary to Salvation, till the Church declares them to be so. Nay, you could never know

\* Conc. Trid. Sess. 4. Decret. de Canon Scripturis.

† Conc. Trid. *ibid.*

that the former is a Christian Doctrine, and the latter a Christian Duty, unless the Church had told you that such and such Texts of Scripture are to be interpreted to this Sense; and had, by her Authority, declared them necessary to Salvation.

I am apt to think, this will appear strange, and sound harshly to Protestant Ears; but I can tell you somewhat else, which, it may be, you will wonder at as much: Some of their own Authors are ingenuous enough to own, that all those Doctrines and Practices of the Church, whose Author and Original is not to be found in Scripture, are to be reckoned Apostolical Traditions: and they own that the following are of this sort: St. *Peter's* having been at *Rome*, and the Primacy of the Bishop of that See; the Sacrifice of the Altar; real Presence; Communion in one kind; private Mass; the keeping and adoring the consecrated Host; the Sacraments of Confirmation, Orders, Matrimony, Penance, and extreme Unction; the Necessity of auricular Confession to a Priest; Indulgences; Purgatory; and in short, almost every Point in Difference between them and us: And yet after all, these very Men, when they debate these Points with Protestants, have the Face to quote Scripture to us in Defence of them, after owning that they are not founded upon Scripture, but only upon Apostolical Tradition. *Authority* and *Infallibility* will it seems bear them out, in doing what we *fallible* Hereticks think very strange things. It falls not within my Province to detect the Falshood and Forgery of these unwritten Traditions, by the help of which such marvellous Feats are to be done: But after having  
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shewn you that they have made many Things to be *de fide*, and necessary to Salvation, which they own have no other Foundation; it is my Business to prove to you, that they have no *Authority* to do so: And to shew you moreover, that as to those Things which are contained in Scripture, their being Articles of Faith, and necessary to Salvation, depends, not upon the *authoritative* Proposition or Declaration of the Church, but upon their having this Stress laid upon them in Scripture it self. As I was musing with my self, how to propose my Argument against such Authority, in the clearest and most intelligible manner; I at first thought it might be proper to begin with enquiring, Whether absolutely every thing which the Church may see fit to propose and declare necessary to be believed and done in order to Salvation, be for that Reason, and that Reason only, *so* necessary? If the Answer had been (as surely it ought to be) No; I should have gone on and reason'd thus: It follows therefore, that besides the authoritative Proposition and Declaration of the Church, there must be somewhat either in the Nature of the Things themselves, or in the Source and Original from whence they derive, which contributes (at least) towards their being necessary to Salvation, and without which it would not be fit, even for the Church itself, to declare them so. And from hence I designed to have concluded the very Point I was to prove, that therefore it is not the Church's authoritative Proposition and Declaration only, that can make these things necessary to be believed and done in order to Salvation. And I am fully persuaded, that if the Enquiry just now mentioned, be answered in the negative, this Reason-

ing thereupon, would be unanswerably conclusive. But I soon saw Reason to alter my Method of Arguing; because I suspected whether I might not be answer'd in the affirmative; that absolutely every thing which the Church may see fit to propose and declare necessary to Salvation, is so, for that reason, and that Reason only. For why should I imagine any thing to be too absurd for the Church of *Rome* to decree necessary to be believ'd, after it has decreed the Doctrine of Transubstantiation necessary to be believ'd? Why should I think any thing could be too trifling for that Church to require, which has recommended Pilgrimages to the Churches and Reliques of dead Saints? Why should I take it for granted, that any thing was so monstrously bad and wicked, that the Authority of the Church itself cannot make it necessary to be believ'd or done; when their great Champion *Bellarmin* has told us in so many Words \*, that if the Pope thro' mistake, should command Vice and forbid Vertue, the Church (unless she would sin against Conscience) would be oblig'd to believe that Vice is good and Vertue evil? These things consider'd, I chose to proceed thus: The Advocates of *Rome* will I suppose own, that whatever the Church *might* do, she never has, nor ever will propose or declare any thing as necessary to Salvation, but what is founded either upon Scripture or Apostolical Tradition; for one or both these, is always pleaded as

\* Fides Catholica docet, omnem virtutem esse bonam, omne vitium esse malum: Si autem Papa erraret præcipiendo vitia, vel prohibendo virtutes, teneretur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona, & virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra Conscientiam peccare. *Bellarmin. De Rom. Pontif. L. 4. C. 5. §. ult.*

the ground of what she decrees : Now the Apostles from whom Scripture and these Traditions are said to have come down to us, either knew that those things which the Church takes thence and decrees or proposes as necessary to Salvation, were indeed necessary to Salvation ; or they did not know it : Attend now to the Consequences, which ever way this question is answer'd. If they did know it, they either declar'd it to, or they conceal'd it from, those to whom they preach'd \* : Surely it won't be said that they conceal'd any thing that was absolutely necessary to Salvation ; this wou'd be charging them with unfaithfulness to their Trust : Particularly as to *St. Paul*, it wou'd be charging him with high Presumption for pronouncing even an *Angel from Heaven, or any Man upon Earth, accursed*, who shou'd preach any other Gospel †, than that which he and the rest of the Apostles had received themselves and taught to others : It would be giving him the lie for having said to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus* whom he sent for to *Miletus*, that he had kept back nothing that was profitable, and therefore to be sure nothing that was necessary ; and again that he had not shunned to declare to them all the Counsel of God ‡. So that I think we may venture to affirm, that neither he nor any other of the Apostles conceal'd any thing which they knew to be necessary to Salvation : Every thing of this sort therefore that they knew, they certainly declar'd ; and if they declar'd it to be necessary to Salvation, I can't imagine what need there can be of the

\* Vid. Chilling. Ch. 4. Sect. 18. p. m. 144, 145. † Gal. 1. 8, 9.

‡ Act. 20. 20, 27.

Church's Authoritative proposal and Declaration ; or how there can be any Authority, any where, to decree what shall be necessary to Salvation ; other than that of the Apostles themselves, under Christ the Head of the Church. Let us see now what follows upon supposition the Question should be answer'd the other way ; *i. e.* that the Apostles did *not* know, concerning some of those things grounded upon Scripture, or Tradition proceeding from them, that they were necessary to Salvation ; but which being so in themselves, (tho' *they* did not know it) the Church hath since declar'd them to be so. If this is the Case, I would fain be told how the Church since the Apostles Days, came to know more fully and compleatly what is necessary to Salvation, than the Apostles themselves did : I don't know that she pretends to any new Revelations of this sort ; and if she should pretend to them, we should expect otherguise Proofs of their coming from God, than I think her able to produce : And yet I cannot devize how the Church of *Rome* should come to know more than the Apostles, but by new Revelation. I can think of but one possible way of evading the force of this Reasoning, and that is so poor an one that it scarce deserves to be regarded : It is thus ; that the Church neither knows, nor pretends to know, better than the Apostles what is necessary to Salvation ; but the Apostles might know several things, which tho' they were not necessary to Salvation in their Days, would become necessary in after Times ; and therefore took Care to hand them down to the Church by Tradition, that she might exercise her Authority in  
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proposing and declaring them to be necessary to Salvation at such Times and in such Circumstances, as she in her great Prudence and Infallible Judgment thought fit. But let us consider; Things necessary to Salvation at one time and not at another? Necessary in our Days, and not so in the Days of the Apostles? Necessary to Christians of later Ages, and not so to the primitive Christians? Sure this cannot be true: I always thought that to be the Christian *Faith, which was once* (and at once) *delivered to the Saints* \* by Christ and his Apostles. But to let that pass: If this was the case, methinks the Apostles should have taken care to leave it upon record, or at least to have given us some Hint in Scripture, that more would be necessary to Salvation in after times than was then: And yet I cannot find any thing like this (but a great deal to the contrary) in all the New Testament. But it may be, though Scripture says nothing of this sort, Tradition does; and that you know, serves their Purpose full as well: I do not remember ever yet to have heard of any such Tradition; but if ever I should, it will appear to me so very unlikely to have proceeded from the Apostles, that I shall strongly suspect it of Forgery, and demand very clear Proofs of its Genuineness, before I give Credit to it. I go on to the fifth and last Proposition.

V. That the Church has Authority to judge and determine in all Controversies relating to matters of Faith; and that Christians are obliged to be determined by, and submit to, her Judgment and Decision. I need not spend your time in proving that such Authority is claim'd in behalf of the Church: Coun-

\* Jude, ver. 3.

cils have so often, and Popes do so continually exercise it ; calling all those Hereticks and accursed (and as far as they have it in their Power treating them as such) who oppose the Church's Decrees, or who, in any Controversies of Faith which arise, decline her Judgment, and refuse submission to her Determinations ; that there can be no need of farther Evidence. Let us see how this Claim is supported : By much the same sort of Proofs (we shall find) as the former ; particularly the third, To interpret and give the Sense of Scripture, which has no certain Sense till she fixes it : and from what was said in Confutation of that, this before us might sufficiently be disproved : So that I shall need to say the less upon it here.

Briefly thus : If they can but persuade you to take three Steps with them (they are pretty large ones indeed) the Point will be proved : There must be a Judge of Controversies ; Scripture is not fit to be, nor can possibly be, that Judge ; the Church and she alone is fit for that Office, and invested with this Authority, by Christ her invisible Head ; and therefore she has this Authority, and is in the right to exercise and employ it. That there must be a Judge of Controversies, meaning thereby a living, ay and an infallible one ; they all affirm with the utmost Confidence : Their Proofs of which will be considered presently. That Scripture is not fit to be, cannot possibly be, this Judge, they are very positive ; nor will we contradict them, if they mean a *living* and infallible Judge, according to the strict meaning of that Word : But then we say, that these Scriptures are very fit, nay the fittest thing in the World, to be the Rule by which Christians should judge and determine all Disputes concerning Matters  
of



of Faith ; as will no doubt be proved to you in the next Discourse. Well, but the Church, *i. e.* (for so they mean) the Pope, or a Council, or the Pope presiding in a Council, and confirming its Decrees, is fit to be, and endowed with Infallibility that it may be, this Judge of Controversies. That it has no such Infallibility shall be proved hereafter : and that she is so far from being the only fit Judge, as not to be at all fit for that Office, \* is plain from hence ; that in all these Controversies she is a party ; and her Power and Authority, her Temporal Grandeur and Interest, are so nearly concerned in them, that it is not to be expected she should exercise this Office with Equity and Impartiality. And if I had time for it I could shew you, that from the time she first began to claim this authoritative and infallible Judgment, she has us'd it in so corrupt and arbitrary a manner, as has quite forfeited her Reputation for Honesty and Integrity ; and as must effectually discourage all who are not in her Interests, from submitting to her Tribunal.

You have now heard the Claims of the Church of *Rome*, for Authority in matters of Faith ; You have heard too, some Part of what we have to say (for all could not be said in this compass of Time) for the Confutation of them. If, wondering at the Exorbitancy of these Claims, you should ask, How she could ever have the Insolence to make them ? I

\* Quærendi sunt Judices : Si Christiani de utraque parte dari non possunt ; quia studiis veritas impeditur. De foris quærendus est Judex : Si Paganus, non potest nosse Christiana secreta. Si Judæus, inimicus est Christiani Baptismatis : Ergo in terris de hac re nullum poterit reperiri judicium ; de cælo quærendus est judex. Sed ut quid pulsamus ad cælum, cum habeamus hic in Evangelio Testamentum ? *Optat. Miles. adv. Parm. L. 5. p. 109. Ed. Lutet. 1676. Fol.*

take the true Account of the Matter to be thus : That between Scripture and the Church of *Rome*; there is a most irreconcilable Difference: Both cannot possibly be in the right : If Scripture be true, many of *her* Doctrines must be false ; great part of her Worship must be idolatrous ; many of her Practices absurd and superstitious ; and her whole Power and Form of Government usurp'd, arbitrary and tyrannical. She seems therefore to have put on a bold Face, and to have resolved, that Scripture shall have no more Authority, no other Meaning, than she is graciously pleased to allow ; and if any thing, not to be met with in Scripture, is found necessary to defend her Cause, and justify her Tyranny †, Tradition shall be applied to, to furnish it out : Tradition which she can forge, alter, and make to say just what she pleases.

I go on now to the other Point, INFALLIBILITY. Their Pretence to which is in itself so monstrously insolent and absurd ; so utterly void of all solid Proof ; so plainly contradictory to History and indisputable Facts ; such a barefac'd Attempt to impose upon the Reason and common Sense of Mankind, and to bring them into a State of the most abject Slavery ; that it is really wonderful (to those who are not acquainted with the History of that Church, and the gradual Advances it made in Demands of this sort) how it should ever enter into the Heads of mortal Men, to lay Claim to it. And yet

† Cum enim ex Scripturis arguuntur (*sc.* hæretici) in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex auctoritate, et quia varie sunt dictæ, et quia non possit ex his inventi Veritas, ab his qui nesciant *Traditionem*. Non enim per Literas traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem, & seq. *Ign. contra Hæc. L. 5. C. 2. Ed. Massuet. p. 174.*

the Fact is indisputably true ; they have long claim-  
 ed it ; they continue to do so ; their whole Fabrick  
 of Authority rests upon this Claim, and falls when  
 it is confuted ; so that I should be thought to spend  
 your Time needlessly, if I were to set about a la-  
 boured Proof of it. *Cressy* indeed, a Profelyte from  
 the Church of *England* to Popery, in the last Cen-  
 tury, seems to have been sick of the Word, and to  
 have wish'd he could fairly have got rid of it : He  
 tells us, *No such Word can be found in any Council :*  
*That he saw no Necessity that ever Protestants should*  
*have heard it named, much less press'd with so much*  
*Earnestness, as (he owns) it has been, in their Books*  
*of Controversy :* That the Word *Infallibility had*  
*been combated by Chillingworth, with too great Suc-*  
*cess,* which therefore he wishes were forgotten or laid  
 aside † ; and intimates it as his Opinion, that the  
 just Authority of the Church might do without it.  
 The poor Man seem'd to have some little remains  
 of Modesty when he wrote this ; but it is highly  
 probable, that his new Masters school'd him severely  
 for talking at this rate ; for in an Appendix to an  
 after Edition of his Book, he unsays it all again, by  
 telling us, *That the Church can neither deceive nor be*  
*deceived ; and that Authority and Infallibility in the*  
*Church, are in Effect all one ; for to say that the*  
*Church hath Authority to oblige all Christians to re-*  
*ceive her Doctrines, and withal to say she is fallible,*  
*is Extremity of Injustice and Tyranny \**. But whe-  
 ther *Cressy* had ever made this Recantation or no ;  
 The Church of *Rome* is so well appriz'd, that her Au-

† Exomolog. Ch. 40. §. 3. p. m. 284.

\* Exomol. Append. C. 5.

thority can never be supported without the Claim of Infallibility ; that as she does not seem at all disposed to give it up, so I am under no Apprehension of their reckoning it a Calumny, when we charge them with making this Claim. And indeed, neither *Cressy*, nor what I have quoted from him, had been worth mentioning on this Occasion, were it not that I might warn you of those Methods, which possibly the present Agents for the Church of *Rome* among us may take, to gain Profelytes : I mean representing their Cause, and the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, in the softest and most favourable manner, and concealing as much as they can the most shocking Parts of it ; that uncautious People may swallow it the more easily. This was manifestly *Cressy's* Intention, and it is not at all unlikely, that others are now making use of the same Arts. If you should happen to meet with any of them, who should be for laying aside this shocking Word *Infallibility*, while they are recommending their Religion to you ; pray ask them, Whether they, or any Papist, can or dare own that their Church has or may err in matters of Faith ? If they should tell you that their Councils do not use this Word, and that therefore they need not ; ask them, Whether no Council ever decreed, that the Church *non potest errare*, cannot err ? and if so, what is the Difference between its being impossible for her to err, and being infallible ? Ask them, whether their greatest Doctors have not told us, that were it not for the Infallibility of the Church, their Faith could have no Foundation, nor their Religion any Certainty ? Nay, Whether the Council of *Ba-*

*fil* has not told us, that if once that pernicious Error were admitted, that *Councils may err*, the whole Catholick Faith would totter. And to say Truth, this is talking (though falsely and impudently) yet consistently at least; whereas those (if really there be any such) who tell us, that Authority will do of it self, though they should drop Infallibility; not only contradict the known Sense of their Church, but in effect give up its Power, and destroy the Foundations upon which its Grandeur and Tyranny subsists. And accordingly in supporting those *authoritative Claims* mentioned under the former Head, they always have recourse to the Church's Infallibility: a Persuasion of which does more to satisfy their Votaries of the Justice of their Claims, and to dispose them blindly to submit to them, than all their other Proofs put together: For in short, the whole of their Faith is resolv'd, into the unerring *Authority and Infallibility* of their Church: So that, besides what has been already said, if I can (as I verily think I shall) confute their Pretensions to the latter, it will be a farther (and it may be a more striking) Proof, than any I have yet offer'd, of the Absurdity and Impudence of the former. To this end, and that we may the better understand what is precisely the Point in debate, it will be of use, in the First Place.

I. To state the notion of *Infallibility*: How far, and with respect to what things, the Church of *Rome* lays claim to it. It will, I suppose, be granted me, that he who does not know absolutely every thing, may possibly be mistaken in some things: since therefore it will be allow'd me that Omniscience

ence, or the knowing absolutely every thing that is knowable, is the Prerogative of God alone, and which no Man or number of Men can (or indeed does) lay claim to ; It will follow that the Church is not absolutely, and with respect to all things Infallible : To do them justice, they don't pretend that she is. The Question therefore is, how far, and with respect to what things does she pretend to be Infallible ? With one Voice they will all tell you that she is infallible in matters of Faith : A few of them (I mean the *Jesuits*, in the famous dispute between them, and the *Jansenists*) maintain'd, and would fain have got it to have been settled and universally own'd, that the Church (*i. e.* the Pope, for so the Jesuits meant) was Infallible with relation to matters of *Fact* also. Again : They will all of them (I think) own, that tho' the Church is Infallible in her decrees concerning Faith and Manners, yet that she may become (and actually has at some times, been) greatly corrupt in Discipline and Practice ; and that both her Head and her Members may be thus corrupted. With respect to this last concession, I cannot help observing, that to any Man of plain common Sense, there appears to be a manifest inconsistency in it. The Church is Infallible in its decrees with relation to *Matters of Faith*, and *Manners* : *i. e.* things to be believ'd, and things to be practis'd : As to the former, *Matters of Faith* ; it not only decrees aright ; but it always actually believes right too : For Error, or varying the least tittle from what the Church has decreed to be believ'd ; is Heresy : and Heresy *ipso facto* cuts a Man off from the Church, and excludes all hope of Sal-

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vation: But the Case is (it seems) otherwise with respect to *Manners*; for tho' the Church does, and cannot but, decree as infallibly upon this Head, as with respect to *Matters of Faith*; yet she herself may become corrupt in her Manners, and *Practise* many things (tho' she can never *believe* any thing) contrary to her own decrees. What should make this Difference I cannot devize; or why a mistake in the understanding, should more effectually cut a Man off from the Communion of the Church, and the hope of Salvation, than the wickedness of his Heart and Life. I am sure St. *Paul* tells us, that tho' he had the Gift of Prophecy, and understood all mysteries, and all Knowledge; nay, tho' he had Faith so that he could remove Mountains, yet if he had no Charity, he should be nothing\*. The Charity he there speaks of, is on all Hands acknowledg'd to be the Source of holy Obedience and regular Practice: Whatever else I have, if I want this, I am nothing; and therefore one would think, not Infallible: And why the Church of *Rome* after having claim'd *Infallibility*, does not rub her forehead, and claim *Impeccability* too, I am at a loss to know; I think verily they might as justly, and with as good Proof from Reason and Scripture claim the latter, as the former. And so with respect to the distinction just now mention'd, of Matters of Faith, and Matters of Fact; I have never yet met with any sufficient Reasons, why those who allow the Infallibility of the Church of *Rome* as to the first, should disallow it as to the last: I can see indeed how it might come to pass, that in the dispute between

\* 1 Cor. xiii. 2,

the Jesuits and Jansenists, the different Views and Interests of the two Parties, might dispose the former to stickle as warmly for the Pope's Infallibility in Matters of Fact, as the latter did against it: But as I cannot tell whether, if it had not been for such an opposition of Interests and Views, this Point when once started, would not have been roundly carry'd in favour of his Holiness; so for ought I know, if a favourable opportunity should offer, the claim may be reviv'd again, and the Church be decreed to be as Infallible in Matters of Fact, as she pretends to be in Matters of Faith: Sure I am, that time was, when there was as little likelihood that any Christian Church should ever pretend to the latter; as there is now, that the Church of *Rome* may some time or other, lay claim to the former. But since this is not yet the Case, and that I may not be thought to dispute against any claim, other than what our Adversaries are universally agreed in making, I will confine myself to their *Infallibility in Matters of Faith*. Upon hearing such an extraordinary priviledge claim'd, it is natural to ask those who pretend to it, Pray where is it to be found? Who is entrusted with it? To whom are we to apply for an infallible Interpretation of Scripture, and for an infallible decision of all Controversies? The having this Privilege is not a whit of more Importance than the knowing where it is lodged; nor can it possibly be of any Use, till it is determined and known who is in Possession of it. If God has appointed such an infallible Teacher and Judge, if he has commanded us upon Pain of Damnation, to hearken to him, and to be determined by him; no Man  
 alive



alive can doubt but that he has taken Care to make him so conspicuous and remarkable, that it shall be impossible to mistake him ; or at least that there are means sufficiently plain and certain, by which we may know, without any doubt, who and where he is. Suppose his Majesty should tell his Subjects, that he had appointed a Lord Chancellor and twelve Judges, to hear and determine all Causes belonging severally to their Cognizance ; would it not appear very strange, if he should conceal their Names, or leave us no possible Method of knowing who the Persons were whom he had appointed and commissioned to execute these Offices ? And yet upon Enquiry, this will be found to be the very Case before us : For our Adversaries themselves, are so far from being agreed where it is lodged, that they are of different and inconsistent Opinions about it. Give me leave to ask (in Archbishop *Tillotson's* \* Words) “ Can any Man think that this Privilege was at first conferred upon the Church of *Rome*, and that Christians in all Ages did believe it, and had constant Recourse to it for determining their Differences ; and yet that that very Church which enjoy'd and us'd it so long, should now be at a Loss where to find it ? Nothing could have fallen out more unluckily, than that there should be such Differences among them about that, which they pretend to be the only Means of ending all Differences”. For you are to know, that in the Church of *Rome* it self, there are several Competitors for this *Infallibility* : Some of

\* Vol. I. Sermon. II. on 1 Cor. iii. 15.

them will tell you that it is in the Pope alone, and not in any General Council ; Others that it is in a General Council only, and not in the Pope ; And others, that is in neither Pope nor Council singly, but in both together ; *i. e.* That when a General Council is called by the Pope, when he presides in it, either in Person or by his Legates, and when he confirms it's Decrees, then they are infallibly true and absolutely binding : And yet there is a fourth Opinion, that these Decrees are not infallible and binding after all, till the Church hath universally owned and received them. Whom, or what are we to believe in this Case ? For these Opinions are so inconsistent, that if you suppose any one of them to be true, all the rest must be false. But what if after all, an Expedient may be found out to reconcile these different Opinions ; or at least to make Mens Minds easy, even though they subsist. *Chillingworth* having urg'd the very Difficulty we are now upon, home on the Church of *Rome* ; *Cressy* takes upon him to solve it ; and he goes about it in the following Manner. Hereto I answer (says he) *That there is no Need at all of an Answer, since the Objection answers it self : For by saying, there are Variety of Opinions among Catholicks, acknowledged for such even while they differ, it follows, that the Objector is not obliged to submit to that Judge which any Catholick refuses † : i. e.* (for so it must hence follow) Since there are many in the Church of *Rome*, own'd as Members of that Catholick Church, who deny that *Infallibility* is in the Pope ; many

others who deny that it is in a General Council, and so of the rest ; you are not obliged to believe that it is in any one of them : Which (to my Understanding) is leaving us at Liberty whether we will believe it is any where : For if it be not in some one or more of these Competitors for it, I cannot imagine where it should be ; for there is no Body else that puts in for it : And if it be no where, or if no Body can tell me who has it, I shall conclude that they have it not ; nay, that there is no such thing to be had. After having given this wise Reason why the Difficulty need- ed no Answer, (by which you see the whole Cause is given up) He proceeds to add two other An- swers ; The whole Meaning of both which a- mounts to no more than this : That though Ca- tholicks are not perfectly of a Mind, where their *Infallibility* is ; yet they are all agreed, that their Church has it : And if we Protestants will but be so good natur'd, as to take this upon their Word, they will leave us at our Liberty to lodge it either in the Pope, as the Jesuits do ; or in a General Council, as the *Gallican* Church does ; or in both together, as many others do. In short, in any of them, in all of them, or in none of them (for there are good Catholicks who deny it of every one of them). Do but believe that we have it, and submit to the Orders and Decrees which it issues out ; and we will desire no more of you. Must not these Men have lost their Sen- ses, to give us such an Answer ; or think that we have lost ours, and so may be satisfy'd with

it? *Infallibility* in the Church, and yet it is neither in the Head, nor in the Members! neither in the Church Virtual, nor Representative, nor diffusive! at least, you need not believe it is in any of them. It is just as if I should say, That there is somewhere in the World a very great and powerful Kingdom, distinguished from all others by some one peculiar Advantage, which none of the rest have: And being asked, Pray in what Quarter of the World is it? I should answer, That though the whole World is divided into *Europe, Asia, Africa, and America*, yet the Kingdom I talk of, is in no one, or more of these. It must be own'd, that thus far, at least, the Church of *Rome* is in the right, to require implicit Faith, blind Submission and Obedience, of her Votaries; since no Man with his Eyes open, can help boggling at such Absurdities.

It will be said (it may be) that *Cressy* went the wrong Way to work, in answering this Difficulty; that by the Concessions he has made, he has well nigh betrayed the Cause: That those who understand themselves better, take Care to fix this *Infallibility* somewhere; and though they do indeed differ very widely in their Opinions about it, yet they are all very certain of the Truth of their Opinions severally. I have already enumerated four of them: And since it is (I think) impossible to devise a Fifth, if I can prove to you that all these four are false; it must surely follow, That they have no such Thing as *Infallibility* among them.

I. Then,

1. Then, The *Jesuits*; almost all their several Orders of *Monks*; great numbers of their learned Doctors; and I believe the greater part of the common People among them; are of the Opinion, that the Pope alone is *infallible*: As I could prove to you, (if I had Time) from a great Number of their Authors. But because this will not be deny'd, I will content my self with proving, that this Opinion cannot be true. For several of their Popes have actually erred; and that in Matters professedly relating to the Faith; acting as Popes, and pronouncing or decreeing *ex Cathedrâ*. Pope *Adrian VI.* was so honest as to own that Popes are fallible. If he said true, the Cause is given up: If he was mistaken, then he himself at least, though a Pope, was not *infallible*. Consult *Platina* in his History of the Lives of the Popes I am going to mention, and you will find that some or other of them must have been mistaken. *Stephen VI.* annulled and rescinded the Decrees of *Formosus I.* *John X.* annulled those of *Stephen*, and restored those of *Formosus*. *Romanus I.* abrogated the Decrees of *Stephen*: And *Sergius III.* had such an abhorrence for *Formosus*, and all that he did as Pope, that he obliged Priests whom he had ordained, to be re-ordained. Their own Canon Law tells us, That *Nicholas I.* \* decreed, it was not fit for Clergymen to bear Arms: Compare this with what *Urban II.* *Boniface VIII.* and several other Popes have advized, or decreed, or practiced, and then judge whether some or other of them must not have been

\* Gratian. Distinct. 50. C. 5.

mistaken. I could give you many more Instances, but these are enough: For upon the Principles of those whom I am now opposing, every Pope must have been infallible; and if it be proved concerning any one of them that he erred, there is no Reason to believe that any of them were *infallible*.

It would be easy to produce several Instances wherein the same Pope has contradicted himself: I'll mention but one: *Martin V.* confirm'd the decree of the Council of *Constance*, which set a General Council above the Pope: And yet he afterwards publish'd a Bull forbidding all Appeals from the Pope to a General Council. Unless Infallibility can reconcile Contradictions, he must have been fallible in one or the other of these Cases.

Nay, I can go farther, and prove to you, not only that many of their Popes have been the most wicked and profligate Wretches that were ever Born, (this they own, but tell us, it is well enough consistent with their Infallibility) but that they have believ'd and Taught and Patroniz'd, what the Church of *Rome* itself has declar'd to be Heresy. If *Athanasius* \* is to be credited, Pope *Librius* for fear of Death (with which he was threatned) subscrib'd to Arianism. And this account is confirm'd both by *St. Hilary* † and *St. Jerome* ‡. *Tertulian* || tells us concerning one of the Bishops of *Rome*, (it was I think Pope *Anicetus*) that he own'd the Prophecies of *Montanus*, *Prisca* and *Maximilla*.

\* Ep. ad solit. Vir. agentes, p. 837. Ed. Par. 1627.

† Hilar. in Frag. col. 426.

‡ Hieron. Catal. vir. illust.

|| Ter. ul. adv. Prax. p. m. 634 C.

*Honorius* not only defended the Heresy of the *Monothelites*, but was condemn'd by three General Councils, every one of them confirm'd by the Pope. *John XXIII.* was † charg'd at the Council of *Constance*, with the blackest and most enormous Crimes, under 70 Articles. Fifty of which were read and prov'd, and declar'd to be publick and notorious. And tho' his denying the Immortality of the Soul, was (I think) one of those Articles, which (out of respect to the apostolick See) was not allow'd to be expressly urg'd against him; yet I do not find that any body attempted to clear him of that Charge. The Council itself in their Citation expressly charges him with *Heresy, Schism, Simony*, as well as other Crimes, and afterwards actually depos'd him. This is the Man concerning whom the Emperor (who was there present) declar'd that the whole Council unanimously own'd him for a true Pope, before his Deposition. Was *Gregory* the Great infallible, when he condemn'd the Title of Universal Bishop as Prophane and Antichristian? the very Title the Popes of *Rome* now claim. Or was *Gelasius* Infallible\*, when he condemn'd (what the Church of *Rome* has since decreed) Communion in one kind, and call'd it *Sacrilegious*? But enough of this sort of Proof: If the Gentlemen we have do with in this dispute, would suffer us to argue with them on the Principles of Reason and common Sense, (as the

† L. Enfant Hist. de Conc. de Constance, p. 141. 175, 220. Ed. 4<sup>o</sup>. Amst. 1714.

\* Gratian. de Consecrat. Dist. 2. C. 12.

rest of Mankind submit to be treated) it would be easy to shew from these Principles, that there is scarce any one Proposition in all the World more incredible, than that all the Bishops of *Rome* have been Infallible. To prove this there needs nothing more, than a brief representation what sort of Persons, Popes (at least for a great many Centuries last past) have generally been; how they are chosen; and how they often proceed in their decrees and decisions concerning Matters of Faith. The Qualifications most regarded in a Candidate for the Papal Chair, are, not Piety and Vertue, no nor Learning and sound Knowledge in the Doctrines of Christianity; For many of them have been monsters in wickedness, and exceedingly ignorant as to these things: But, a deep Skill in Politicks and Canon Law; in Dispensations, and Beneficiary Matters; Excommunications, and Appeals: And then, the older the better; as being the more likely to die soon, and make way for others, of whom there are always enow gaping after this Dignity. Well, when any one or more such Candidates are pitch'd upon as the Electors (or those under whose influence they are) think will best promote their Interests, and answer their Purposes; how does the choice proceed? Is it (as is pretended) under the Influence and Direction of the Spirit of God, or is it by trick and artifice, and under the Influence of a Spirit of Faction and Cabal? Let any Man read even their own accounts of the usual methods of proceeding in these Cases, and then Judge. Such a Pope; thus created; sets himself down in his Infallible



lible Chair, and is to determine authoritatively a matter of Faith; how does he proceed? If he takes, what our Adversaries themselves will own to be, the wisest and safest Course; he consults his Cardinals, or (as the case may happen) calls upon Divines or Canonists, to hear their Opinions; *i. e.* He that is himself *Infallible*, advises with, and borrows Light from those who are *Fallible*; nay, and after all, is (it may be) so unknowing about the affair in question, as not to be able to form a true Judgment, or come to a right Determination upon what he has heard: But as it is his business to pronounce; when he has done so, it's your Duty to receive and submit to his Decree as infallibly true, and binding upon the whole Christian World. What a ridiculous Farce must it be, to behold, what must often have happened at *Rome*; his Holiness with an affair of this sort before him, solicited on the one hand by the Jesuits, on the other by a secret Friend to the *Jansenists*; now by the *Dominicans*, next by the *Franciscans*; all of them in different Interests, and acting from different Views; here an Agent from one temporal Prince, putting the Pope in mind of former Favours and promising new ones; there the Ambassador of another, insisting on his Master's Rights, and threatening hard if he be not oblig'd. I imagine that Popes are as much perplexed and at a loss to know what to do upon such Occasions, as other fallible People are, in like Circumstances; and as he himself could be, if you suppose him stript of his Infallibility. Nay, and I think we may venture to say, that with all their Infallibility about them, Popes have often made Decrees and issued out Bulls, which they have

afterwards found to be wrong, and heartily repented of. ---I have been the longer in confuting this Pretence of Infallibility being lodg'd in the Pope alone, because I think it is the prevailing Opinion in the Church of *Rome*. I will be shorter on the rest.

2. Others pretend that *Infallibility* is lodg'd, not in the Pope, but in a General Council only. Thus it was agreed in the Councils of *Constance* and *Basil*; and this is the Opinion of the \* *Gallican* Church in general, and of several learned Doctors elsewhere. But this Pretence is (I apprehend) in some respects more absurd and incredible than the former. If I could believe the Infallibility they claim were any where to be found among Men; I should incline rather to expect to find it in some one particular Person, than in a Hundred or five Hundred of them got together, who yet (it is own'd) take them singly, are every Man of them fallible. Is it a whit more likely, that any number of fallible Men should make up an infallible Company; than that any number of Cyphers should make a positive Sum? If *Infallibility* be lodg'd in a General Council only, I would fain know where it is, when there is no General Council subsisting? This is often the case; a Hundred, two Hundred Years have run out, from the breaking up one, to the calling of another: It is now above 170 Years since their last General Council of *Trent*: Nay, the first that was ever called so, was at *Nice* in the Year 325. Where was *Infallibility* during these Intervals? Who, and where was the Church's unerring Guide and Judge of all Controversies? They

\* Vid. *Bellarmino* de Rom. Pontif. L. 4. c. 2. §. *Secunda Sententia*, &c.

will not say surely, that the Decrees of former Councils are this unerring Guide and Judge; for besides that the Church had no such Decrees, for the first 300 Years; we might as well take Scripture as the Decrees of Councils, for these purposes. When we Protestants say that Scripture is a sufficient Guide, and the only Rule by which to judge of and determine Controversies in matters of Faith; they tell us no: Scripture is by no means sufficient or fit for this Office; that it is absolutely necessary there should be a living Judge to be apply'd to and consulted upon all Emergencies. Are the Decrees of Councils such a Judge? Are not these as capable of being perverted, and having different Interpretations put upon them, as the Scriptures? If it be said that the Church is in possession of these Decrees and knows the meaning of them, and can determine all Controversies by them; I ask whether she can do it *Infally*, and without danger of erring? If it be answered (as it must be) Yes: I ask again, who is meant by this *Church*? It cannot be a General Council; for that we suppose is not subsisting, and therefore can't be apply'd to: It is not the Pope, no nor any body else, that can do this infally; for that destroys the Supposition we now go upon, that a General Council only is Infallible. ----- I could produce to you the plainest Testimonies of their own Writers, and unanswerable Reasons made use of by them, to prove that *Infality* is not lodg'd in General Councils only: I could shew you that if it is lodg'd there, not only these Authors (who yet are held in the highest esteem in that Church) but even the Popes themselves (who you may well think, are not for lodg-

ing Infallibility any where but in themselves) are mistaken: Mistaken did I say? They must all of them be as very Hereticks, as we Protestants are said to be: For surely nothing can make a Man more so, than denying this Privilege to those who really and only have it: It is rejecting the Judge whom they all pretend to be so necessary, that the Church can't subsist without him; it is sapping the Foundation of all the Church's boasted Authority, and overthrowing it at once.---I could shew you General Councils, not only decreeing what is false and directly contrary to Scripture, (tho' that alone is enough to convince us, that they were fallible) but reversing, opposing, and directly contradicting each other's Decrees: so that we may be as certain that General Councils are not Infallible, as that the two Ends of a Contradiction cannot be both true. --- If you have ever heard or read any History of them; how they are call'd; what sort of Persons they generally consist of; by what Methods they ordinarily proceed; and from what sort of Motives they usually act; you will find little reason to believe them Infallible. So long ago, as *Greg. Nazianzen's* time, pious and peaceable Men were quite out of love with them; for thus he says, in one of his Epistles, \* “ If I must write you the Truth, I am in a Dis-  
 “ position to avoid all Assemblies of Bishops, as ha-  
 “ ving never yet seen a happy end of any one of  
 “ their Synods or Councils: Nor have I ever found  
 “ that they do more towards lessening, than to-

\* Ἐγὼ μὲν ἕως· εἰ δ' εἴ τ' ἀληθῆς γράξω· ὡς πᾶντο σύλλογον φεύγω· ὄπισκοποι, ὅτι μηδ' ἐμῶς συνέδος τελεῖται· εἰδὼν γὰρ ἕως· μὴδὲ λύπην χακῶν μᾶλλον ἐρηκίαι, ἢ πρὸς δὴκλω. Ἄι γὰρ φιλοεικίαι καὶ φιλαρχίαι· ἀλλ' ὅπως μὴτε φορηκῶν ὑπελάβης ὅπως γράφομαι· καὶ λόγος κρείττονος· κ. τ. λ.  
 Ad Procop. Ep. 55. Op. Vol. I. p. m. 814. Ed. Par. 1630.

“wards heightning any Mischiefs that are com-  
 “plain’d of. It may sound harsh to say it; but  
 “their Spirit of Contention and Ambition, their  
 “Pride and Lust of Power, is such as no Words  
 “can express.” By all that ever I have read, I  
 don’t find any reason to believe that matters are at  
 all mended since his Days. The History of their  
 famous Council of *Trent*, has been written by Fa-  
 ther *Paul*, and by Cardinal *Pallavicini*, both Mem-  
 bers of their own Church: The former of ’em has  
 indeed spoken too much plain Truth, to be much  
 relish’d at *Rome*; the latter is strongly in the Pope’s  
 Interest, and therefore much better approv’d: But  
 let any impartial Person read either of ’em, or com-  
 pare them together, if he be not sick of the No-  
 tion of the Infallibility of General Councils, I am  
 grossly mistaken.-----I go on to consider the third  
 Opinion.

3. That a Pope \* and a General Council together  
 are Infallible; *i. e.* that when a General Council is  
 call’d by the Pope, when he presides in it either in  
 Person or by his Legates; and when he confirms  
 its Decrees; then they are infallible: They can’t pos-  
 sibly err; and ought to be implicitly submitted to  
 and obey’d. But why so? If (as we have shewn,  
 and as the Defenders of this Opinion admit) both  
 be fallible separately consider’d, I can’t conceive  
 how their clubbing together shou’d make them In-  
 fallible. This is much the same Absurdity we had  
 before, two Cyphers making a Sum. Besides, if  
 Infallibility depends upon the Conjunction and  
 Agreement of a Pope and a General Council, the  
 Church of *Rome* cannot be always in possession

\* Bellarm. de Concil. L. 2. c. 2.

of it, because they have not a General Council always subsisting; and it must follow from the Opinion we are now considering, that when the General Council breaks up, Infallibility expires along with it. Not to insist on these Absurdities of this Opinion, I could shew you (if I had time) Decrees of one General Council confirm'd by one Pope, and contradicted, reversed by the same Authority; nay, the self-same Pope first confirming, and afterwards contradicting the Decree of a General Council. I could shew you the Council of *Constance* decreeing that the Laity should receive the Communion in one Kind only, and yet acknowledging that Christ instituted it in both Kinds; and this Decree confirm'd by Pope *Martin V.* And the Council of *Trent* † confirm'd by Pope *Pius IV.* decreeing that Divine Service should be perform'd in the *Latin* (*i. e.* an unknown) Tongue, in direct contradiction to *St. Paul's* Doctrine, *1 Cor. xiv.* But to wave all this, it may be prov'd, I think, to a Demonstration, that if the Pope and the Council separately be both of them fallible, they can't both together be infallible; nor can any Decrees of the latter, tho' confirm'd by the former, be known to be more infallibly true, than if both were as fallible jointly, as they are own'd to be separately. For consider, the Infallibility can't come from the Council, that is own'd to be fallible; its Decrees therefore may be true or false, and the Council in the right, or mistaken, just as it happens. Well, when the Council has past the Decree, and so done its work, it comes to his *Holliness* to be confirm'd; but can he who is ac-

† Conc. Trident. Sess. 22. C. 8.

knowledg'd to be fallible, infallibly assure me that the Council has not err'd in making this Decree? 'Tis manifestly impossible. I will only add as to this Head, that if either the Pope himself, or the Church of *Rome* in general, are thoroughly persuaded that a General Council confirm'd by a Pope, is really *infallible*; nothing can be more unaccountable, than the Reluctance which the Popes generally shew to the calling a General Council, and the Terror and Fright they are in, when they have the Prospect of its assembling. Is then the boasted Privilege of so little Value, that to keep the Pope easy and in good Humour, the Church must be content to do without it? With what Difficulty, and after how long and earnest Sollicitations was the Council of *Trent* itself obtain'd, even tho' Emperor, Kings, Princes, in a manner the whole Body of the Church, most ardently desir'd it, and thought there was no other Expedient to come at Peace and Truth, and a Reformation of the Church both in its Head and in its Members?----I go on,

4. Others are of opinion that Infallibility is only in the Church Universal; *i. e.* (I suppose) diffusively in the whole mystical Body of Christ consisting of all its Members here upon Earth: So as that, though neither Pope, nor Council, nor any particular Church, are infallible; yet when their Decrees are received and submitted to, by the Catholick Church, they then become infallibly true, and absolutely binding. This has been the Opinion of a considerable Number of great and learned Men in that Church; and this is (it must be own'd) talking more modestly than the others do; though as to any of the purposes for which *Infallibility*

*libility* is claim'd, this Opinion is as ridiculous as any of the rest. If all that they mean is, that the universal Church and every Member of it, cannot err in Matters absolutely necessary to Salvation; I don't know that Protestants have any occasion to contradict or deny it. But then if this be own'd, it is not because we apprehend that either any, or all the Members of the Church together, are infallible; but because we take our Saviour's Promise, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church*, to be an Assurance to us that he will have a Church in this World as long as the World itself lasts; and because those who err in any of those things which are absolutely necessary to Salvation, do for that very reason cease to be Members of that Church. But then after all, if this is all the *Infallibility* which is claim'd, it is nothing to the purpose; nor will it by any means answer the great End and Design for which it is claim'd. Our Adversaries are perpetually ringing in our Ears, the absolute Necessity of an infallible Interpreter of Scripture, and Judge of Controversies to whom we may have recourse on all Emergencies. Is the universal Church such an one? Can all the Members of it meet to consult and determine? It must not be said that they can meet in a General Council by their Representatives, for this would not answer the end, unless the Church universal could impart her *Infallibility* to her Representatives; which I believe will not be said; nay, and I have prov'd already, that the Church Representative has not *Infallibility*.

I have gone through the four several Opinions maintain'd by different Persons in the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, concerning the Seat of  
 Infallibility,



Infallibility, where and in whom this wonderful Privilege is lodg'd. Since these have (I think) all been fairly examin'd and fully confuted, and no other is (that I know of) pretended to, or can be devis'd; I would now conclude that they have no such Privilege any where among them; were it not that they tell us, they have plain Texts of Scripture, exprefs Promises of Christ himself, assuring them that the true Church is infallible, and that their Church is the true one: and if so, the thing is certainly true, and may justly be claim'd, notwithstanding this Difference of Opinions where it is lodg'd, and all the Difficulties and Absurdities with which those Opinions are severally charg'd. What though it be so doubtful, whether it is Pope, or Council, or both together, or the whole Church that is infallible; and so difficult to answer the Objections that are rais'd, against any or all of them being so; if Christ has promis'd it, and the Scripture says it, no Man ought to deny it.

In answer to all this, it would I think be sufficient to say; That it is very hard to believe our Saviour should give Promises to his Church that can do it no good: That the Church is never the better for its *Infallibility*, if no body can tell who has it: And that the appointing an infallible Interpreter and Judge, can answer no manner of purpose, till it is known who is this Judge. But waving all this, and that we may not be thought to decline the Force of any of their Arguments, especially of any such as are taken from Scripture, allow me to examine this somewhat particularly.

I begin with observing that a Proof of this Sort, is arguing in a vicious Circle; and an absurd begging that the thing may be granted, which ought

to be prov'd. For if you ask, how they know from express Scripture, or good Consequence from it, that the Church is infallible? The Answer must be, that the Church has interpreted Scripture to this Sense; and upon their own Principles you could never have known that this is the true Sense of Scripture, if the Church had not so interpreted it: Well, but why am I bound to believe, and be satisfy'd with the Church's Interpretation? The Answer is, because the Church is infallible. Can any thing be more ridiculous?

Suffer me but to put on, for a moment, the Church of *Rome's* bold Front, and to reason upon her avowed Principles; and I undertake, by the self-same Argument, to prove that I myself am infallible, nay, and that no-body is so besides myself. Thus: *St. John*, speaking of Christians, says, *Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things,* 1 *John* ii. 20. Upon quoting this Text, for this Purpose, I shall, no doubt, be ask'd, 1<sup>st</sup>, How this proves me infallible? And 2<sup>dly</sup>, Since it seems to speak as much of other Christians as of me, How it proves me *only* to be infallible? Now tho' either of these Questions will, I confess, puzzle me grievously, unless you allow me to borrow his Holiness's Confidence, and to make use of some of his Principles; yet thus furnish'd, I assure you I have my Answer ready. For, to take no Notice at present, that this Text imports Infallibility, as much (for ought I can see) as any other in the Bible: Thus I reply, (and it is exactly what the Church of *Rome* has the Modesty to say for herself.) I am the only authoritative Interpreter of Scripture; and as no body can be sure of the true Sense of it, till I tell it them; I now declare the true meaning  
of

of this Text to be, that I am infallible. Well, but how does all this prove that I *only* am infallible? Just as well as any other Texts of Scripture, which speak as much of any other Christians as of those of the *Romish* Communion; prove that the Church of *Rome* is infallible: And if you pretend to contradict me, I will rub my Forehead over again; and tell you once more, I am the authoritative Interpreter of Scripture, and that the meaning of this Text is, not only that I am infallible, but that I *only* am so: And let me but find Fools enough to believe it, and stand by me in the Defence of it; and who will dare to dispute or oppose my Claim.----Having thus made use of their Confidence and their Principles, to answer the Purposes for which I assum'd them; I am now very well content to lay both aside, and leave them in the Possession of the right Owners.

But tho' what I have been saying manifestly proves the Absurdity of their quoting Scriptures in proof of their Church's Infallibility, yet for the sake of those, who paying a just Regard to their Bibles, are willing to believe any thing they find prov'd by Arguments taken from thence; it wou'd not be amiss to consider the Texts themselves, (the most considerable of them at least) and what sort of Proof they afford of the Church's Infallibility.

\* *Bellarmino* quotes in Proof of the Pope's Infallibility, those Words of our Saviour to St. *Peter*, *Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* Luke xxii. 31, 32.

\* De Rom. Pont. L. 4. c. 2. init.

He tells us, the true Meaning of this Text is, that our Lord obtain'd two Privileges for St. *Peter*, 1st, That he himself, how strongly soever he might be tempted by the Devil, should never lose true Faith. The 2d Privilege was, that neither *Peter* himself, as Pontiff of *Rome*, nor any other of his Successors in that See, should ever teach any thing contrary to the true Faith. The first of these Privileges (says *Bellarmino*) did not, it may be, descend to *Peter's* Successors; but the second doubtless did. To prove which, he quotes seven Popes, *Theophylact*, *Peter Chrysologus*, and *Bernard*; and this is all the Proof he alledges. Now tho' these Authors were all of his mind, (which yet, upon reading what he quotes from 'em, I think they are not) it is surely a strange way of proving the Pope's *Infallibility*, that Popes themselves have said they were *infallible*: And his three other Authors come too late to be credited in a Question of this Importance. And yet after all, his Proof that this is the meaning of the Text before us, is not so weak, but that the Proof that this cannot be the meaning of it, is as strong. The time was now at hand, when our Saviour was to be betray'd into the Hands of his Enemies, and by them to be put to Death: This he knew would prove a severe Trial of that Faith and Trust which his Disciples had repos'd in him. He knew St. *Peter's* forward warm Temper, which (tho' he meant honestly) dispos'd him to trust too much to the strength of his own Resolutions, and not to watch so carefully, and pray so earnestly for divine Aids, as he ought to have done. Our Lord foresaw (it shou'd seem) the Temptation with which St.

*Peter*

*Peter* would be assaulted, and that he would succumb under it. Thus the Case stood when our Saviour spake these Words: Addressing himself to *Peter*, as the Person most in danger, he tells him, That his approaching Sufferings and Death, wou'd be made use of by Satan as a strong Temptation to persuade him and his Brethren to forsake and deny their Master: So that they all needed our Lord's Prayers upon this occasion, and no doubt he pray'd for them. But as for you *Peter*, (says our Lord) whose Trial will be peculiarly strong, and whose Temper of Mind exposes you to more than ordinary Danger in the time of Trial; I have prayed for you especially, *that your Faith may not fail*: That, tho' you may be weak and timorous enough to deny that you belong to me, or have had any thing to do with me; yet that you may not wholly forsake my Service, and renounce the Profession of my Religion. This is the plain Design and Meaning of the Words; which were spoken to St. *Peter*, and belong to him only: Nor is there the least Shadow of Reason to suppose, that they at all relate to Popes; St. *Peter's* Successors, as they are call'd. If they assure us of the Indefectibility of the Faith of all his Successors; I would fain know, why not of his Successors in the See of *Antioch*, (where he is said to have been Bishop seven Years, before he was Bishop of *Rome*) as well as of those in the See of *Rome*? And yet placing *Infallibility* at *Antioch*, as well as at *Rome*, would spoil all. I will only add, that if the *Infallibility* of *Peter*, and his pretended Successors, is assur'd to us by our Saviour's praying that *his Faith might not fail*; then every Man whose Faith fails

not,

not, must be *infallible*: And since it has been prov'd, concerning several of St. *Peter's* Successors, that their Faith has actually fail'd, (even in the Sense in which the Papists themselves understand these Words) it certainly follows, that these Words of Christ to *Peter*, neither do, nor were ever design'd to assure us of the Infallibility of his Successors.

Your time will not allow me, to consider particularly the Texts of Scripture which our Adversaries urge, to prove this favourite and capital Point: If it wou'd, I think I could easily shew you it wou'd be difficult to find any one of the wildest Enthusiasts that has ever appear'd in the World, quoting Scriptures in confirmation of his Dreams, more absurdly, more impertinently, or to a Sense more foreign to that which the Holy Ghost design'd, than the Papists do, when they go about to prove their Infallibility thence. Let me only put you in mind, that many of the Texts alledg'd by them relate to the Church in general, as consisting of all true Believers; and therefore will serve as well to prove that every particular good Christian is *infallible*, as that the Pope or the Church of *Rome* is so. Others of 'em are design'd to represent the Duty of the Ministers of the Christian Church, and the Ends for which that Office was instituted; without designing at all to intimate, that the Ministers wou'd never neglect their Duty, and swerve from the design of their Office: And yet without supposing this last, the Arguments drawn from hence, will all be found to be sophistical and fallacious. Lastly, others of them mean nothing more than to recommend to private Christians the shewing

shewing that Respect and Regard to their Ministers, which is due to 'em so long as they continue diligent and faithful in the Execution of their Office; without so much as hinting at any *Dominion*, or *Infallibility*, or *Authority*, (properly so called) that Christ has conferr'd upon 'em. Let these things be remember'd, and applied to the Texts quoted by the Church of *Rome* to prove the Point we are upon; and they will be found to be the Keys, which will not only open to us the true meaning of such Texts, but effectually convince us, there is not any one of them that proves their Infallibility.

There is one thing more very pertinent to our present purpose, which deserves to be consider'd: Among the many Texts of Scripture quoted by our Adversaries in this Controversy, some are alledg'd to prove the *Infallibility* of the Pope, separately and singly consider'd as *St. Peter's* Successor: Such as these, *e. g.* <sup>1</sup> *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, &c.* <sup>2</sup> *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, &c.*---- Again, others of these Texts are alledg'd to prove the *Infallibility* of General Councils, whether with the Pope as a Member of them, or without him: Such as these; <sup>3</sup> *He that beareth you, beareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.*---- <sup>4</sup> *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*---- <sup>5</sup> *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, &c.*---- <sup>6</sup> *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*---- Lastly,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxii. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Luke x. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Acts xv. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxviii. 20.

there are others of these Texts, which if they prove any thing, prove the *Infallibility* of the Church in general, or of any particular Church: Such as these; <sup>7</sup> *If he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican.* ----- <sup>8</sup> *The church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth.* Now concerning these Texts taken all together, and as made use of by the Church of *Rome*; I say, either that they prove nothing, or they prove too much; even so much as will overthrow the whole *Romish* System. They design to prove *Infallibility* by 'em: I confess, in my Opinion they mean nothing like it: But if they do, some of 'em must prove that the Pope is *infallible*; others of 'em that a General Council is so; and others that the Church either universal or a particular one, has this Privilege: And all these Propositions must be true, they being all suppos'd to be confirm'd by Scripture. But is not this a great deal more than the Church of *Rome* desires to see proved, or will admit to be true? Do they like to have their *Infallibility* thus widely spread, and laid as it were in common? Will the Pope own that a Council has it; or a Council that the Pope has it, and they themselves have no share in it? Or will either Pope or Council admit, that a particular Congregation of Christians, or a few Christian Bishops got together, are endow'd with *Infallibility*? Thus it must be, if they interpret Scripture right: And yet if it is thus, the whole Fabrick of the Church of *Rome's* *Authority* and *Infallibility* is demolish'd.

I should now go on to take notice of their other Arguments, which (as they say) unanswerably prove

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xviii. 17.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15



the Infallibility of their Church : Such as these : \*  
 If the Church may err, why do we (as the Creed does) call her *Holy*? A Church united in the Profession of any Error, is so far from deserving that Character, that, on the contrary, it is a wicked Assembly.---- Again ; † If the Church, particularly the Church Representative, or the Body of Pastors, may err, why do they, when met in Council, denounce their Anathema's against such as refuse to receive or submit to their Decrees? If they be supposed fallible in making them, this is such a piece of Wickedness as they would never be guilty of.---- Again ; ‡ If the Church could err, she might entirely fail ; which is directly contrary to express Promises of Christ, and therefore she must be owned to be infallible.--- Again ; || They argue the Church's Infallibility, from her perpetual Visibility : The true Church (say they) must always be visible and knowable ; but if she could err, she could no longer be known to be the true Church. I hope there is no great danger of any one's being perverted by Proofs of this sort ; for I think verily it requires no great Skill to confute them. They are urged by no less Names than Cardinal *Bellarmino* and Cardinal *Richelieu* ; and therefore (were it not for fear of trespassing too much upon your Patience) I would give you what, I apprehend, would be full Answers to them. But I must forbear. There is one other Argument which they boast so much of, and have so often successfully urg'd for perverting some to their Church, and confirming others in it, that I

\* Card. *Richelieu*, L. 1. c. 13.  
 Milit. L. 3. c. 14. §. *Tertio obligamur.*  
 ubi sup. & c. 4.                      || Id. Ib. c. 5.

† *Bellarmino*. de Eccles.  
 ‡ Card. *Richelieu*,

think I ought not wholly to pass it by, especially since in some former Parts of this Discourse, I have led you to expect it should be taken notice of and answered. It is to this purpose :

Must it not be horrid Impiety, to suppose, that divine Providence has so little Concern for, and the blessed Redeemer so little Care about the Welfare of his Church, as to have left no certain infallible Method of deciding all Controversies, coming at Truth and the true Sense and Meaning of Scripture? If the Church is not a *visible* and *infallible* Tribunal, always in a Condition to determine Differences, what must become of *Her* ; what must become of Truth and Christianity itself? Will there not a thousand Heresies be broach'd, that must tear out her very Bowels, rend in pieces the seamless Coat of Christ, darken Truth, and make Error triumphant; shake the Faith of Christians, and fill their Minds with endless Doubts and Uncertainty? There must therefore be somewhere a *Judge* to pronounce and decide : Scripture is so far from ending Controversies, that it is well known to have been the Occasion of them : There's not a Heretick but what quotes it, and endeavours to impose upon weak Minds, by the false Meaning they put upon it. In many Points the Sense of it is so obscure and doubtful, that the Interpretation which Hereticks give of it, seems as plausible as that which the Church herself affixes. There must therefore be a living speaking *Judge*, to interpret this *dead*, this *unsens'd* Letter : And unless such an one be own'd and submitted to, every Tinker or Cobbler must be left to judge of Christian Doctrine, and to find out the Meaning of Scripture for himself.---

Thus

Thus do they bluster. By the Noise of their Triumphs on this occasion, one would be apt to conclude that they had gain'd a compleat Victory: And yet after all, when the Matter comes to be sifted, this Argument is as harmless an one as any of the rest they make use of. I could almost wish the Time would allow me to enlarge on the following Observations; which tho' I can do no more than just suggest them, will furnish you with Materials for a full Answer to any one who may attempt to pervert you by so fallacious an Argument.

1. That the *Impiety* talk'd of, falls to their share, who thus boldly prescribe to God and the Redeemer, what they ought to have done, and what they must be suppos'd to have done, for the Welfare of the Church: And that we Protestants shew much more Reverence and Modesty, when we turn the Argument upon our Adversaries, and tell them, God has no where commission'd, or pointed out, such an *infallible Judge* as they talk of, and therefore we can't be persuad'd that such an one is necessary.

2. That such a *Judge* as they talk of, can never be fit to determine *all* Controversies; till it is first agreed by the contending Parties, that he is *infallible*. For, one of the most important Controversies now subsisting in the Christian World is, Whether there be any such *Judge*? and *Where he is*? Now it would be very absurd to send me to one, whom I am not yet suppos'd to believe *Infallible*, to be determin'd by him whether he is *Infallible* or not.

3. There can be no Necessity of such a *Judge* to determine *all* Controversies in Religion, because it is not necessary that *all* such Controversies should be decided. There are a great many disputed Points

and different Opinions, which neither affect our Interest in the Favour of God, nor are at all inconsistent with the *Peace* of the Church; or that *Unity* among its Members, which Christ the Head of the Church so earnestly recommends.

4. If a Judgment may be form'd of what *would be* hereafter, by what *has been* heretofore; we may conclude that such a *Judge*, tho' he were to be found, would neither prevent *Heresies* from arising, nor put an End to all *Controversies*. Our blessed Saviour was such a *Judge*; able *infallibly* to decide in all Cases, and yet the Jewish Church in his Days run into many Errors; and among the rest, that pernicious one of mistaking and rejecting the Messiah. - - - If it be objected that this was, because they did not own him *as* such a *Judge*; the Answer is obvious: That since our Lord gave at least as good Evidence of his being *Infallible*, as any other can pretend to give, it is at least as likely that the *Infallibility* of any other will be, as that his shou'd have been disown'd. The Apostles were (it is allow'd) under the Guidance of an infallible Spirit in all things relating to the Kingdom of Christ, and the Propagation of his Religion in the World; and yet *Heresies* sprang up in their Days: Nay, and St. Paul (it seems) thought them not only unavoidable, but that Providence suffer'd them to arise, \* *that they which are approved might be made manifest*. - - - There were Divisions among the *Corinthians* even after all the Pains St. Paul had taken to restore *Unity* and *Peace* among them.--Nay, in the Church of *Rome* herself, notwithstanding all her Boasts of an *infallible living Judge*, to whom all her Members

\* 1 Cor. xi. 19.

may have recourse, there are (for ought I see) as different, as inconsistent Opinions, as are to be found among Christians, who own no such Judge.

5. and Lastly. Every meek, humble, sincere Lover of, and Enquirer after Truth, may hope for, and reckon upon such Assistance of the Spirit of God, as will enable him by the Rule of Scripture to judge of, and determine for himself all such Controversies in Religion, as it is absolutely necessary to his Salvation to judge, or believe, or determine any thing about. If a Man thus dispos'd, and with the Promise of such Assistance, is not secure from all fatal Error, and in the way to come at all Truth, necessary for him to know; I see no other Method by which he can be so; I am sure the way of *Authority* and *Infallibility* won't do it; and if I don't strangely mistake the Meaning and Design of many Passages of Scripture, this Method will do it.

If I had time, I shou'd go on now, and consider the Proofs pretended to arise from the Testimony of the Fathers; for tho' their Writings were long in the almost sole Possession of the Friends to the *Romish* Cause; and during several dark Ages were so little read, or attended to, that *They* had Opportunity to mangle and alter, to blot out, and soist in, as might best serve their Cause and support their Pretensions; nay, tho' gross Falsifications of these Writings have been pointed out to them, and prov'd upon 'em; yet still, even in the Condition they now are, it might from them be plainly shewn, that for several Hundreds of Years after Christ, the Fathers never dream'd, nor made mention of, any such *Authority* or *Infallibility* as the Church of *Rome* now claims.

Nay farther, if I had time, I cou'd lay before you what must (I think) be a sufficient Inducement to any impartial Mind, either to believe that the Church of *Rome* herself suspects or doubts of her own *Infallibility*; or else to condemn her for having acted the most unjust, the most unmotherly, the most absurd part in the World, for not having employ'd it in a proper Manner, and for the kindest and most useful Purposes. Why does she suffer, and sometimes direct, her own Doctors to go on writing *fallible* Commentaries on Scripture, as contradictory and inconsistent, as any of those written by Protestants? Why does she not once for all bless the World with an *infallible* Interpretation of the whole Bible, and an exact Account of all the Church's *unwritten Traditions*? Why does she not find out an *infallible* Method for inducing all the World to hearken and submit to her *infallible* Decisions? She has, I know, found out, and made use of, one Method for this purpose; she has Censur'd, Curs'd, Spoil'd, Imprison'd, Banish'd, Tortur'd, Committed to the Flames, and Doom'd to Hell and Damnation, to promote this hopeful Design; but tho' she has been too successful, she is yet far, I hope, very far, from having fully carry'd her Point.

O ROME! Haughty, Cruel ROME! <sup>1</sup> Thou hast long glorified thy self, lived deliciously, and said in thy heart, I sit a Queen, and am no Widow, and shall see no sorrow: But <sup>2</sup> the multitude of Sorceries, and abundance of Inchantments, are found with thee: <sup>3</sup> The Kings and Inhabitants of the Earth have been made drunk with the Wine of thy Fornication:

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xviii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Isai. xlvii. 9.

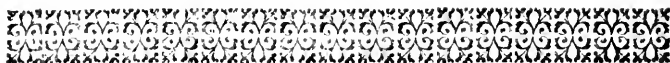
<sup>3</sup> Rev. xvii. 2.

\* *Thou thy self art drunken with the Blood of the Saints and Martyrs of Jesus: Therefore* <sup>5</sup> *shall thy Plagues come upon thee in one Day, Death, and Mourning, and Famine; yea, thou shalt be utterly burnt with Fire; for strong is the LORD GOD who judgeth thee.*----In the mean while, and till that Day of Recompense comes,

May Almighty God, who has often, and almost by Miracle, preserv'd these Nations, from falling again into her Clutches, and feeling the Effects of her deep Malice and savage Cruelty; still protect, still defend us! May the *Protestant Interest*, the Cause of *Truth*, and *Virtue*, and *Liberty*, be establish'd, and own'd, and propagat'd! May the Blessing of Heaven rest upon all *Protestant* Princes and States; and especially upon our most Gracious Sovereign King GEORGE, and every Branch of his August FAMILY! May we and all his Subjects stand fast by, and be secur'd in the Possession of, that Christian Liberty with which Christ has made us free! And finally, for the Honour and Advancement of that pure and uncorrupted Christianity which we profess; may we all of us take care to get our Minds and Tempers form'd, our whole Conduct and Behaviour regulated, by the generous, human, excellent Principles and Precepts of it! God of his infinite Mercy grant it, for the Sake of Jesus Christ, &c.

\* Rev. xvii. 6.

5 Rev. xviii. 8.



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S C R I P T U R E  
A N D  
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I N A  
S E R M O N

On EPHES. ii. 20.

Preached at **SALTERS-HALL**,  
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By *SAMUEL WRIGHT*, D. D.

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In hanc insipientiam cadunt, qui cum ad cognoscendam  
veritatem aliquo impediuntur obscuro, non ad prophe-  
ticas voces, non ad apostolicas literas, nec ad evan-  
gelicas auctoritates, sed ad seipfos recurrunt.

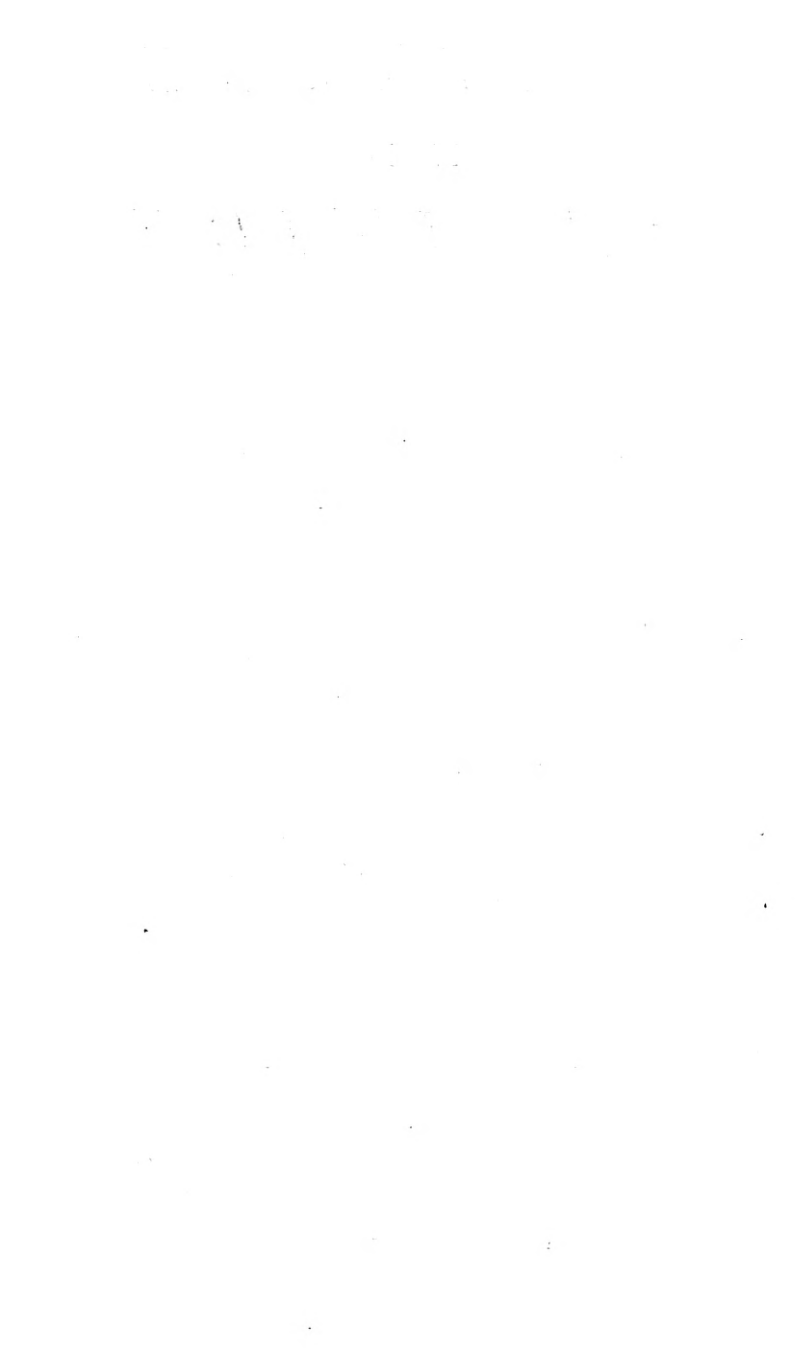
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EPHESIANS ii. 20.

“ And are built upon the foundation  
“ of the apostles, and prophets, JESUS  
“ CHRIST himself being the chief  
“ corner-stone.”

**T**HE foregoing discourses against the pretensions of the *Romanists*, have given you an account of their setting up a *kingdom of this world*, under the name and notion of a *Church*; which they assert, is the only church that hath salvation in it, and the *Keys of Heaven and Hell* committed to its rulers and pastors. In one *discourse*, the *notes and marks*, which they bring to prove themselves the *true and only church of CHRIST*, have been examined; and the falshood of their ways of arguing from thence, was shewn. In *another discourse*, their grievous usurpation and iniquity was exposed in placing at the head of their church a *sovereign Pontiff*; whom they make, very unjustly, successor to *St. Peter*; as if he had a power superior to the *other apostles*, and superior to the kings of the earth; yea, whose *decrees*, and *dispensing*

*penſing* powers, are advanced above all that ever were called GODS in this world. In a *third diſcourſe*, the pretended *authority* and *infallibility* of this church, (that is, of the Pope and his councils) you have had fairly repreſented, and very largely expoſed.

My province now is, to ſet before you the *true* and *only foundation* upon which the *Chriſtian Catholick Church* is built; with the neceſſity of our adhering to the *Scriptures*, through faith in CHRIST, for our eternal ſalvation. So that my preſent buſineſs will be to prove the *perfection*, and *perſpicuity* of the holy ſcriptures; and the reaſon that we have to receive them as the *word of GOD*, without depending upon the *teſtimony* of the *church of Rome*, or admitting their *traditions* as *neceſſary* to be received together with the ſacred writings.

All their uſurped *authority*, the doctrine of the Pope's *ſupremacy*, and their confining the title of *Catholick Church* to themſelves, are built upon, and ſupported by what they call either *apoſtolic*, or *eccleſiaſtical* traditions.

I have therefore choſen the *text* now read, for the ſubject of the *enſuing diſcourſe*; being better ſuited (in my apprehenſion) than any other I could fix upon, to anſwer the ends I have in view. “ And are built upon the foundation of  
“ the apoſtles and prophets, JESUS CHRIST  
“ himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone.”

That we may ſee the true meaning and import of theſe words, our attention will be requiſite for a few minutes to the *context*, before we come

to apply ourselves to the difference betwixt us and the Papists about *scripture* and *traditions*.

St. Paul, in the 1st, 4th, and 5th verses of this chapter, tells the *Ephesians* who were converted to Christianity out of the heathen or *gentile world*, That “ they who were dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened together with “ CHRIST.” Thro’ the “ rich mercy and great “ love of GOD,” there was a power, proportionate to that of quickening and raising the *dead body* of CHRIST, manifested in their being *quickened together with him*. The apostle therefore describes the state of *sin*, and *death*, and subjection to the *prince of this world*, (v. 2, 3.) in which they were, when the gospel was sent by the free undeserved favour and grace of GOD to *save them*; and which by the power and love of GOD became effectual to their conversion, and to bring them into the Christian life.

In the same mighty power and love we hope and trust, for the raising and quickening that part of the world *called Christian*, where thro’ a dreadful and long apostacy, men are walking just as the heathen *Ephesians* did, “ according “ to the course of this world, according to the “ prince of the power of the air, the spirit that “ now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Amongst whom even *we* of this Protestant kingdom, “ had our conversation in times past, in “ the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires [or “ wills] of the flesh, and of the mind, and “ were by nature the children of wrath, even as “ others.” The rich mercy, the great love wherewith GOD loved us, when he saved us out  
of

of such a state of slavery, and death, as that of Popery, should encourage us to hope for the salvation of other nations and people, in the day of GOD'S *power*; and whilst we are using our best endeavours to recommend a pure scriptural religion, let us wait for the manifestations of a further power from on high, when the LORD himself shall "consume that Wicked by the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming." A firm persuasion that the overthrow of *Popery*, (let the kings and rulers of the earth favour it as they please) shall be by a power like that which raised CHRIST from *the dead*, and first set up the gospel kingdom in the world, led me to this *digression*; which will, I hope, be allow'd upon the present occasion.

To proceed in our account of the context: The *Gentiles* being brought into the kingdom of GOD by pure grace and favour, as the *Jews* had been of old, both were *raised together*, and made to *sit together* in the same gospel kingdom, which is called the kingdom of Heaven, or *heavenly places* in CHRIST JESUS, v. 6. They were both alike in this, that there were no works of which either could boast; but works for which both might have been for ever rejected and condemned. By grace alone they were both equally privileg'd, both being saved upon the same foot, that is, through FAITH. And this salvation thro' faith, (in the whole contrivance \* and method of it)

\*  $\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omicron$  seems to refer to the whole work of salvation, and not to [  $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  ] faith, by a regular construction.

it) they were ever to look upon as the *gift of God*, and not owing *to themselves*, ver. 8. So that no such thing as works of *supererogation*, or works to be boasted of in the sight of God, and *meriting* at his hands, are to be brought into the gospel scheme of being saved, v. 9. “not of works, lest any man should boast.” And yet this salvation doth necessarily include *good works*, as the fruit and effect of faith in CHRIST; for which God hath before provided, that we should both be directed and enabled to walk in them, v. 10. “For we are his work-  
 “manship created in CHRIST JESUS unto good  
 “works, which God hath before ordained, [or  
 “prepared] that we should walk in them.” He hath made sufficient preparation for this under the gospel.

The matter being thus stated, and *Jew* and *Gentile* thus united, the apostle would have the *Ephesians* mindful of their former state of *aliens*, which he describes in the 11th and 12th verses; and also by whom this *union* was brought about, CHRIST JESUS; and how wonderfully it was effected, by his *crucifixion* and *blood*; of which a very distinct account is given in those five verses, from the 13th to the 18th ver. But I must not stay upon them; tho’ there are several things concerning the abolishing of the *Jewish* rites and ordinances, and dissolving their church-state, as a national and temporal polity, that may serve to expose the *schismatical* principles and practices of the Papal *state* and church: In which innumerable rites and ordinances are set up, more *carnal* and *worldly*, than those of *Moses*; and a *temporal*  
 kingdom

kingdom and polity more injuriously exclusive of the nations that refuse subjection to them, than the *Jewish* covenant of peculiarity was.

To go on: CHRIST having “*preached peace*” to them that were far off, and to them that were nigh, it follows, that through him both have an access, by one SPIRIT, unto the “FATHER.” Here we see what regards are due to the ever-blessed Trinity, FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, in the affair of our salvation. The whole work is built upon it, and the whole church is hereby framed together to be an holy temple in the Lord. So that this doctrine is to be received, not as the doctrine of the *Roman* church, nor as the doctrine of any particular *Protestant* church; but as a *scripture doctrine*, upon which the universal church is built. Where this doctrine is received and believed, as the scripture requires it should, producing all the genuine and saving effects of such a faith, what is said of the *Ephesian* church may be applied to others; “IN WHOM (*i. e.*) [the LORD Jesus Christ] you also are builded together for an habitation of GOD, through the SPIRIT.” Thus ends the chapter where our *text* is.

According to this most wise, and most extensively merciful and benevolent constitution of things, the *Gentiles* are taken into the same *household* of GOD with the *Jews*. And in every *nation*, where a number of men are brought to believe and obey the *gospel*, and to worship GOD according to the ordinances thereof, they are to be look'd upon as parts and members of the *one Catholick* church of Christ. Even to us in these



these *isles afar off* from any likelihood to partake such blessings, are these glad tidings sent :  
 “ Ye are no more strangers, and foreigners, but  
 “ fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the  
 “ household of GOD.” It will reward your pains, diligently to compare the 12th and 19th verses of this chapter, to take the sense of these expressions, as they include *all* that are in Christ Jesus *every where* : All such being now equally invested with the same rights and privileges, as *fellow-citizens*, and admitted to the same nearness to GOD, as *domesticks*.

All the churches of Christ, being thus *made one* by him *who is our peace*, are built upon the *foundation* of the *apostles* and *prophets*, JESUS CHRIST himself being the *chief corner-stone*.

From this thread of St. *Paul's* discourse, concerning the *Jews* and *Gentiles* being made one, it is evident, that by the *prophets* he means the Old Testament *scriptures*, and by the *apostles* the New. The whole church of GOD, both under former dispensations, and now under the gospel, was, and is built, upon the doctrine of the *prophets*, including *Moses* as the principal and most eminent of them ; and upon the doctrine of the *apostles*, including St. *Paul* who writes this with the other apostles : Their doctrine (as has been said before) not their *persons*, is the foundation upon which GOD hath built his church ; JESUS CHRIST being the *chief corner-stone*, by which both parts of the building are *united*, and upon which they *rest*. Both prophets and apostles *center* in him.

The *primary* foundation is CHRIST. Therefore in another text of scripture it is said,

“ That other foundation can no man lay, than  
 “ that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST, 1 Cor.  
 “ iii. 2.” In that very place, *Paul, Apollos,* and  
*Cephas* (or *Peter*) himself, are denied to be  
 foundations. They were only *ministers* by whom  
 Christ and the essentials of Christianity were  
 preached, and workmen by whom the church  
 was raised; and in THIS view they themselves  
 refer to CHRIST as the *only foundation*. But the  
*doctrines, or writings* of the prophets and apo-  
 stles, are the foundation of GOD’S church in a  
*secondary* sense; they being authorized by Christ,  
 and qualified by the guidance and aids of his  
 infallible Spirit, to lay those foundations thro’  
 faith in his name, upon which the whole fa-  
 brick or superstructure should abide, and be car-  
 ried on throughout all ages of the world.

From hence, therefore, the two following  
 things are evident, which may comprize all that  
 is necessary to be said on the *part* I have chosen  
 to take in this lecture.

I. That the church of GOD, the true church  
 of Christ throughout all nations, is built *intirely*  
 upon the Scriptures. And therefore,

II. That a church built upon *traditions*, which  
 are beside and against scripture, as far as it goes  
 off from, or opposeth the apostles and prophets,  
 is a building *of men*, formed to serve their *own*  
*ends* and purposes, not those of the gospel.

I thought to have enlarged on that delightful  
 view of our *text*, its referring to JESUS CHRIST  
 as the grand *subject* and *scope* of the writings both  
 of the *prophets* and *apostles*: And to have consi-  
 dered the expression here used, Christ *himself* be-  
 ing

ing the chief corner-stone, together with those places that style him the *head* of the *corner* : But so many things have been suggested already on the *headship* of our LORD JESUS, and his being *sole* king in his own kingdom, without any *vicious* governour, or *visible head* of his church here on earth, that I need not take up any of the present time in discoursing on this part of the subject. I shall therefore now keep to the two general heads I have mention'd.

I. The church of GOD, consisting of the *whole* body of *Christians*, is built *intirely* upon the *scriptures*.

This hath been insisted on already, and in one view or other will be referr'd to in all our discourses against the *Romanists*. But what I have now to offer, will be in a manner quite different from what has been said before ; but yet so as to be a further and fuller confirmation of the foregoing discourses.

By the *scriptures* we mean the books of the *Old* and *New Testament*, as they are now received, and allowed to be *canonical* by the church of *Rome*, as well as by ourselves, excepting what we commonly call the *Apocrypha*. For tho' the apocryphal books may be read “ for example  
“ of *life*, and instruction of manners, yet they  
“ are no part of the canon of scripture, nor is  
“ any doctrine to be established by them.”

As to the pretended *authority* of the church of *Rome*, to settle the *canon* of scripture, and to determine what *is* scripture, and what *not*, so much hath been said already, that I need not stay to expose their pretensions in a way of *confutation*.

The reasons that we have to believe *the scriptures* are the word of GOD, and to receive the present *books* of the *Old* and *New Testament* as *genuine*, without our having any regard to the *Roman church* as such, will appear in the sequel of this discourse.

When we assert that the church of CHRIST is built upon the scriptures, the church of *Rome* doth not oppose us, while they allow, ‘ That ‘ the scripture is to be received by all Christians ‘ as the *infallible word* of GOD.’ But when they say, that the scripture is not a *sufficient foundation* to build the church upon, without their interpretations and additions; in opposition to that we say, ‘ That the true church of Christ, ‘ throughout all nations, is built INTIRELY upon ‘ the scripture.’ That is, either upon those things which are *expressly contained* in scripture, or such things as are *plainly proved* from thence, by consequences that are refer’d to every man’s reason and conscience, as in the sight of GOD.

This is what we mean by a *judgment* of *private discretion*, upon which Protestants very justly oppose the impositions, and pretended powers of the *Roman church*, in matters that concern our salvation.

1. I shall therefore shew, in opposition to *Po-pery*, the sufficiency or *perfection* of scripture to inform and guide us in all *necessary* things.

We say, that “ Whatsoever is not read in “ scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not “ to be required of any man, that it should be “ believed as an article of faith, or be thought “ requisite, or necessary to salvation.” *Article VI.*

The

The *Romanists* say, that ‘ All things necessary to salvation are NOT contained in scripture, but that a number of articles, relating both to faith, worship, and manners, are to be received from their church.’

The *Council of Trent* declared, that the *oral traditions* of the Catholick church (meaning the *Roman*) were to be received with EQUAL PIETY and reverence, as the *books* of the *Old and New Testament* \* ; and he that despiseth the said traditions, is accursed †.

But I need not take pains to prove this, since it is not denied by those that are now endeavouring to make converts to *Popery* in this city. In a little pamphlet which hath been put into many hands of late, it is asked, *Why should not the scripture alone be the rule of faith?* And the answer there given, in one part of it, is, *Because several necessary articles are either not AT ALL contained in scripture, or at least are not plain in the scripture without the help of tradition.* Of tradition we shall speak hereafter. The quoting of this passage here, is only to shew, that their asserting the *insufficiency of scripture to salvation*, is what they openly avow and teach, even in a *Protestant* country.

Now in this, let their own confession, of the *scriptures* being the *infallible word of GOD*, be their confutation. For that infallible word declares, “ That all scripture is given by inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in  
“ righteousness,

\* *Pari pietatis affectu, ac reverentia, suscipit ac veneratur.*

† *Si quis—Traditiones prædictas sciens & prudens contempserit, Anathema sit. Concil. Trid. Sess. 4. Decr. de Scripturis.*

“ righteousness, that the man of GOD may be  
 “ PERFECT, [or may be *perfected*] *thoroughly*  
 “ *furnished* unto ALL good works, 2 *Tim.* iii. 16,  
 “ 17.” If the *man* of GOD here be understood  
 of a *pastor*, or *teacher* of others, then it is ex-  
 pressly declared, that the scripture is given to  
 perfect the pastor or teacher for his office, and  
*thoroughly* to furnish him for all good works be-  
 longing to his station. That whatever is needful  
 in a way of *doctrine* relating to matters of truth  
 and faith, or in a way of *reproof* to shew men  
 their errors, or in a way of *correction* to con-  
 vict men of sin and of their faults, or in a way  
 of *instruction* as to their duty, to teach them  
 all righteousness; in all these things the scrip-  
 ture is to *perfect* the man of God, and *thoroughly*  
 to furnish him for *every good work*; and there-  
 fore it must contain every thing necessary to such  
 purposes. Consequently if any thing taught by  
 the man of GOD, or pretended man of God,  
 be not in the scripture, nor to be evidently and  
 convincingly *deduced* from thence, it is not *ne-*  
*cessary* to salvation. Yea, by this infallible word  
 of GOD, such man is out of *the way* of salva-  
 tion *himself*, that does require any thing to be  
 received as of *equal authority* with the gospel.  
 If an *apostle*, or an *angel* from Heaven was to  
 be accursed for doing this, surely a bishop or  
 missionary of *Rome* cannot expect to fare better,  
 in declaring that there are *several* NECESSARY  
*articles* NOT contained in *scripture*. “ Though  
 “ we, (saith the apostle) or an angel from hea-  
 “ ven preach any other gospel, than that which  
 “ we *have preached* unto you, let him be ac-  
 “ cursed.”

“curfed.” To impreſs this the more, and to declare the certainty of the curſe apoſtolicall coming upon ſuch, it is immediately repeated, (not in ſpeaking only, but in writing, of which there would have been leſs need, if the importance of the thing had not required it :) “As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, if any man preach any other goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accuſed, Gal. i. 8, 9.

Perhaps it will be here replied, That the church of Rome alloweth the *ſufficiency* of ſcripture to *perfect* the man of GOD, provided it be *interpreted* as the *Catholick church* directs, meaning *themſelves*; and that there be alſo, with them, a holding faſt thoſe *traditions* to which this written word refers.

But will this free them from the charge of inconfiſtency, and *ſelf-contradiction*? They profeſs to receive the *ſcripture* (that is, the word *written*) as the infallible word of GOD. This word declares, that [as written] it is profitable to all thoſe purpoſes that ſhall make the man of GOD *perfect*, *thoroughly* furniſhed to *all good works*. Then they ſay, That there are *other articles* neceſſary to make the biſhop or paſtor *perfect*, which are *not contained* in the word written, but are preſerved and handed down from one age to another by tradition.

Now what can be an abſurdity, and ſelf-contradiction, if this be not;--- That the *written* word of GOD is infallibly true, which ſays, The *ſcriptures* are able to make men *wiſe to ſalvation* thro’ faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and to make the *man*  
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of GOD *perfect*: And yet that they are NOT *able* to make the man of GOD *perfect* without other *necessary articles* added to them.

The *Romanists*, to palliate this inconsistency, and prevent the offence it must needs give, if it was clearly discerned, here plead, That the scripture itself refers to *traditions*, which are to be *held fast*, as well as the things that are *written*. For which they quote a passage out of the second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*; “ Therefore brethren  
“ stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye  
“ have been taught, whether by word or our  
“ epistle.” The true and full meaning of that place, will be set before you by and by. Nothing is needful to be said here, save only to observe, That by the *Romanist's* explication of this text, they make the *scripture* contradict itself; as if it declared in one place, That the things written are *sufficient to salvation* through faith in Christ, and to *perfect* the man of GOD; and then in *another* place, requires the holding fast traditions taught by WORD ONLY, which were to be in all ages *additional* to those things that are *written*; for this is their explication: Whereas the scripture evidently speaks of the *same things* that were taught by the apostles, both in *word* and *writing*; and therefore whether they were received from THEM, in one way or the other, the *Thessalonians* were required to hold them fast.

But if the *Romish* church can throw their own inconsistencies and absurdities upon the scripture, they do not stick to do it, however they expose that sacred book to contempt. The more Infidels are led to cavil against it, and to deny the truth  
of



of it, the more *necessary* do Papists make the testimony and authority of their church: And well pleas'd they are if this point be gain'd, however unfairly the scripture is treated either by themselves or others.

Here lies the head-spring and main support of *Poper*y: To set the scriptures at *variance*, and to excite a variety of opinions and warm disputes amongst men thereupon; to which, in the critical and rational way, they are always ready to lend their assistance on *either side*; and then make a *judge of controversies* necessary to determine whose opinion shall stand, and be confirmed by the stamp of authority. And this judge of controversies they make *infallible*, so as to abide by his decisions, though they prove to be contrary to *express scripture*. In this, they assume a power beyond that of God himself, and therefore expose themselves to a just contempt, in pretending to make both parts of a *contradiction* true. For what the scripture asserts, they say is infallibly true, and yet what their church determines, (though it happen to be contrary to scripture) they say is infallibly true also.

*Erasmus* would have put the church of *Rome* into a way to have secured their *credit* and *power* much better, (when so many nations were breaking off from them in the beginning of the Reformation) if his sentiments had been of sufficient weight with them. He would have had them to make no articles of faith necessary upon the *authority* of the *church*, but what are made necessary in *scripture*; which if they had been so wise as to comply with, they had got clear of a

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great number of articles by which they have been carried to set one *infallibility* against another. His sentiments are worth reciting, as they are preserved in one of his *epistles*: \* “ This would reconcile people to the church of *Rome*, if all things, says he, were not so particularly defined, and made a matter of faith, which we would have to belong to it; but those only which are *evidently express'd* in the holy scriptures, or without which we do not see any way to be saved. To this purpose, a few things may be sufficient: And a few things may be sooner persuaded, than a great many. “ Now

\* *Quin & illud, mea sententia, complures populos conciliaret ecclesie Romanæ,—si non passim quælibet sic definiantur, ut velimus ad fidei negotium pertinere; sed ea duntaxat, quæ evidenter expressa sunt in sacris literis, aut sine quibus non constat ratio salutis nostræ. Ad hæc pauca sufficiunt, & pauca citius persuadentur pluribus. Nunc ex uno articulo sexcentos facimus, quorum aliqui tales sunt, ut citra periculum pietatis vel nesciri possint, vel ambigi. Atque sic est mortalium ingenium, quod semel definitum est, tenemus mordicus. Porro philosophiæ Christianæ summa in hoc sita est, ut intelligamus omnem spem nostram in Deo positam esse, qui gratis nobis largitur omnia per filium suum *Jesum*: Hujus morte nos esse redemptos, in hujus corpus nos insitos esse per baptismum, ut mortui cupiditatibus hujus mundi, ad illius doctrinam & exemplum sic vivamus, ut non solum nihil admittamus mali, verum etiam de omnibus bene mereamur: Et si quid inciderit adversi, fortiter toleremus spe futuri præmii, quod omnes pios haud dubie manet in adventu *Christi*: Ut ita semper progrediamur à virtute in virtutem, ut nihil tamen nobis arrogemus, sed quicquid est boni Deo transcribamus. Hæc potissimum sunt animis hominum inculcanda, sic ut velut in naturam transeant. Quod si qui volent circa naturam divinam, aut circa hypostasim *Christi*, aut sacramenta quædam abstrusiora rimari, quo magis attollant mentem in sublime, & à rebus humilioribus abducant, hæcenus liceat, ut non statim quod huic aut illi visum fuerit, cogantur omnes profiteri. Quemadmodum ex loquacibus syngraphis citius nascitur controversia, sic ex plurimis definitionibus nascitur dissidentia. *Epist. Erasmi Rot. Joanni Slechtæ Bohemo Sec. Ed. Lug. Bat. 1703. Ep. 478. Oper. Omn. Tom. 3. p. 521.**

“ Now out of one article, (as he goes on) we  
 “ make *six hundred*; some of which are such,  
 “ that without endangering piety, we may ei-  
 “ ther be ignorant, or doubt of them. And  
 “ such is the nature of mankind, that what is  
 “ once defined they hold so as to bite and devour  
 “ one another. But when all's done, the sum  
 “ of Christianity lies in this, (mind what he says)  
 “ that we understand all our hope to be placed  
 “ in GOD, who freely gives us all things by his  
 “ Son JESUS: By whose death we are redeemed,  
 “ into whose body we are planted by baptism,  
 “ that being dead to the lust of this world, we  
 “ may live according to his doctrine and exam-  
 “ ple; not only abstaining from all evil, but  
 “ endeavouring to deserve well of every body:  
 “ And if any adversity happen, that we bear  
 “ it couragiously, in hope of a future reward,  
 “ which, without doubt, waits for all pious per-  
 “ sons at the coming of Christ. And that we  
 “ make such progress from virtue to virtue, as  
 “ notwithstanding to arrogate nothing to our-  
 “ selves, but to ascribe all the good that is in us,  
 “ or that we can do, unto GOD.---These things  
 “ are chiefly to be inculcated.----But if any will  
 “ search into those things that are more abstruse,  
 “ about the divine nature, the hypostasis of  
 “ Christ, &c. that they may raise their minds  
 “ the higher, and draw them from things be-  
 “ low; let them do so, provided that every bo-  
 “ dy be not compell'd to believe what seems  
 “ good to this or that person. For as out of  
 “ large deeds law-suits sooner arise, so by many  
 “ definitions of things differences are begotten.”

Had this advice been taken, it would have prevented numberless *contradictions* which there are betwixt the infallible declarations of *scripture*, and the pretendedly infallible decisions of the *Roman church*. Most agreeable was this advice to the *Oration of Constantine*, the first Christian Emperor, when he would have *fixed a rule* for the council of *Nice* to keep to; (and no other rule should ever be allowed by the civil power, for deciding matters in *ecclesiastical councils*;) “ Since they had the doctrine of the holy Spirit recorded *in writing*, he tells them, that the books of the evangelists and apostles, and the oracles of the old prophets, evidently taught what we were to think of the divine Majesty. Therefore laying aside seditious contention, he would have matters determin’d by the *divine writings*.” *Theod. Hist. L. I. c. 7.*

But the ends of the *Pope* and his *clergy* could not be answered by bringing articles of faith into so narrow a compass as the scripture had done. And therefore they went into the shameful *expedient* of taking away the *Bible* from the people; that their Clergy might have the delivering out of such passages *only* as should serve *their* purposes; and might keep those things lock’d up, and out of sight, that would discover their *absurdities* and *contradictions*.

In thus denying the free use of *scripture*, their violence is not to be endured by those that know how directly they go against the authority of *God*; and against many express texts in both Testaments, that require men to *read* the scriptures diligently, and *teach* them to *their children*; and

and to keep to the *Law* and to the *Testimony*, declaring that they who speak not *according to this word* have no *light in them* : And that all Christians have it in charge from their Lord to *search the Scriptures*, as the acknowledged fountains of eternal life. And those things which were deliver'd by the first witnessers to Christianity, St. *Luke* declares were put into *writing*, that he who had been instructed in them before, might know them with *certainty*. And the apostles direct their *epistles* to the *saints* and *faithful brethren* ; and expressly require that they should be read *unto all*. And in the closing book of Scripture, he is pronounced “ blessed that readeth, and they that “ hear the words of it.”

It is not, as I said, to be endured by those that know these things, to be told they have no right to this blessing of reading the Scriptures, and that they are not fit to be trusted with Bibles in their own tongue. However the Papists may colour this matter, or represent the sense of the church of *Rome*, in those places where they see Bibles in every common hand and house ; yet the use of the Bible is prohibited upon *severe penalties* in all *Popish* countries. *Azorius*, a man of great fame in the 16th century, (whose merit as a linguist, scripturist, and moral philosopher, is highly extoll'd amongst the Jesuits, amongst whom he was rector of several colleges) declares, that *it is a heresy to say the Scriptures ought to be translated into vulgar languages*. And this he asserts at the same time that he admits *all were allow'd to read the Scriptures for several hundred years*.\* And another

\* Instit. moral. l. 8. c. 26.

ther of their learned men yields to *Erasmus*, that the Scriptures were of old translated into the vulgar tongues, and that the fathers, such as St. Chrysostom and St. Jerom, earnestly exhorted the people to read them; but the case is alter'd, since such mischief comes by reading the Scriptures. † The council of Trent leaving it to the Pope to publish the *Index* of prohibited books, all persons are forbidden, by the fourth rule prefix'd to that *Index*, the use of the Scripture in the vulgar tongue without a particular license; and whosoever presumes to do it, [such a sad wicked thing it is to search the Scripture without their license] he is not to receive absolution, unless he first give up his Bible. And one of their best writers, upon the Scriptures in Latin, I mean *Estius*, tho' he is forc'd to allow, from *Timothy's* mother and grandmother instructing him, when a child, in the holy Scriptures, that women are not to be wholly deprived of the use of the Scriptures; yet he presently adds, that this is to be understood according to the rule of the Roman church, (which I have just mention'd, and to which he refers) to extend only to such as are judg'd out of danger of being hurt || by their reading of them. And who those licensers are like to confine such a favourable judgment to, you need not to be told.

But instead of bringing more testimonies to attest this, it will turn to much better account to answer their pretended reason for depriving the common people of the use of their Bibles.

This brings me to consider,

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à Castr. l. 1. c. 13.

Est. Comment. in 2 Tim. iii. 15.

2. The *perspicuity* or *plainness* of the sacred Writings, in opposition to the *Popish* representation of them.

Here it is alledg'd, that St. *Peter* hath assured us there are some things in St. *Paul's* epistles “hard to be understood; which they that are unlearned and unstable *wrest*, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction.” 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. From hence the *Romanists* conclude, that the unlearned part of mankind are in more danger of being hurt by having the Scriptures, than by being denied the common use of them. There is such a stress laid upon this in the little piece now handed about, to which I refer'd before, that upon this text in St. *Peter* only, the Scripture is determin'd *not to be sufficiently clear, in all points wherein our salvation is concerned; but that the misunderstanding, and misinterpreting of it, may endanger our eternal salvation.* I have taken the very words from the *Profession of Catholick Faith*, extracted from the *Council of Trent* by Pope *Pius IV.* which is now in use for the *reception of converts into their church.* And, as the many learned and excellent writings against *Popery* in former reigns, were specially suited to the *Popish* books then in vogue; so I apprehend our more immediate and principal concern at this day, is to suit our discourses to the things that are *now* spread abroad.

I shall therefore shew, that the words of St. *Peter* do not *at all* belong to the controversy betwixt Protestants and Papists about the *clearness* and *plainness* of Scripture in things *necessary* to salvation. We desire to shew a becoming concern for  
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the credit of the Scripture in point of PLAINNESS, as well as *sufficiency* and *perfection*, whilst *they* would make it an accuser and contradictor of it self, in one case as well as the other. And

1. It is to be observed, that the words of St. *Peter* do evidently imply the very thing, which the Papists bring them to *disprove*. Because some things are hard to be understood in St. *Paul's* epistles, and other Scriptures, and the unstable wrest them, therefore the Papists would have them kept from the *common people*: whereas it is manifest, that the apostles allow'd and order'd the Scriptures to be free for the *use* of the *unlearned*, or else how could they *wrest them*. But

2. It is farther evident, that those who are called *unlearned* and *unstable* by St. *Peter*, were not such as the *Romanists* call *unlearned* in this controversy. They were not such as wanted what commonly goes by the name of *learning* in our day; that is, the knowledge of languages, and philosophy, human arts and accomplishments; but such as had not learned the main points of religion, or were not sufficiently acquainted with the grounds and principles of *Christianity*, and therefore were unstable or unsettled. Sometimes seeming to be Christians, and at other times turning to *Judaism* or *Heathenism*: Sometimes seeming to quit their vices, and then again as bad as the dog turning to his vomit, or the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire; they are St. *Peter's* own expressions. Such as were carry'd away sometimes by one opinion, and in a little while by another quite contrary; like those, by St. *Paul* compar'd to "children toss'd to and fro, and carry'd about  
" with



“ with every wind of doctrine.” *Ephes.* iv. 14. So that St. *Peter*’s words are misapply’d shamefully, when they are interpreted concerning the *illiterate* part of mankind in general, instead of being applied to those that were unlearned and unsettled in the scheme and design of Christianity. Again,

3. These very men are not forbidden *the use* of the Scripture by St. *Peter*, bad as they were; nor is there any intimation of blame cast upon their *reading the hard places*; but their destruction is laid wholly upon their *wresting* or abusing them. And if the apostle would not, upon such an occasion, order the *Scripture* to be kept from *those men*, certainly he never intended to deprive *others* in after-ages of such a privilege, for the sake of them that should in any age abuse it, as the unstable then did. To say that men are not to be trusted with the Scriptures, because *some* wrest them to their own destruction, hath just as much sense as to say that men ought not to be trusted with their *liberty*, or *estates*, because such as are of bad principles and depraved morals do great mischief by those things, and very often bring destruction both on themselves and others. And indeed where the *Romanists* have full power, they shew that people are as little to be trusted with *liberty*, or *estates*, as with their *Bibles*.

The direct contrary to this way of arguing, is the *true inference* to be drawn from St. *Peter*’s words. Thus: Since the unlearned and unstable wrest the hard and difficult places of Scripture to their own destruction, therefore we should read them *more humbly*, and *carefully*, and *diligently*.

This is the language of reason ; but sure it is the language of violence only, to say, therefore they *shall not be read at all* by the generality of Christians. But,

4. St. Peter does not speak of any *one book* of Scripture, much less of the Scripture in general, as if it was *dangerously obscure*. In *which* are some things hard to be understood, does not refer to the *epistles* of St. Paul, or other books of Scripture, but to those places that relate to the *particular subject* St. Peter is treating of in that chapter.\* From *particular passages* having certain [δυσνόητα] difficulties, to represent a *whole book* as if it was hard to be understood, is a most sophistical and false way of arguing, easily discerned by every man. There is one thing more to be added, which will effectually take off the pretended objection against the *clearness* of Scripture, as grounded upon the words of St. Peter, viz.

5. The things which St. Peter says are hard to be understood, and which are wrested by some men to their destruction, are things that might be *let alone* without *endangering their salvation*. So that they are not things *necessary* to salvation, as the *Romish profession of faith* suggests, that are spoken of, either with respect to St. Paul's epistles, or other Scripture.

St. Peter had been writing concerning the *new heavens* and the *new earth*, and the manner of the world's being *dissolved* at Christ's *second visible appearance*, and of the long-suffering of our Lord, which is for the salvation of all that are to be glorified

\* ἐν οἷς cannot be construed *in which epistles*, because ἐπιστολαῖς before is of a different gender. *Vid* Whitby in loc.

rified with him at that time. Concerning that awful joyful event, St. *Paul* had deliver'd things hard to be understood, throughout his *epistles*. Such as these: "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." *Rom.* viii. 19. Again: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have deliver'd up the kingdom to GOD the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." *I Cor.* xv. 24. And again: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain to the coming of our Lord, shall not prevent them that are asleep." *I Thess.* iv. 15. So in other epistles, when this subject is treated on, there are things confessedly hard to be understood. But then, the understanding of these things is not *necessary* to the humble believing pious Christian's *being saved* at the coming of Christ.

*Noah* was saved, when the rest of the world was drown'd. And yet he might not be able to conceive how such a *mass* of *water* should come, as to deluge the whole earth; or what the *new face* and appearance of the world would be, after that deluge. But by an assured expectation of the event in *general*, and by a faith unmoved in God's promise of saving him and his family, and living and preaching righteousness all the time that he was preparing the ark, he and his family escap'd out of the *common ruins*. So will it be with them that believe and obey the *Gospel*; they shall be saved at Christ's second coming, though there are some things they do not understand concerning the *conflagration* of the world, and the *new* dis-

position or *formation* of the heaven and the earth, and the Son's giving up the *mediatorial kingdom* to the Father, and the like.

These things hard to be understood are not things *necessary to salvation*; and therefore St. Peter's words are not at all to the purpose of the *Romanists*, to prove that the Scriptures are *not sufficiently clear in all points wherein our salvation is concerned*. The truth of the matter is, that the *wresting* of these things is more to be charged on their great and learned men, who explain them so as to set up a *temporal kingdom*, and to expose the whole affair to *scoffs* and contempt, than to the common people's reading them, tho' they should unwillingly misinterpret them, or not be able to understand them.

I will only here add, that as to this subject it self, [the future dissolution of the world, with the manner of Christ's coming to consummate all things in the salvation of the righteous] the difficulties which attend the accounts of it, have had very great and good effects upon *some* even in the lower parts of life, though they are observed to have a bad effect upon others. The minds of many have been *fixed*, by studying these *hard passages*, till they have been *more thoroughly affected* with the consideration of so stupendous an event, than if such difficulties had never been laid before them. And if in these very things there is *so much* to be understood, as to make men more diligent in their *preparation* for the coming of Christ; then, instead of endangering, they do greatly promote their salvation. And if in the very *hardest things*, the Scripture be sufficiently

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ly clear to secure and help forward the salvation of plain-hearted men, we may well abide by the doctrine of Protestants concerning the *perspicuity* of scripture, as well as the *perfection* of it.

The *Psalmist* hath well connected these two things, “ The law of the Lord is *perfect*, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, *Psal. xix. 7.*” The law or word of God has all the *perfection* which is necessary to turn the soul from destructive courses, to the way of life and righteousness; and it has all the *clearness* and *certainty* that is necessary, as a *testimony* or *witness* to make the most weak, if honest minds, wise unto salvation.

3. I proceed to shew, that we have abundant reason to receive the holy scriptures as the word of God, without depending upon the *testimony* of the church of *Rome*, or her *traditions*.

We receive the *canonical scripture* upon a quite different foot, from that of its being delivered to us by the *Roman church*. Our evidences, that the scripture was given by *inspiration* of God, and that the books we now receive are *genuine*, are such as would be valid, though there had never been a church of *Rome* at all; yea, our proofs are such as enable us to abide by the writings of the *Old* and *New Testament*, in opposition to all that the *Romanists* have done to corrupt them, and to provoke those men that *have not faith* to write and cavil against them.

We plainly see, that the two Testaments do cast such a light upon each other, and prophesy  
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and history so exactly tally, notwithstanding the hundreds, yea thousands of years distance in the writing of them, that they are throughout directed by the finger of God. And had not many things been permitted in the *Jewish worship* and *constitution*, purely in consideration of the *hardness of their hearts*, and to prevent their falling into *Heathen idolatry* and superstition, those things that relate to the *Messiah* had been more generally and more clearly understood than they were. The *author* of *scripture* evidently appears to be *omniscient*, clearly discerning all the actions and operations both of *necessary* and *free* agents, and having a perfect view of *all events* throughout all ages of the world. He evidently appears to be a Spirit infinitely wise and good, holy and true, displaying those perfections in the *various ways* of dictating his word, amidst all the follies, enmities and oppositions, sins and errors of men. The things revealed and declared are so sublime, and they are so well calculated to promote *moral virtue* and the good of society, and the things foretold are so much beyond all human *forefight*; the *miracles* wrought to confirm them are so great and numerous, and so much beyond all human *skill* or *might* to effect; and withal so publicly wrought, and the facts so undeniably attested: The *style* of *scripture* is so full of majesty, concise and yet clear; the *access* it hath to the *hearts of men* is so quick and powerful, piercing even to the dividing asunder soul and spirit, discerning the most secret thoughts, and directing or counter-working the most secret intentions: And then the great and  
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lasting *effects* produced by the sacred writings, prove such a mighty power and energy accompanying them: And there is such a *uniformity* throughout, in the substance and spirit of these writings, notwithstanding the various changes of language, and governments, and arts, and fashions in the world: That (all these things being put together) the scripture by its own *light*, and as its own *interpreter*, shews that it was given by inspiration of GOD. These are proofs to us of the truth of the scripture in general, let the *Romanists*, or *Infidels*, speak of them well or ill.

To proceed: As to the rational proof, that the books we now receive are *genuine*, we draw arguments from the particulars *following*, which have no relation to any such person as the *Pope of Rome*, and which have a respect wholly to the times *before that church* pretended to determine what is scripture, and what is not.

Besides the arguments we are furnished with from the *Jews*, and from other *writers* of antient history, to prove the authority and genuineness of the books of the *Old Testament*; we judge of them by their being refer'd to, and declared to be of GOD, in the *New Testament*. This rule must be allowed good, if the New Testament books were written by inspiration of GOD, and if we have also proof sufficient of THEIR being handed down to us as they were written. This will abundantly satisfy all common Christians about the Old Testament, so far as the apostles, and their penmen, speak of the books in the *Jewish canon*, and quote them to confirm what they say.

Our proofs of the *New Testament* being *genuine*, we take from historical facts, and from antient records; and from writings of many kinds, that quote the *Gospels*, the *Acts* of the apostles, and their *Epistles*, some hundreds of years before the *church* of *Rome* pretended to have the custody of them.

We look to the age immediately following that of the apostles, to such as were their disciples, and speak of their writings under the names of those *very persons* to whom they are now ascribed. And we look to the succeeding ages, in which many writers both *for* and *against* Christianity, cite passages out of the *Gospels*, the *Acts*, and the *Epistles*, as we now find them in our Testaments. From these scriptures being publish'd in a language most *commonly spoken*, and generally read and understood; and being dispersed into various nations, and soon *translated* into *many different tongues*; we conclude, that if these had been *lost* (any of them) in one place, they would be preserved in other places; or if they had been maimed and corrupted by one set of men, others were still able to rectify those errors. And we have the more certainty in these conclusions, from the *heresies* and *sects* that arose in every age, which made men exceeding *watchful* of each other. And we find both the defenders and adversaries of the Christian faith, quoting these sacred writings in much the same words. *Justin Martyr's* dialogue with *Trypho* the *Jew*, shews that the *Jews* look'd upon these books as the standing records of Christianity: And *Origen's* controversy with *Celsus*, shews that  
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the *Heathens* allow'd these books to contain the common faith of Christians. This is also confirmed by the writings of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others. *Origen* gives us a catalogue of the books of the *New Testament*. And they are set down by two *councils*, viz. *Laodicea* and *Carthage*. Some of the books now taken into the *canon* of the *New Testament* being *question'd*, the debates and enquiries upon that occasion, make the settling of the whole as it now stands the more satisfactory and authentick. To all this we add the confirmation of the principal facts of the *New Testament* from *antient authors* \*, who were *contemporary* with our Saviour, or his apostles, or liv'd near their time. And finally, the accounts we now have of the *various readings* of antient manuscripts, and of the many printed copies of the *Greek Testament* that are extant †, do all of them confirm the present *canon* of scripture in general, however they differ as to particular *texts* or *passages*.

These are evidences of a quite different nature from the pretended *authority* of the church of *Rome*, and therefore the insinuation in the *Grounds of Catholick doctrine* is fallacious, and not worth our farther arguing upon, *That we ought to take the meaning and interpretation of scripture from the church they call Catholick, because it is the same hand from which we received the Bible itself*. This sacred book has received no advantage, as to its credibility, from its falling into their hands. But much has been done by them

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\* See *Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History*.

† Vid. *Millii Grec. Test. in Dissert. de Lib. N. T. & Canonis Constitutione*.

to lessen its esteem, and to make men call in question the truth of it; and had it not been *impracticable*, they have shewn sufficient inclination, either to have *altered* it to serve their designs of power and dominion, or else utterly to have *suppressed* it. We may truly say of the *Roman Clergy* what our Saviour says of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, that they make “the commandment of GOD of none effect, thro’ their traditions.” *Matt.* xv. 6. This brings me to the other part of the subject, which it is expected I should enlarge upon.

II. That a church built upon *traditions* which are *beside* and *against* scripture, is a building of *men* formed to serve their *own ends*, not those of the *gospel*.

I have said traditions *beside* and *against* scripture, to distinguish the *traditions* upon which the power and superstitions of the *Roman church* are built, from those traditions that have their foundation in the scripture, and have therefore been received by the *Christian Catholick church* in all ages. The word *tradition* signifies only the *delivering* from one to another. When this is applied to the doctrines, or precepts, and the ordinances of the *gospel*, it is allowed that there are two *ways* of delivering them, namely, by *speaking*, and by *writing*; and I may add, that some things are *delivered* and handed down from one age to another, by certain *actions*. Now, we do receive and continue in the things delivered to us by *preaching*, and by *word of mouth*,

*mouth*, and by such religious *actions* as are to keep up the *remembrance* of Christ, and his worship and kingdom in the world: But we receive them together with the *written* accounts of them, and *judge* by the scripture orders concerning them. We try what is *spoken* and *done*, by what is *written*, and make that the only certain *rule* both of our faith and actions. Every church thus built upon *scripture traditions*, is in other words built upon the foundation of the *apostles* and *prophets*. But a church built upon *unscriptural* traditions, yea, upon *anti-scriptural* traditions, is a building of *men*, raised by the help, and at the instigation of the GOD of *this world*; a kingdom set up to overthrow the *great design* of the gospel, and in direct opposition to our Saviour's declaration, "That HIS kingdom is not of this world."

They pretend, indeed, that they have *scripture* to enforce their *traditions*; and to this end they urge that *text* I mention'd before: "Therefore brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our *epistle*." 2 *Thess.* ii. 15.

Let us here carefully consider what the apostle *enjoins*, and we shall find that this very text obligeth us to *hold such traditions*, as are intirely *subversive* of all that heap of *Popish* traditions, which they would have the people to believe are favour'd by this place of scripture\*.

The apostle there speaks of traditions that had been taught *before*, and were taught by the same *spirit* and the same *persons* that endited the scriptures, "traditions which ye *have been taught*,

\* Grounds of Catholick Doctrine, p. 17. Ed. 4.

“ whether by word or our epistle.” But the *Papists* apply this to traditions many *hundreds of years after* the whole *canon* of scripture was complete.

The *apostle* joins *word* and *letter* together, that they might judge of one by the other, and not advance, or receive things *inconsistent*. The *Papists* would have this to be understood of traditions that *alter* the sense of scripture, yea that expressly *contradict* it, as we shall prove presently by undeniable and most flagrant instances. The apostle speaks of things first delivered *orally* or by *word* of mouth, but afterward committed to *writing* for greater *certainty*. That this was the end of writing, St. *Luke* expressly declares, (*Luke* i. 4.) when (under the direction of St. *Paul*, as *Irenæus* and *Eusebius* inform us) he wrote his *gospel*.

But *Chillingworth* quotes a passage from cardinal *Perron*, upon this text of *holding traditions*, that says, *We must not answer that St. Paul speaks here only of such traditions, which, tho' not in his epistle to the Thessalonians, yet were afterwards written, and in other books of scripture, because it is upon occasion of tradition touching the cause of the hindrance of the coming of Antichrist, which was never written, that this injunction is laid down.* To this it is replied, that if the *very tradition* there refer'd to, and which there was such a charge to hold, be yet *lost*, because it was not written, we have very little reason to shew any regard to other *oral traditions*, to which this charge of the *apostle* cannot have a respect\*.

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\* *Chill. No Church of one Denomination infallible.*

We have surely very good reason to join with that writer against the *Cardinal*, in his ejaculatory thanksgiving on this occasion: ‘ Blessed therefore be  
 ‘ the goodness of GOD, who seeing that what was  
 ‘ *not written* was in such danger to be *lost*, took  
 ‘ order that what was *necessary* should be *written*’.

Dr. *Whitby* hath justly observed, that this is not only a reason why the church of *Rome*, or even the *Church Catholick* should be esteemed no sure preserver of *oral traditions*; but it is a very good argument against all pretensions of that kind. There is one thing that makes it very plain to me, that *St. Paul* speaks of traditions first given by *word of mouth*, and afterwards in *writing*; which is this, because in the 5th verse of that very chapter, where he bids the *Thessalonians* hold the traditions they had been taught, he says expressly, that what he was now actually *writing*, he had *told* them before. “ Remember  
 “ ye not, that when I was yet with you I told  
 “ you these things”. And in the 14th verse he refers to what they were called to by *the gospel*; which he speaks of as having others joined with him in the delivery of it, *our gospel*. Having thus TOLD you things first, and *written* them to you afterward, we therefore add, *Brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle*.

This text therefore obligeth us to maintain and abide by the traditions which were received from the *apostles themselves*, which after they were given *orally*, were further given in *writing*; and we are required to stand fast in these evidences (or in that tradition) whereby we receive the apostolical writings

writings as the word of God: And if we do this, then we are obliged by *these traditions*, to reject all other *traditions* that presume to be of *equal authority*; and much more are we required to fly from those that are *contrary* hereto, wherever they are found. Our *renouncing* the communion, and *protesting* against the errors of the church of *Rome*, is therefore made a duty, an *indispensable duty*, by this place of scripture, which they very imperiously, but yet very stupidly alledge, for the necessity of receiving their *numberless traditions*. For if it be our duty to *stand fast* in the things delivered by the *apostles*, and to *hold* to their *Epistles*, then it is our duty to reject things that are evidently *contrary* to their epistles, and to doctrines and precepts set down in their *writings*.

In like manner, the *other texts* which they quote upon this occasion, do *fix us down* to the things delivered by the *apostles*, against all the demands of them that make their *ecclesiastical* traditions necessary to our being members of the church of Christ. I need only to read them to you as they stand in the *scriptures*, with the alterations made by the *Romanists* application of them, and as wise men leave you to judge which ought to be regarded. St. *Paul* says to the *Corinthians*, “ I praise you brethren that you remember me “ in all things, and keep the ordinances [ or tra- “ ditions ] as I delivered them to you”, 1 *Cor.* xi. 2. According to the *Romanists*, instead of remembering or reverencing the apostle, the reverence must be paid to the *authority* of the *church*; and instead of keeping the traditions as the

the *apostle himself* delivered them, ( who says  
 “ what he received of the Lord, that also he  
 “ delivered unto them”) they must be kept as the  
*Romish church represents* them, with all that she  
 hath *added* to them.

Again, *St. Paul* says, “ We command you  
 “ brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 “ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother  
 “ that walketh disorderly, ( and by a parity of  
 reason from every church that walketh disorderly )  
 “ and not after the tradition which he received of  
 “ us”. This us the *Romanists* apply to their  
 church, pretending to apostolical traditions, not  
 received from the *apostles*, but from *Councils* and  
*Popes* several hundred years after the *canon* of  
 scripture was settled. And therefore if that  
 church walk not after the tradition of the *apostles*,  
 that text is an express command to *withdraw from*  
*them*, 2 *Thes.* iii. 6. The *apostle* says, “ hold fast  
 “ the form of sound words which thou hast heard  
 “ of ME, in faith and love which is in Christ  
 “ Jesus”, 2 *Tim.* i. 13. The *Romanists* would  
 have this to be understood of all the *traditionary*  
*articles* of faith in their church, which are to be  
 held without *love* or *mercy* to those that differ from  
 them. *Timothy* is directed to “ commit the  
 “ things he had heard of the apostle, to faithful  
 “ men, who should be able to teach others also”,  
 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. These things the *Romanists* pretend  
 are committed to them *only*. If it were so, the  
 greater is their iniquity, who have been abun-  
 dantly prov'd the most *unfaithful men* in the  
 world, in their with-holding what is truly aposto-  
 lical ; and at the same time delivering things for  
 apostolical,

apostolical, which are not so, but are most directly *opposite* to the scriptures.

We do not say this, without being able to produce many instances of the truth of what we assert. This hath been fully proved in the discourses foregoing; and the subject has been written upon very largely by many learned men. I shall only put you in mind of a few passages under these four heads.

1. Of traditions which *they reject*, though plainly apostolical.

2. Of some traditions which they say are apostolical, though they are *not to be met with* in any writings of the apostles, nor for several ages succeeding.

3. Of some traditions that are *directly contrary* to the scriptures, and to the declared sense of the whole Christian church for many ages.

4. Of some traditions which have their institution *wholly from the church*, and are therefore called *ecclesiastical*; in which they contradict *themselves*, as well as the *scriptures*.

1. For a specimen of traditions which they reject though *plainly and undeniably apostolical*, I need only to refer you to the main subjects of this and the three foregoing discourses. In which we have proved, "That JESUS CHRIST is the only  
" head of the church, according to the scriptures". And "That he and his apostles expressly require  
" all men to search the scriptures". And "That  
" every man is required to *judge for himself* in  
" things *necessary* to salvation, as in the sight of  
" God". And "That the scriptures are *suffi-*  
" *ciently plain*, and easy to be understood so far



“ as is necessary to salvation, by every honest diligent mind”. And “ That they are able to make the man of God perfect through faith in Christ”.\*

In opposition to these undoubted *apostolical traditions*, you have heard of the arts and pretensions by which the *Romanists* reject them. But I may add, when they would thus set aside the written word of God itself, with the head of the corner; who can wonder at their setting aside other things that are expressly delivered to us in these scriptures? They make one of the *commandments* of none effect, by their image worship. They make the express words of Christ in the sacrament, [ *drink ye all of it* ] of none effect, by refusing the cup. They make faith in God, or *divine faith* of none effect, by setting up a *human implicit* faith in the stead of it. And they make the doctrine of *repentance* of none effect, by their confessions and penances and absolutions, instead of real amendment; as you will hear in subsequent discourses.

2. For a specimen of traditions which they say are *apostolical*, though they are neither to be met with in *scripture*, nor in any writings in the *first ages* of Christianity, take these instances following.

They have added to the canonical books of scripture, those of the *Apocrypha*, which are so called because written after *prophecy* and *divine inspiration* ceased. As these books were not recei-

\* There are several quotations from ancient writers that deserve to be consulted, with reference to these things, at the end of archbishop Tillotson's Rule of faith.

ved amongst those *Oracles of God* which were committed to the *Jewish* church, *Rom.* iii. 2. so neither were they admitted by the *Christian* church. For the Council \* of *Laodicea* in the *fourth* century set down a catalogue of the canonical books of scripture, in a different manner from what is done by the *Romanists*. The Council of *Trent* expressly mentions *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Wisdom*, *Ecclesiasticus*, *Baruch*, the two Books of *Maccabees*, and a new part of *Esther* and *Daniel*; and declares concerning these *whole* books, with all *their* parts, that whosoever rejects them as not canonical, is accursed. †

They deliver it also as an apostolical tradition, that the *Roman* church is the *mother and mistress* of all other churches; and that *without* believing the things she declares there is no *salvation*. || It is observed that there are above 100 *Anathema's* in the Council of *Trent*, upon such as do not believe points of doctrine there laid down, though we cannot find any of them in scripture. The offering of the *sacrifice of the mass* for souls in *Purgatory*, is a tradition they profess to have from Christ and his apostles ‡. So also are their *mystical benedictions*, their *incensings*, *garments*, *chrism*, *waxlights*, and many other things\*\* which have no manner of foundation in any apostolical writings. And are these the *faithful men*, *Christians*, to whom an implicit faith must be yielded? How much better is it to follow that rule of the *apostle*, “ Prove all things, hold fast that which is good”,  
I *Thef.*

\* Can. 60. Vid. Hieron. in Prol. Proverb.

† Concil. Trid. Sess. 4. Decr. de Script.

|| Bulla Pii IV.

‡ Concil. Trid. Sess. 22. c. 2.

\*\* Ibid c. 5.

1 *Thef.* v. 21. Thus the *Fathers* of the 4th and 5th centuries, even those for whom the *Papists* profess a special veneration, urge Christians to ‘attend to the scriptures, looking upon all that is disagreeable thereto as adulterate’. There are many passages in *St. Chrysoſtom* and *St. Austin* often refer’d to on this head. *St. Basil*, whose authority is much used by the *Papists* to enforce oral traditions, yet hath one remarkable passage that shews how he would have them judg’d of. ‘It’s necessary for those that are young in religion to learn the scriptures, that the mind may be well confirmed in piety, and that they may not be accustomed to human traditions’. And *St. Cyril* of *Jerusalem* (whose *catechetical discourses* were published about sixteen years after the Council of *Trent*) says, ‘It behoveth us not to deliver the very least thing of the holy mysteries of faith, without the holy scripture. --- That is the security of our faith, not which is from our own inventions, but from demonstration of the holy scripture’\*. We shall yet see farther need for this advice,

3. By giving you a specimen of some *traditions* that are expressly *contrary to scripture*. Besides what was said under the first head of apostolical traditions that are *set aside*, though the scriptures *plainly enjoin* them; there are other traditions which the church of *Rome* makes necessary, though they are things *expressly prohibited* in the word of GOD. Of this kind, is the worshipping of God by *images*, in direct contradiction to the *second* commandment, and to the guard set

\* Catechef. 5.

upon it by a particular explication at the time when it was given. ‘ Ye shall not make *with me* Gods of silver, &c.” *Exod.* xx. 23. So also the worship of *angels*, and *saints*, notwithstanding an angel’s saying upon such an occasion “ See thou do it not”; and an apostle’s dislike of the prostration of *Cornelius*, “ Stand up, I myself also am a man”: And notwithstanding such *voluntary humility* being condemned in the *worshipping of angels*, which is no better than an *intruding into things unseen*, and a being *vainly puffed up* by a *fleshy mind*, *Colos.* ii. 18. The blasphemous adorations of the *Virgin Mary*, are a most shameful contradiction to the scripture rule of worship; and considering the stress laid upon this in the *Roman Church*, it deserves to be particularly exposed. But I should trespass upon your patience, and too much go into the province of another, if I should enlarge on this head. I will only beg leave to instance in one thing more, by which the *whole practice* of godliness and virtue is destroy’d, and that is their tradition about *works of supererogation*, upon which the practice of their granting indulgences is founded \*. This is against the *express words* of our Saviour, “ When ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say we are unprofitable Servants”, *Luke* xvii. 10. And against the verses before our text, as was shewn at the beginning of this discourse; and against the whole tenor of the gospel, and the apostolical writings. And yet this *overplus* of good works the church of *Rome* pretends to have as a *fund* or *treasure* in her

\* Bellarm. de Indulg. l. 1. c. 2.

her custody, according to the 21st session of the *council of Trent* \*; and this treasure is to be disposed of as their church *sees fit* †. The *plenary indulgences* granted upon this pretence, are the more to be abhorr'd by all them that believe the *apostle*, that “no man shall see the Lord without holiness,” because *Cardinal Hosius*, the *Pope's legate* at the council of *Trent*, hath taught, ‘*That the doctrine of their church is the express word of God, and whatever is taught against the sense and consent of the church is the express word of the devil* ‡.’ These are things so shocking, that no man can forbear concluding, this *traditionary spirit* is that very spirit which *works in the children of disobedience*.

But I must hasten, in the *last place*, to say something briefly on those traditions which have their institution *wholly from the church*, and are therefore called *ecclesiastical*; in which they are as notorious for contradicting *themselves*, as for their contradictions to *scripture*.

Some of their writers acknowledge, that the doctrines of *transubstantiation*, and of the *seven sacraments*, and of *Purgatory*, and the like, are *not in scripture*; but others earnestly contend that they are to be proved from thence. And in their *explications* of these points, as well as in their ways of *arguing* about them, they have uttered the most inconsistent things: Not only contradicting one another, but the same writer contradicting himself, and upon the whole destroying the credit of the very things they would enforce  
by

\* Can. 9. † Bellarm. de Indul. l. 1 c. 3. ‡ De expresso Dei verbo, p. 642, 643.

by the most shameful affronts offered to common sense and reason. The discourses you are to expect on these heads, as well as upon *Auricular Confession, Penances, &c.* will doubtless give you proofs enow of their *absurdity* and *inconsistence* with themselves.

I shall only instance in what relates to the *two* main parts of the foregoing discourse; that is, in what they deliver concerning the *use of the scripture*, and concerning *oral tradition* being a *rule of faith*. When we compare their *former* accounts of these things, with the *present* establishment and decrees of their church, we shall find them as directly opposite as words can describe. It has been proved (in former writings against *Popery*) from numerous and undoubted testimonies, that *Catholick tradition* for *fifteen* hundred years allow'd the perfection and plainness of *scripture* as a *rule of faith and manners*. It shall suffice at present to produce *three* witnesses for the proof of this, as low as the *century* preceding that of the council of *Trent*.

The first is that of *Thomas Walden*, who was *Confessor* \* to king *Henry V.* He was one of the strenuous opposers of *Wickliff*, whose books were condemned at *Oxford*; at which time the *Lollards* (as all Protestants were then called by way of reproach) were used with great severity at the instigation of the *Popish* Bishops; so our *English* history informs us. Yet in this juncture, and with all the power that *Popery* then had, *Walden* utterly disclaims any such thought, as that of an *equality* between *scripture* and *tradition*; and he particularly

\* *Tribemius* de Scrip. Illustr. &c.

particularly insists on the distance that ought to be kept betwixt the *canonical* writings, and *ecclesiastical authority* \*.

The *second* witness for the scripture, about the same time, is that of *John Gerson*, who was declared by Cardinal *Zabarella*, in the council of *Constance*, to be the *greatest* divine of his time. He says, ‘ *That if a man be well skill’d in scripture*, his doctrine deserves more to be regarded ‘ *than the Pope’s* declaration.’ Yea, he adds farther, ‘ *That if in a general council he find* ‘ *the majority incline to that part which is con-* ‘ *trary to scripture*, he is bound to oppose it: And ‘ he instanceth in *Hilary*; shewing that *since* ‘ *the canon of scripture received by the church*, ‘ *no authority of the church is to be equall’d to it* †.

The third witness is *Cajetan*, who was counted the oracle of his day, as *Dr. Stillingfleet* observes. He says, *that the scripture gives such a perfection to a man of God*, (and he evidently asserts the plainness as well as perfection of scripture, because he explains the *man of God* to be any one that devoutly serves him) *that he is thereby accomplish’d for every good work* ‡. Many

\* Non quod in auctoritate æquantur, absit; sed sequantur, non quidem in subsidium auctoritatis canonicæ, sed in admonitionem posterorum. *Lib. 2. Art. 2. c. 22.*

† *Job. Gerson. Exam. Doctr. p. 540.* To which the passage following may be added, from the *second part* of his *Trial of Doctrines*. Quoniam scriptura nobis tradita est, tanquam regula sufficiens & infallibilis, pro regimine totius ecclesiastici corporis & membrorum, usque in finem sæculi: Est igitur talis ars, talis regula vel exemplar, cui se non conformans alia doctrina, vel abjicienda est ut hæreticalis, aut suspecta aut impertinens ad religionem prorsus est habenda.

‡ Ecce quo tendit utilitas divinæ scripturæ ad perfectionem hominis Dei, (hoc est qui totum seipsum Deo dat) perfectionem, inquam, talem ut sit perfectus ad omne bonum exercendum. *I. Ep. 2. ad Tim. iii. 16.*

Many other testimonies of this kind might be produced, in the close of the 15th century. But from that time the *Romanists* determin'd to go another way to work. Inſomuch that they were carried to *oppose* and *condemn* all thoſe former *Catholick* traditions. They reſolved with Cardinal *Turrecremata* to found *Catholick* verities for the future on *unwritten* tradition, as well as on *ſcripture*. And Cardinal *Cuſa* ſet up the notion of a *running ſenſe* of ſcripture, which might be ſuited to the various *occasions* of the church, and *adapted* to every *new rite* †. Agreeably hereto, Pope *Leo X.* condemns *Martin Luther* for denying the power of the *church* to make *new articles* of faith. In that Pope's *Bull* againſt *Luther*, known by the title of *Exurge Domine*, the 22d proposition condemned is ſet down thus: “ That it is not “ in the power of the *Church* or *Pope* to appoint “ *new articles* of faith.

The errors and corruptions then complained of, not being poſſible to be defended by *ſcripture*, and yet not being thought requiſite to give them up, ſeveral attempts were made to ſet *traditions* on an *equal foot* with the ſcripture. They muſt no longer ſtand in the place where *Gerſon*, and others of their *own writers* before had placed them, that is, in the *ſecond degree* of the truths of faith, which was the general opinion of the *council of Conſtance*; but all manner of attempts were uſed, to raiſe the credit of tradition to the utmoſt height, as the only *ſecure way*. So that they got it inſerted as one of the *canons* of a *provincial*

† Scripturas eſſe ad tempus adaptatas & variè intellectas, ita ut uno tempore ſecundum currentem univerſalem ritum exponerentur, mutato ritu iterum ſententia mutaretur. *Conſ. ad Bohem. Ep. ii.*



vincial council, in 1527, *That to receive nothing but what is deduced from scripture, is a pernicious error* \*.

Upon authority of no longer standing than this, the *council of Trent* was brought to establish it as a necessary part of the constitution of the *Roman church*, "That their traditions should be received as of *equal authority* with the scriptures themselves." Of which we spoke in the former part of this discourse.

Thus we see, that *tradition* contradicts *tradition*, and the Papists now become as inconsistent with *themselves* as with the scriptures.

Alike contradictory to all their own former traditions, was their taking the apocryphal books into the *canon* of scripture, as many of their most learned men shew'd in the council of *Trent* itself. But I should quite tire you, if I should shew the opposition there was in the debates on this head. I will only add this short account of it from *F. Paul's History*, who informs us, *That they could by no means agree about making the catalogue of the divine books; and they had so much trouble about SOME PARTS of the Apocrypha, (not being able to produce any tradition for them) that one while it was proposed to distinguish the catalogue into books of different classes, or else not descend to particular books at all; and another while to make only one catalogue, and set down all the books as of equal authority* †. Here again, tradition (par-

\* Council of *Sens*, in *France*, Can. 53.

† This is a short account of what is more at large in *F. Paul's History*, translated by *Brent*, in 1726, p. 144, 145.

ticularly as to *Baruch*) quite failed; and numbers carried it for the apocryphal books, as they now stand in *the decree* to which we refer'd before.

Upon this principle, every new *council* begins a *new set* of traditions; and by thus contradicting and leaving the *scripture*, men of learning are led into endless mazes, and the most dishonest arts; and the poor *Laity* in common life are subject to perpetual *tyranny*, and to have new *yokes of bondage* put upon them in every age.

May we not therefore say of those that *return to Popery*, as the apostle says of the foolish *Galatians*, “ Who hath bewitched them, that they “ should not obey the truth?-----To suffer so “ many, or so great things in vain, (as we have “ suffer'd formerly in these nations) if it be yet “ in vain.” But we hope *better things* of you, and things that accompany salvation in the completest sense, though we thus speak.

Upon what has been said, I hope the following advices will be acceptable, which with a very brief mention of them, I shall leave with you.

When you are speaking with tenderness and charity of the multitude of *poor souls* that are under the *Roman yoke*, and hoping that many of them may be saved, let that very *compassion* excite your detestation of *Popery*, that hath so sadly *abused* and *enslaved* humble and honest minds. And do not flatter any of that church, by allowing that salvation is to be had any further,

ther, than as they *believe* and *obey* the scriptures.

Take care, if ever you fall into conversation with them upon the head of *traditions*, that you watch against their subtilty, in quoting *places* of *scripture* which speak of traditions before the *canon* of scripture was compleated; and in quoting the *Fathers* for the tradition of scripture itself, or of things declared and proved from thence; and then applying these things to enforce their *ecclesiastical* demands and decisions.

Be sure to *read* the scriptures till you are ready in them; and engage those about you, and all that are under your care to do so; or else the *free use* of your Bible, in a language that you understand, is a privilege and blessing that will rise up in judgment against you.

Watch against *infidelity* and *immorality*, and every thing that would disgrace the scripture, considering how great advantage is given to the *practices* of the *Romanists*, by departing from the scripture, either as a rule of faith, or manners.

And *finally*, let the scripture be made the great bond of *peace* and *union* amongst all Protestants. In things *expressly declared*, and necessary to salvation, let us firmly and unanimously abide; in things *deduced* from scripture by fair and just consequences, let us leave every one to *judge* as accountable to God, and to his own conscience: And in things *disputable*, and difficult to be understood, let us proceed with *care*, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; and maintain *cha-*

ry, allowing for different sentiments and opinions.

Here I had closed, had I not thought it would be of special service in such an audience as this, to recite one passage from a well-known writer *intire*, which is often quoted by piecemeal: I mean that *immortal paragraph* which we have in *Chillingworth's* Proof that *Protestants are no Hereticks*. Which whoever hears, or reads, as the language of one *converted* from *Popery* by the *study of the scriptures*, cannot help being greatly moved with it, let him hear or read it ever so often. Addressing to a writer of the *Roman church*, he thus summarily pleads the *Protestant cause*.

‘ Know then, Sir, that when I say the religion  
 ‘ of *Protestants* is in prudence to be preferr’d be-  
 ‘ fore *yours*; as on the one side I do not un-  
 ‘ derstand by your religion the doctrine of *Bellar-*  
 ‘ *mine* or *Baronius*, or any other private men amongst  
 ‘ you, nor the doctrine of the *Sorbone* or of the *Je-*  
 ‘ *suits*, or of the *Dominicans*, or of any other par-  
 ‘ ticular company among you; but that wherein  
 ‘ you all agree, or profess to agree, *the doctrine of*  
 ‘ *the council of Trent*: So accordingly on the other  
 ‘ side, by the *religion of Protestants*, I do not  
 ‘ understand the doctrine of *Luther*, or *Calvin*,  
 ‘ or *Melancthon*, nor the confession of *Augusta*,  
 ‘ or *Geneva*, nor the *Catechism of Heidelberg*,  
 ‘ nor the articles of the *church of England*, no,  
 ‘ nor the harmony of Protestant confessions;  
 ‘ but that wherein they all agree, and which  
 ‘ they

they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as  
 a *perfect rule* of their faith and actions, that is  
 the BIBLE.

The BIBLE, I say the BIBLE only, is the  
 religion of Protestants, whatsoever else they  
 believe besides it: And the plain, irrefragable,  
 and indubitable *consequences* of it, well may  
 they hold as matter of opinion; but as mat-  
 ter of faith and religion, neither can they with  
 coherence to their own grounds believe it them-  
 selves, nor require the belief of it of others,  
 without most high and schismatical presumpti-  
 on. I for my part, after a long, and (as I  
 verily believe and hope) impartial search of the  
*true way to eternal happiness*, do profess plainly  
 that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my  
 foot, but upon this rock only.

I see plainly, and with mine own eyes, that  
 there are Pope's against Pope's, Councils against  
 Councils, some Fathers against others, the  
 same Fathers against themselves, a consent of  
 Fathers of one age against a consent of Fathers  
 of another age, the Church of one age against  
 the Church of another age: Traditive inter-  
 pretations of scripture are pretended, but there  
 are few or none to be found: No tradition but  
 only of scripture, can derive itself from the  
 fountain, but may be plainly proved to be  
 brought in, in such an age after Christ, or  
 that such an age it was not in. In a  
 word, there is no sufficient *certainty* but of  
 scripture only, for any considering man to build  
 upon. This therefore, and this only I have  
 reason to believe: This I will profess, accord-  
 ing

‘ ing to this I will live, and for this if there  
 ‘ be occasion I will not only willingly, but even  
 ‘ gladly, lose my life, though I should be sorry  
 ‘ that *Christians* should take it from me.

‘ Propose me any thing out of this book, and  
 ‘ require whether I believe or no, and seem it  
 ‘ never so incomprehensible to human reason,  
 ‘ I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as  
 ‘ knowing no demonstration can be stronger than  
 ‘ this, “ God hath said so, therefore is it true”.  
 ‘ In other things, I will take no man’s liberty of  
 ‘ judging from him; neither shall any man take  
 ‘ mine from me. I will think no man the worse  
 ‘ *man*, nor the worse *Christian*, I will love no  
 ‘ man the less for differing in opinion from me.  
 ‘ And what measure I mete to others, I expect  
 ‘ from them again. I am fully assured that God  
 ‘ *does* not, and therefore men *ought* not to re-  
 ‘ quire any more of any man than this, “ To  
 ‘ believe the scripture to be God’s word, to en-  
 ‘ deavour to find the true sense of it, and to live  
 ‘ according to it”.

May this be our happiness through Jesus Christ  
 our Lord, to whom be glory now and ever.  
*Amen.*

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LUKE xxii. 19, 20.

*This is my body which is given for you : [which is broken for you, I Cor. xi. 24.] This do in remembrance of me.-----This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*



THESE words, according to the doctrine of the *Reformed Churches*, are to be understood in a *figurative* and spiritual sense, and to mean no more than, *This bread signifies my body, which will shortly be broken, and this cup my blood, which will shortly be shed, for the redemption of the world; and the eating this bread, and drinking this cup, are to be a standing memorial of*

of my death, in the Christian church, to the end of the world.

The *church of Rome*, on the contrary, pretends, that these words must be understood in a strict, and *literal* sense, and to signify, that the *bread* and *wine* in the Lord's Supper, when these words are pronounced by a Priest, with an intention of consecrating them, are immediately changed into the real natural *body* and *blood* of Christ, and become his real *flesh* and *blood*; and that they cease to be any longer bread and wine, and have nothing but the appearance, and accidents of them left. 'Tis thus express'd by the *council of Trent*, which was their last *general council*, and is the standard of *modern Popery*, viz. That by the consecrating of bread and wine Jesus Christ, very God, and very man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of those sensible signs; that there is a conversion of the whole substance of bread, in this holy sacrament, into the whole substance of the body of Christ; and of the whole substance of wine into his blood; which conversion is fitly and properly called *Transubstantiation* <sup>1</sup>. And the council denounces an *anathema* against all who believe and teach otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Concil. Trid. Sess. 13. c. 6.

This is further explained in the *Trent Catechism*; That 'tis the *true body of Christ* which was born of the virgin, and is now in heaven, together with his soul and divinity: That 'tis entire in every part of the bread, and every drop of the wine, and that no part of the substance of bread and wine remains: That the accidents of bread and wine, which do remain, are in no subject, but exist by themselves in a wonderful manner, and which is not too curiously to be enquired into<sup>2</sup>.

This is the point I am to debate at this time; and because these words are made the principal support of this doctrine, I shall confine myself to this single view of the case. What I have to offer against this interpretation of the words, I shall reduce to the following observations.

§. 1. There is no *necessity* of understanding these words in this sense. If indeed they could be understood in no other sense, and were not capable of any other construction, it were another case; but they will easily and fairly admit of another sense. I readily acknowledge the known rule of interpretation, That the literal sense of words is not to be forsaken, and a figurative one followed, without necessity: The natural

<sup>2</sup> Catech. ad Parochos, P. 2. De Euchar.

and proper sense is always to be preferred, where the case will admit and allow it; but then it is as certain a rule, That the literal sense *ought* to be forsaken, and a figurative sense received, where the *nature* of the subject, the relation to the *context*, or any other circumstance of things, evidently require and make it necessary.

Now what I observe here, as the first and lowest exception to this interpretation is, 'That there is no manner of *necessity* to understand these words in a strict and literal sense, but they *may* fitly be understood in a figurative one; whether they *ought* to be, or not, must be considered afterward. For the proof of this observation, I appeal to the frequent figurative expressions of a like kind in our Lord's discourses with his disciples, when he is speaking of himself, and upon all occasions, agreeably to the language of the Eastern nations, and of the *Jewish* church. And the best way to understand any author's expressions, is to attend to his phraseology, and use of words, in like cases in other instances. Thus, for example, when our Lord says of himself, *I am the door*, and the *true vine*, and the *good shepherd*; when he calls his body *this temple*, and the church *his body*; when he says, *the field is the world*; *the tares are the children of the wicked one*; *the harvest is the*  
*end*



*end of the world*; the *reapers are the angels*; and when the apostle says, *Christ is our passover*, and *this rock is Christ*; the meaning is not, that these are the very things themselves, but only that they *signify* these several things; that there is some resemblance and likeness between them, and they are proper images and representations of them. These are confessed on all hands to be figurative expressions, of an obvious and easy signification, which were never mistaken by any one, or pretended to be used in a literal sense. Nothing is more usual in all language, and among all nations, than to put the *sign* for the *thing* signified by it. So is *wax* when it becomes a *seal*, and *gold* and *silver* when coined into *money*.

This expression therefore, *This is my body*, may be understood in a figurative sense, and to mean, This bread *signifies* my body, and is designed to be a *memorial* of it; and no man can pretend to say, That they *cannot* be so understood, and are not *capable* of such a signification, or that there is any *necessity* of understanding them otherwise. And why then should we draw a needless difficulty upon the Christian doctrine, and perplex the minds of men, without any manner of necessity, and when the words can so easily be understood in another sense?

§. 2. 'Tis not a convenient, or *probable* sense, *i. e.* agreeable to the *subject* spoken of, and the *occasion* of speaking them. 'Tis another rule of interpretation, That words and phrases must be understood suitably to the *subject* to which they belong, and the *occasion* of speaking them, and according to the *genius* and customs of the people where they are spoken. So terms of art are understood agreeably to the several arts to which they relate; and the *Jews*, and all the Eastern nations were known to delight in parabolical and figurative representations; and nothing was more frequent, or better understood among them.

If we consider these words in this view, we shall find the matter stand thus: Our Lord had been just celebrating the last *passover* with his disciples, a little before his sufferings, which was a solemn festival appointed by God, in commemoration of the angel's passing over the houses of the *Israelites*, when he slew all the first-born of *Egypt*<sup>3</sup>. It consisted in eating a roasted lamb, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.----The eating the paschal lamb was called the *Lord's Passover*<sup>4</sup>. So the *Jewish* church

<sup>3</sup> Exod. x.

<sup>4</sup> The *Jews* called the Passover the *body* of the paschal lamb. *Buxt. Vind. cont. Cap. p. 14.*

always

always understood it, from the first institution of it to this day. The apostles, who were all *Jews* by birth and religion, well understood the nature of their own Passover, as they had been accustomed all along to such ways of representation in our Lord's discourses.

Now when the Passover was finished, our Lord took some of the bread which remained of the paschal supper, and broke it, and said, *This is my body*; and some of the wine, and poured it forth, and said, *This cup is the new testament in my blood: i. e.* I appoint this supper to be a perpetual memorial of my suffering and death which are now approaching; as the eating the paschal lamb was of the angel's passing over the houses of the *Israelites*. I appeal to any ingenuous and impartial mind, whether this is not the natural sense of the expressions and much the more probable and likely sense; more agreeable to the subject and occasion of them, and which makes the whole transaction uniform, and all of a piece: And whether it is not very unnatural and disagreeable, to suppose our Lord immediately after the observation of the Passover, which was so well understood by the disciples, to institute another ordinance instead of it, with so strange a meaning as was never heard of before, and entirely different from the

occasion of it, and without the least hint, or intimation of so extraordinary a thing. Can one think it likely that it should never be made a question by the scrupulous disciples; nor more objected afterwards to the Christians by the Pagan writers,<sup>5</sup> who were full of questions and cavils, upon other matters, where there was less occasion given.

Besides, the nature of a *sacrament* requires this, which is allowed to be, a visible *sensible* sign of a *spiritual* blessing and benefit. There is always something sensible, to represent something spiritual; so *water* in baptism, signifies the *washing away our sins*,<sup>6</sup> and the *answer of a good conscience towards God*:<sup>7</sup> And *bread* and *wine* in the Lord's Supper signify the *body* and *blood* of Christ, which was broken and shed for us, and the  *blessings*  we obtain by his death. Whereas upon this supposition, there is no visible sign of the thing, but the very thing itself; and because nothing can be a sign of itself, this destroys the definition and alters the *nature* of a sacrament.

Upon these accounts we conclude it more agreeable to the subject, the occasion,

<sup>5</sup> When any thing of this kind is mentioned in the Christian *Apologists*, 'tis constantly denied of themselves, and strongly retorted upon their adversaries.

<sup>6</sup> Acts xxii. 6.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Peter iii. 21.

and all the circumstances of it, to understand these words in a figurative, and not in a literal sense.

§. 3. 'Tis not a *consistent* sense, or suitable to the other expressions which are here used concerning it. If this expression was designed to be understood in a literal sense, then according to all the rules of reasonable construction, so must the other expressions too which belong to the same matter, and were spoken at the same time; especially if any of them are exactly parallel to this. It would be very unreasonable to pick out a single sentence in the same discourse, and understand it in a strict and *literal* sense, when the other expressions round about it, are plainly *figurative* and allusive, or require it to be so understood; and so we find it always was in our Lord's parabolical discourses where the figure is continued quite thro', and appears in every part.

If we consider the matter in this light, we shall find that neither these words, nor the other expressions here used, can be understood in any consistency with themselves, without a figure. If the demonstrative *this*<sup>s</sup> refers to the *bread* spoken of  
in

<sup>s</sup> Tho' τῆν does not agree with ἄρτον, yet it will with the whole sentence, *this bread, taken, broken and blessed;*  
of

in the foregoing verſe, and there is no other antecedent to which it can refer; then *this bread* which he took, and bleſſed, and brake, *is my body*, in the rigour of the letter, will ſignify, that it was both *bread*, and *his body*, at the ſame time; or that the bread *was* the ſubſtance of Chriſt's body, and not *changed* into it; which is a flagrant inconfiſtency, for they are not only diſtinct, but quite different things: And when theſe words, *this is MY body*, are pronounced by a prieſt, it will neceſſarily ſignify the change to be made, into the body of the *prieſt*, and not of *Chriſt*; unleſs you allow a figure, and ſuppoſe him to ſpeak in the perſon of Chriſt. Our Lord ſays, *This is my body which is BROKEN for you*, when it was not yet broken; but only in the figure and representation of it.

Again, he ſays,--- *this do in remembrance of me*, εἰς τὸ ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, as a memorial of me. *q. d.* As often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, think of me who died for you: Don't forget me when I am gone

of which conſtruction there are many inſtances in the LXX, and in the new teſtament. Eph. ii. 8. *Ye are ſaved by grace, thro' faith, and that not of your ſelves, καὶ τὰ τ, it is the gift of God. τὰ τ cannot agree either with χάρις or πίστις, but it refers to the whole ſentence, q. d.* This appointment and conſtitution, that we are *ſaved by grace thro' faith*, is a free favour and vouchſafement of God.

to the Father, and you shall see me no more : Keep up the remembrance of your absent friend and benefactor by this token of love and respect ; as the paschal lamb was a perpetual memorial of the *Israelites* deliverance and preservation in *Égypt*. This is certainly the obvious meaning of the words. But if the natural body and blood of Christ be really present in the sacrament, how is it then a *memorial* of him ? Do we properly *remember* one who is present with us ? Does not a memorial set up, or observed in remembrance of any person or action, suppose that person to be absent, and that fact to be passed ? With what propriety can it be said, Take my body in remembrance of my body : Take my self for a token to remember me by ? <sup>9</sup> May we not with as good sense talk of *seeing* an *absent* friend, as *remembering* one who is *present* ? No, he is not now bodily present with us, but at a distance from us : So our Lord told the disciples, *Me you have not always* ; <sup>1</sup> and the Apostle says, *Tho' we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more.*<sup>2</sup> This is to supply the place of his presence, and to be in some sort instead

<sup>9</sup> Nemo recordatur nisi quod in presentia non est positum.  
*Aug. in Psal. xxxvii.*

<sup>1</sup> Matth. xxvi. 11.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. v. 16.

of it. So that this supposition would alter the great *design* of the sacrament, as the former did the nature of it; for it would make it conversing with Christ present, and not a memorial of him absent. 'Tis in this sense the apostle says, *Ye shew forth the Lord's death till he come*, καταγγέλλετε,<sup>3</sup> declare it to others, and make an open profession of it, as the *Israelites* were required to *shew* to their children what the Lord had done for them.<sup>4</sup>

Besides, our Lord says as expressly, *This cup is the new testament in my blood*, as, *This is my body*; and according to all the reason and rules of interpretation, we must be obliged to understand this expression in a literal sense too. And then if there is any real and substantial change, it must be of the *cup*, and not of the *wine*, for he says, *This cup is the new testament*. Well, *This cup*, i. e. the wine in this cup, which is itself a figure, *is the new testament*, that is, not only procures, and confirms it to us, or signifies and represents it, but literally, *this cup is the new testament*; which is language so strange and uncouth, that I know not whether any Papist will pretend to own it: But the reason however is common to both, and if one part of the sen-

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xiii. 8.



tence must be understood in a strict literal sense, the other, which is exactly parallel, must be understood so too; and they must necessarily either both be true, or both be false, unless a reason of the distinction can be assigned, and the difference between them pointed out.

'Tis further considerable to this purpose, That our Lord himself expressly calls it, after the institution and celebration of it, *the fruit of the vine.*<sup>1</sup> And the apostle speaks of it in such a manner, as plainly shews he had no such apprehension of the matter; for he calls it *bread* three several times, in the verses immediately following the institution, as if he would purposely guard against such a conceit; *As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup;* and *Whosoever eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup;* and, *So let him eat this bread and drink this cup;* τὸ ἄρτον τῆτον, and τὸ ἄρτε, this bread remaining bread, not this body, where there is no bread remaining. And the apostle sometimes represents the whole action, by the *breaking of bread.*<sup>2</sup>

This makes all the expressions agreeable to the subject, and consistent with themselves, and renders it together a regular and beautiful representation of the matter. I add further,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 42. xx. 7.

§. 4. That this sense of the words is not *reasonable*, or agreeable to the principles of *human* nature. As we consist of a *conscious* principle, and a *material* body, so the only powers by which we attain all our knowledge, are our *reason*, and our *senses*; and we have no other by which to raise *ideas*, or pass a *judgment* on any thing. We justly conclude, that God will deal with us, in all his transactions, suitably to the nature he has given us, and not contrary to it. Whatsoever therefore is contrary to the reason of our minds, and the senses of our body, in the due exercise of them, and upon their proper objects, is justly accounted *absurd*.

Now this is the case here; for all the reason of our minds informs us, from all the circumstances of things, that *this is my body*, can only mean, This bread broken *signifies* my body which is shortly to be broken for you; and not, this is my *real* natural body. 'Tis plain the disciples could not so understand him, at the time of the institution; for his natural body was then before them, and was not yet broken. They saw him whole and entire before their eyes. He took the bread of the passover in his hands, when he spake these words, and when he had blest it, eat it; and they could never suppose that he took his whole  
body

body into his own hands, and that he *eat himself*, which would shock all the reason in the world. We can judge of no sensible object whatsoever, but by the essential properties which describe its nature, and distinguish it from others ; nor do we pretend to know the abstract nature and essence of any thing. Now to suppose any object to be one thing, while it has only the properties of another, and none of the properties of that thing, is manifestly contrary to reason. Indeed no man can pretend that his own reason would ever have led him to such a sense of the words, or that it was reasonable so to understand them. This is so evident, that several of the greatest men of the church of *Rome*, have ingenuously given up this ground, and refer it wholly to the authority of the church.

It will be said ; But this is a matter of *faith*, and not of *reason* : 'Tis a mystery to be believed, and is above reason.-----But there is always a reason of faith, and a *motive* of credibility, of any proposition or any fact. We must first understand what we are to believe, and in what sense we are to believe it. 'Tis the office of reason duly disposed and instructed, to help us to understand the objects of our faith, so far as we are concerned to believe them, whatsoever

further there may be in the things themselves ; or else we must lie open to all the imposture and delusion in the world, and be obliged to believe whatsoever any man has the confidence and presumption to pass upon us as the will of God : And an unreasonable faith, or believing without a reason, is a great absurdity, and could have no virtue, or acceptableness in it. We are enquiring what we are to believe, and in what sense this expression is to be understood ; and that is the province of reason, and neither against it, or above it.

Besides, 'Tis contrary to our *sense*, which is the proper judge in matters of sense. We plainly discern that 'tis bread and wine after these words are pronounced, as much as before ; and not the body and blood of a man : It has not only the same *figure* and appearance, but the same *nature* and properties it had before, the same form, the same smell and taste. 'Tis separated indeed to a sacred use, by virtue of Christ's appointment, which is the proper *consecration* of it ; *i. e.* 'Tis a memorial of his death, and of the new covenant ; and this, I hope, is no *conjunction*, as a late writer<sup>3</sup> is pleased to express it ; but 'tis nevertheless bread and wine, and equally capable of

<sup>3</sup> *Rights* p. 102.

answering this purpose, without any such change of them, and much more properly too. Here is a *concurrence* of our senses, and of the senses of all mankind, at all times, and in a proper object of sense. We *see* with our eyes that 'tis bread and wine; and if they are more easily mistaken, we *feel*, and *handle* it, we *smell*, and *tast* it. There is no difference possible to be observed, by any of our senses, with the closest inspection, and exactest scrutiny, before and after the consecration, or between that bread and any other. So that here is not a doubtful and disputable matter, for which several things may be said on either side; but there is a plain sensible *fact* on one side, and only a confident *assertion* on the other. 'Tis indeed a down-right defiance and affront to all the reason and sense of mankind, which yet are the only faculties by which we can judge of any thing.

If it be said, That our senses often *deceive* us, as in the apparent dimensions of the sun, the distance of the stars, and when a strait stick appears crooked in the water: --- I answer, That is not because our senses, especially in concurrence with our reason, are not the proper judges of sensible objects; but because they are not rightly circumstanced, by reason of undue distance,

or

or an unapt medium through which we see them. Nor do they properly deceive us when a due consideration is had of all the circumstances of the case. If we cannot judge by our senses of sensible objects, in a due situation and circumstance, then we must be liable to perpetual deceit by our nature and make; then we cannot be sure of any thing; that we ourselves exist, or that there are such words in the Bible, but that we dwell in the midst of *enchancements*, and in a mere *ideal* world, without any real objects about us: Then I cannot be sure that 'tis not midnight darkness in the glaring light of noon-day, or that in this numerous assembly I don't stand here alone, without a single person present with me. This would reflect an infinite dishonour upon the God of nature, the wise Creator of the world, who upon this supposition, would have made us the most awkward and untoward creatures in all the world.

Besides that this would destroy the great *proofs* of Christianity, and all the evidence of *miracles*, which are nothing else but visible facts, and *appeals* to the *senses* of men; as when our Lord *healed* the sick, and *raised* the dead. The truth of his *resurrection*, upon which so great a weight is laid, was capable of no higher a proof; and therefore our Lord appeals to the senses of the  
disciples,

disciples, when he appeared to them after his resurrection; <sup>5</sup> *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my self; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have: And when he had thus spoken he shewed them his hands and his feet.* He appeals to their eyes, and hands, their sight and feeling. And when *Thomas* was more scrupulous and cautious than the rest of the disciples, he offered him, with the greatest condescension, and as the highest evidence, <sup>6</sup> *Reach hitber thy finger, and behold my hand; reach hitber thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing.* But how would this have been any satisfaction to their anxious and doubtful minds, if their sight and feeling could have deceived them, or had not been a sufficient proof.

The apostles made no higher pretension to convince the world of the truth of the fact, than that they were <sup>7</sup> *eye-witnesses of his resurrection, and his glory*; and could say, <sup>8</sup> *That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life---that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.* I conclude therefore from all this, that that must be unreasonable and absurd which is evidently contrary to the sober rea-

<sup>5</sup> Luke xxiv. 39.

<sup>6</sup> John xx. 27.

<sup>7</sup> Acts iii. 15. 2 Pet. i. 16.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Epist. John i. 1, 2.

son and sound sense of all mankind, and would destroy the use and advantage of both, in every other case, as well as in this. But I advance further still.

§. 5. It is an *impossible* sense, and *cannot* be true; for it implies a great deal of contradiction in it. This proceeds upon this principle, That whatsoever implies an evident contradiction to the nature and reason of things, in any fact or proposition, cannot be true, and is impossible to be done. No power whatsoever can do that which cannot be done, and which is no object of power. 'Tis a direct *repugnance* to all being and all power; for that which builds up one side of a contradiction, does necessarily, at the same time, destroy the other. So that 'tis really doing nothing, and producing no effect, and there is no need of any power to do nothing, much less of divine power. When the apostle says, That *God cannot deny himself*; and that 'tis *impossible for God to lie*; the meaning is, That the divine Being, who is infinitely wise and true, as well as Almighty, cannot act in contradiction to the immutable nature of things, and the infinite perfection of his own nature. <sup>9</sup> So to make a triangle a

<sup>9</sup> Ἄτοπα γὰρ ἐστὶν πλάσει ὁ πενταγώνου.



square, or a square a circle ; for that would destroy the nature of the triangle and circle, and they cannot be both at once, or either have the properties of the other.

Now the doctrine of *Transubstantiation* plainly implies a contradiction in many undeniable instances. For example ; It supposes the bread to be turned into the *broken* body of Christ, when he himself was present with his disciples, and his body was *not* yet broken. For if the pronouncing these words by a Priest produces this wonderful effect, then surely the pronouncing them by Christ himself, must much more do it, for this was the leading instance to all the rest. And then here was his *natural* body entire and whole before their eyes, by which he took the bread, and spoke these words ; and the *bread* turned into his broken body ; and so he had two distinct bodies at the same time, quite different from one another, one *entire*, and the other *broken*. This implies this evident contradiction, That his body was broken, and not broken at the same time, his blood shed, and not shed. If there were any change at that time, it must have been into his *whole* body, and not into his *broken* body ; but that the same body should be both whole and broken at the same time, is a direct inconsistency, and absolutely impossible.

Besides, it supposes his natural body, which is but *one*, to be at the same time *many*: 'Tis one body in heaven, and ten thousand bodies on earth, and the same body divided and separated from itself, which is a contradiction in *numbers*. Yea, 'tis one and the same body with quite different *qualities*; 'tis a *glorified* body in Heaven, and a *broken* body on earth; it exists spiritually and bodily at the same time; it had a being seventeen hundred years ago, and is made afresh every day, *i. e.* it was in being before it began to be, and was in being, and not in being at the same time.

Further, it supposes the same *individual* body to be in innumerable *places* at the same time. 'Tis in heaven and earth, and in all the parts of the earth, wherever the sacrament is administered, how remote and distant soever, at the same instant. This is a contradiction to the nature of body, which is naturally *extended* and impenetrable, and can occupy but *one* place at once, and is circumscribed by it in proportion to its figure and magnitude. When any body is removed out of one place into another, it necessarily ceases to be in the former place, and one place must be without it, while the other possesses it. It being but *one* thing, it cannot be in both; for then it would be *two* things, and not one, which is contra-

ry to the supposition. 'Tis a contradiction to all our notions of matter, and all our observations and experience, for the same *system* of matter to be actually in more places than one at the same time, much more to be in ten thousand places together.

If it be said, 'Tis now a *spiritual* body, and not gross *matter*; I answer, It was not a *spiritual* but a *mortal* body, when our Lord spake these words: And if it be now a *spiritual* body, then how comes it to have flesh and blood; when *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven*? However, if it be a true and proper body, it must necessarily partake of the essential properties of body, how much soever it is spiritualized, or else it will be no body at all. Not to add, That no *finite* being whatsoever, whether *body*, or *spirit*, can be conceived to be in more places than one, at the same time, tho' *spiritual* beings by their natural fineness and agility, can sooner remove from one place to another, as the angel *Gabriel*, whom *Daniel* saw in a vision at the beginning of his prayer, <sup>1</sup> *Being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation.*

Once more, it supposes *accidents* to subsist without any *subject*, to which they be-

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ix. 21.

long. They allow there are the *accidents* of bread remaining; there are the figure, colour, smell and taste; but the *substance*, it seems, is quite changed, and become the body of Christ. But what are they the accidents of? Not of bread, for there is no bread left. Not of the body of Christ, for that is a spiritual body, and *exists after the manner of spirits*, whatever that is. Then they must subsist of *themselves*, and without any subject to which they belong: And then accidents become *substances*, for 'tis the property of a substance to *subsist of itself*; and then the same individual thing will have two contrary natures, it will be accident and substance too. The whole subject must be changed, accident and substance too, if there be any change at all, for they necessarily subsist together, and no accident can remain when the subject of it is gone; as you cannot conceive *extension* without something extended, or *consciousness* and thought without a spirit. This is indeed supposing a building without a foundation, and raising castles in the air. This once occasioned a smart repartee from a *Physician* in *France*, of the *Roman* communion, who, when prest by an *English* Minister <sup>2</sup> with this difficulty, pleasantly said in the close of the debate,

<sup>2</sup> The late learned and pious Mr. *Will. Lorimor*.

He thought the Fathers of *Trent* ought to have been condemned to feed only on *accidents* of bread all their lives, for bringing so great an incumbrance upon their faith.

If it be said after all, and as the last refuge, That it is to be considered in the nature of a *miracle*, and as the effect of divine power, and is not to be measured by the ordinary course of nature, and maxims of reason and philosophy; Why can't he turn bread into a body, as well as *water into wine*, and multiply a *few loaves* to feed a great *multitude*? Nothing is impossible to Omnipotence, and 'tis great presumption to *limit the Holy One*?<sup>3</sup> I answer, That this is not a *miracle*, but a *contradiction*: “ A  
“ miracle is an extraordinary work of God,  
“ above the ordinary powers of nature, evi-  
“ dent to sense, and designed for convicti-  
“ on”. So were all the miracles of *Moses*  
and *Christ*. But here is nothing of the nature of a miracle, for there is no evidence to sense, or any ground of conviction to the mind. 'Tis indeed a flat *contradiction* to nature, which is no object of power, and impossible to any power, most of all to the divine Power, which is always founded in the highest reason, and governed by the greatest wisdom.

<sup>3</sup> *Profession of Catholick Faith, extracted out of the Council of Trent, p. 28.*

The difference in the cases is very evident, for when the water was turned into wine, it ceased to be water, and lost all the properties of it; it had no longer the colour and taste of water, but was sublimated and enriched into wine. The case should stand thus to make it parallel, That the water was *confidently said* to be turned into wine, and yet had all the properties of water still, and none of the properties of wine; and then I doubt it would no more have been thought a miracle, than it would have satisfied the guests at the feast. So the *loaves* were multiplied by the power of Christ, by the addition of more loaves, and this we can easily conceive possible to divine Power. But here bread is supposed to be turned into a human body, and into as many bodies as there were crumbs in those loaves, and yet has nothing but the appearance of bread all the while, and without any form and figure, or any property of a body at all.

If none of these are contradictions, it will not be easy to say what is; and if any one contradiction can be fairly fastened upon it, it *cannot* be true, and is *impossible* to be the sense of these words.

I add further,

§. 6. They were not so understood in the *first ages*, and by the *earliest writers* of the  
Christian

Christian church. There is scarce any thing in which the church of *Rome* puts in a stronger claim, or makes a louder boast, than the sense of *antiquity*, and the judgment of the *antient Fathers*, tho' in points peculiar to Popery, and in which they differ from the Protestants, scarce any thing is less fair, or more unjust. Now tho' we acknowledge nothing as an *authoritative rule of faith*, but the holy scriptures, the great charter of the Christian church; yet it must be allowed that the first ages and first writers, especially for the first three hundred years, had some opportunities and advantages of knowing the sense of scripture, beyond what we have at this distance of time, especially with relation to matters of *fact*, and the *practice* of the church; and we refuse not their arbitration in the present case.

Tho' it would not be proper in a popular auditory, nor stand with the limits of a single discourse, to go distinctly into this argument now; yet thus much I may safely venture to undertake, That no christian writer, of whom we have any records remaining, for more than five hundred years, ever spake of Transubstantiation, as now understood in the church of *Rome*, neither *name* nor *thing*. They give no such sense of these words, but speak many things which  
are

are contrary, and inconsistent with it. I confess they sometimes speak of the sacrament, in their popular discourses, with strong figures of rhetorick, and high expressions of reverence and affection, as they also do of baptism; and as devotional writers often do in other subjects, as well as this, especially where there has been no controversy about them; but they nevertheless declare their sense of this matter in a great variety of expressions. Thus <sup>1</sup> Justin Martyr, and <sup>2</sup> Irenæus in the second century; <sup>3</sup> Tertullian, <sup>4</sup> Origen, and <sup>5</sup> Cyprian in the third; <sup>6</sup> Eusebius, <sup>7</sup> Basil, <sup>8</sup> Chrysostome, in the fourth, speak of being *nourished* with the food of

<sup>1</sup> Apol. 2. 98. Τεσσαὶ δὲ ἥς αἷμα καὶ σαρκὸς καὶ μεταβολῶν πρέρον ἢ ἡμῶν. Dial. cum Trypho. Τύπος ἦν τῶ ἄρτου τῆς εὐχαριστίας ὃν εἰς ἀνάμνησιν τῆς πάθους Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ ὁ κύβητος ἡμῶν παρέθηκε ποιεῖν.

<sup>2</sup> Adv. Hæref. 1. 4. c. 34. Sed Eucharistia ex duabus rebus constans, terrena & caelesti.

<sup>3</sup> Adv. Marcion. 1. 1. Quo ipsum corpus repræsentat. L. 4. c. 4. Figura corporis mei.

<sup>4</sup> In Matt. xv. ὡς πικρὸν καὶ συμβολικὸν σῶματός αὐτοῦ.

<sup>5</sup> Epist. 63. ad Cecil. Sola [aqua] Christi sanguinem non potest exprimere. In aqua vidimus populum intelligi, in vino ostendi sanguinem Christi.

<sup>6</sup> Dem. Evang. 1. 5. c. 10. διὰ συμβολῶν τῆς σώματος αὐτοῦ. I. 5. τῆς ἰκῶνα τῆς ἰδίας σώματος.

<sup>7</sup> Epist. 289. ---- ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ὁ ἱερῶς ὀπιθίδωσι τῆς μερίδας.

<sup>8</sup> In Cor. i. Hom. 24. Τί γὰρ ὄταν ὁ ἄρτος; σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Τί δὲ γίνονται οἱ μεταλαμβάνοντες; σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Οὐχὶ σῶμα πολλὰ, ἀλλὰ σῶμα ἓν. Homil. 17. in Epist. ad Heb. ---- μάλλον δὲ ἀνάμνησιν ἐργαζόμεθα θυσιῶν.



the Eucharist; and say, it consists of an *earthly* and *heavenly part*; that 'tis the *image* and *figure* of his body, and *expresses* and *represents* it. <sup>9</sup> St. *Austin*, who lived in the *fifth* century, and is in great esteem in the church of *Rome*, calls it a *figure* and *sign* of his body and blood; and says, his *body is in heaven*, and the sacrament is the *resemblance* and *representation* of it. He says expressly, That it is a *figurative speech*, and must be *spiritually understood*. <sup>1</sup> *Theodoret* says, He *honoured the symbols with the name of his body and blood*, not *changing nature*, but *adding grace to nature*; and that they remain in their *former substance, figure and appearance*; and may be *seen and handled as before*. <sup>2</sup> Pope *Gela-*

<sup>9</sup> Cont. Adamant. c. 12. Non enim Dominus dubitavit dicere, *Hoc est corpus*, cum daret *signum* corporis sui. He lays down a rule to distinguish the *literal* and *figurative* sense of *scripture*, and assigns the sacrament as an instance of the latter. De doctr. Christ. l. 3. c. 16. And de Verb. Apost. Serm. 2. Si quod in sacramento visibiliter sumitur, in ipsa veritate spiritualiter manducetur, spiritualiter bibatur.

<sup>1</sup> Τὰ ὀνόματα σύμβολα τῆ τοῦ σώματος ἢ αἵματος ἑρμηνεία τῶν ἰουκων, ἔτι οὐσαν μεταβολὴν ἀλλὰ τὸ χάριεν τῆ φύσει πρεσβυτικῶν. Dial. 1.

<sup>2</sup> De duab. naturis in Christo. Et tamen non esse definit substantia vel natura panis & vini; & certe imago & similitudo corporis & sanguinis Christi, in actione mysteriorem celebrantur. So, Sacramentum memoriæ. Auf. cont. Fauc. l. 20. c. 21. Aliquod pignus derelinquat. Hier. in 1 Cor. in τὸ ἰόντων ἄρτους πῶσι, & τὸ ὄντων πνεύματος ἀντίστοιχον. Theod. Dial. 1. Ἐν πτωρῶν ἄρτος δίδεται σὺ πνεύματι, ἕως πτωρῶν οὐκ ἰδοται τὸ αἶμα. Cyr. Catech. Myst. 4.

*sius*, who lived in the same century, says, It ceaseth not to be the substance and nature of bread and wine, but is the image and resemblance of Christ's body and blood. 'Tis often called by later writers, The sacrament of remembrance, the pledge of an absent friend ; the symbols, and antitype of his body.

There is no ancient *liturgy* which contains any prayer to this purpose at the *Eucharist* ; that in the <sup>3</sup> *Clementine Constitutions*, and those ascribed to <sup>4</sup> *St. Basil*, and <sup>5</sup> *Ambrose*, plainly express the contrary. The great Council of *Constantinople* in the eighth century, which condemned the worship of images, declared, That it was the *image of his living body*, which was made, after a precious and honourable manner <sup>6</sup>. And this is acknowledged by some of their own schoolmen, of the greatest authority and esteem ; as *Scotus*, *Durandus*, *Ockam*, &c.

On the contrary, It was first started by a Monk at the beginning of the seventh century ; and was afterwards countenanced

<sup>3</sup> Προσφέρομεν σοι τὸ ἄσπορον ἄψικτον καὶ τὸ πτύγιον ἕσπ. We offer to thee this bread and this cup. l. 4. c. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Προσθετετε ταυ ἀντίτυπα τῶ ἀγίου σώματος καὶ αἵματος ἡς Χριστοῦ. Antitypes of his body and blood.

<sup>5</sup> L. 4. c. 5. Which is the figure of the body and blood of Christ our Lord.

<sup>6</sup> Conc. Conflant. Act. 6

by the second council of *Nice*, which first introduced the worship of images, and with a design to support it, in opposition to the Council of *Constantinople*. It was afterwards brought into the *Latin* church at the latter end of the ninth century ;<sup>7</sup> but was contested and opposed for above three hundred years, by many of the most learned and pious men of those times ; and was not made an article of faith till the fourth *Lateran* Council, under Pope *Innocent* the third, in the twelfth century ; and that in a very imperious and unprecedented manner, by the meer authority of the Pope, without the concurrence and consent of the Synod ;<sup>8</sup> the same Pope who *deposed* our King *John*, and first set up the *Inquisition*. It was not properly established till the council of *Trent* in the fifteenth century. This is the pedigree of this spurious offspring ; these the circumstances of its conception and birth. 'Tis so far then from

<sup>7</sup> *Paschasius Rathbartus* first formed it into shape and brought it into the Western church, but was vigorously opposed by *Rabanus Maurus* Archbishop of *Mentz*, the most considerable man of those times, who says, It was an *error newly broached*, and which he *opposed with all his might*. Epist. ad Heribaldum, c. 33. And there was a famous contest for a long time by *Berengarius*, which occasioned the meeting of two synods, and several hearings before the Pope ; and by *Bartram* and others, afterwards. See a learned and ingenious discourse of the late Mr. *Thomas Goodwin* of *Pinner* : *Transubstantiation a peculiar Doctrine of the Church of Rome*, 1688.

<sup>8</sup> *Matt. Paris* in ann. 1215.

being any doctrine of the *antient church*, that 'tis a *novel* doctrine, of a late date;<sup>9</sup> brought into the church in a corrupt and ignorant age, by an ill man, to serve a bad purpose, and in a very extraordinary manner.

§. 7. It naturally leads to great *immoralities*; to *idolatry*, *cruelty*, and *profaneness*. 'Tis not a meer abstract *speculation* which rests in the mind, but it affects the *practice*. The bread and wine being supposed to be changed into the body and blood of Christ, is adored with the <sup>1</sup> *supreme worship which is given to the true God*, by solemn prayer, the lowest prostrations, and highest marks of homage. Now whatever worship is due to the body of Christ together with his soul and Divinity; if it appears from what has been said, that there is no such thing, or any body of Christ in the sacrament at all, but only bread and wine, set apart in commemoration of it; then it must be acknowledged, that all this homage and devotion is misplaced, and is worshipping a meer creature, and without any warrant and appointment, which is the true notion of idolatry. And tho' I know 'tis said, That however in that case, 'tis only

<sup>9</sup> In synaxi Transubstantiationem serò definivit Ecclesia. *Erasm.* in 1 Cor. vii. p. 472. Edit. *Basil.* 1535.

<sup>1</sup> Conc. Trid. Sess. 13. c. 5.

*simple error*, and not idolatry, because the homage is designed to be paid to Christ, and not to bread and wine; that then indeed they are *mistaken*, but not idolators; yet I think we justly charge the *opinion* and *practice* with idolatry, for I meddle not with the *persons* of men; at least till they have fairly answered our arguments, and sufficiently supported their own; because it has the nature of idolatry in it, and is, worshipping a creature; to be sure as much as worshipping by mistake an *unconsecrated* host, which some of their own writers allow to be so; and their intention will not alter the nature of things, whatsoever abatement it may be of the crime. Besides that this would justify the *Jewish* and *Heathen* idolatry, which is so severely condemned in the scripture; and is contrary to one great *design* of Christianity, which was to bring men to the worship of the true God, and banish all idolatry out of the world; to *turn men from idols to serve the living and true God*. I am sure so many things are required, in the qualification and intention of the priest, and the qualities of the bread, to make the consecrated host a proper object of adoration; that it must needs, upon their own principles, be full of hazard and almost impossible to be secure from the danger of it. And that cannot be a *safe* way of religion which is liable to so great an evil in their daily worship. And

And certainly 'tis the greatest instance of *inhumanity* to eat the flesh and blood of any human person, and much more of the *Saviour* of the world ; and especially in the case of the *Virgin Mary*, who if she ever communicated, which I suppose will not be denied, did eat the flesh and blood of her own child ; as *Saturn* is fabled by the *Heathen* poets, to have devoured his own children : Besides the numberless lives which have been sacrificed to this idol, and the altars stained with the blood of martyrs, The great symbol of union and love has been made an engine of hatred and violence, of the most unchristian anathema's, and inhuman cruelties, in many parts of the world, in former, and later ages.

And 'tis the highest instance of *prophanation*, to eat the *real* body of Christ, his very *flesh* and *blood*, which then must partly turn into the nourishment of the body, and partly go into the draught ; which is too horrid to bear a thought, or admit an aggravation. I only add,

§. 8. 'Tis an infinite *scandal*, especially to infidels and unbelievers, and an effectual *prejudice* to the propagation and entertainment of the gospel in the world. 'Tis the highest offence to a great part of the *Christian* world, to see men worship the host, and

and fall down to a bit of bread. The greatest part of the *Greek*<sup>2</sup> church, the *Moscovites*, *Armenians*, the *Nestorians*, the *Maronites*, *Ethiopians*, and the vast empire of the *Abyssines*, &c. and all the *Protestant* churches, which together make a greater body of Christians than those in the communion of the *church of Rome*, have an irreconcilable prejudice to the doctrine, and can never unite upon this foot. They ought according to the apostle's rule, upon this account, to remove the offence out of the way:<sup>3</sup> *That no man put a stumbling-block, or occasion of falling in his brother's way*: And,<sup>4</sup> *Give none offence, neither to the Jew nor the Gentile, nor the church of God*.

But what is more considerable, 'tis an infinite prejudice to the *unbelieving* world, and hinders the progress of the gospel wherever it comes to be known. The *Jewish*, the *Mahometan*, the *Pagan* world, look upon it as monstrous and ridiculous, for men to make their God, and eat him when they have done. It reflects an infinite dishonour upon the Christian doctrine, and exposes it to scorn and contempt.<sup>5</sup> They

<sup>2</sup> Mr. *Claud.* Doct. Cathol. de l'Euchar. *Smith* De statu hodierno Ecclesiæ Græcæ. *Ludolph.* Histor. Ethiop. l. 3. c. 5. n. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xiv. 13.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 32.

<sup>5</sup> *Ecquam tam amentem esse putas, qui illud quo vescatur, Deum credat esse?* *Cicer.* De natur. Deor. l. 3.

can never bring men to believe *Christianity* to be true, but upon reasons which will prove *Transubstantiation* to be false, and there will be just so much reason against the one as there can be for the other. Indeed it destroys the great evidence upon which it ought to be received, and which was designed to convince the world. And tho' their *zeal* and *industry* in propagating the Christian religion in heathen countries, may justly deserve commendation, and in some respects be an example to others; yet we cannot but detest the shameless savings, and deceitful shifts of their *Missionaries*, who conceal and dissemble the matter, and attempt to reconcile them by scandalous compliance, and false pretences; for the truth of which I appeal to the late conduct of the *Jesuits* in *China*.

If it be said, That this is nothing peculiar to *their* doctrine, that it gives offence to the world, for so did the doctrine of the *cross* at first; and the preaching of *Christ crucified*, by the apostles, was <sup>6</sup> *To the Jews a stumbling-block*, and to *the Greeks foolishness*: I answer; It was so through their own *fault*; from the prejudices of their own minds, and the false notions they had entertained; not from the *nature* of the thing. There

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. i.



was nothing absurd and unreasonable, but the greatest wisdom and kindness, in saving the world by the death of Christ, which the church of *Rome* acknowledges as well as we : But the case is otherwise here ; the *matter* is infinitely absurd, and shocking to all reasonable nature. The offence arises from the *nature* of the thing, and is a scandal, not only to the unbelieving world, but to far the greater part of the Christian world too.

I shall deduce this *corollary* from what has been said, That the *adoration* of the host ; the *sacrifice* of the Mass as a propitiation for the quick and the dead ; and the communion *in one kind*, are utterly groundless, and without foundation ; for as they all go upon the supposition of Transubstantiation, and entirely depend upon it, so if the foundation is removed, they must necessarily fall too.

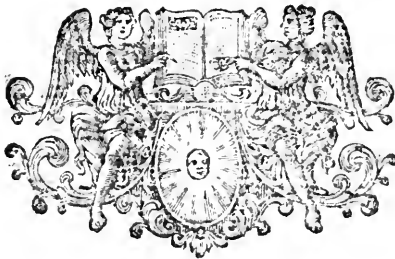
I shall conclude with this *practical reflection* upon the whole. What just matter of *astonishment* is it, on the one hand, that so many nations of men, many of whom are of exquisite *learning* and refined *sense* ; many, I doubt not, truly *pious* and devout ; should ever be brought to agree in so *complicated an absurdity*, without any necessity, or probability, against all reason and possibility, and to so great a mischief and inconvenience to the Christian interest,

terest, with so little shadow of reason for it, and so many substantial and undeniable reasons against it. How unspeakable are the prejudices of education, the bias of worldly interest, and the awes of authority and power! One cannot forbear thinking of those awful words of the apostle; <sup>7</sup> *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause God sent them strong delusions to believe a lye.* No wonder that men of freer minds, or greater honesty, in Popish countries, are often tempted, when they apprehend so great an absurdity in the Christian doctrine, to throw off all belief of the Christian revelation, and become *secret Deists*; which is said to be the case especially in *Italy*, from whence this doctrine sprang, and where it is triumphant.

And what reason have we, on the other hand, to be *thankful* to God, for the invaluable blessing of the *Reformation*, which delivered us from the tyranny and superstition of the church of *Rome*, and restored in so great a measure the *rights of conscience*, and *purity* of the *Christian worship*. We partake of the ordinances of the gospel, according to the institution of Christ, without the gross mixtures of superstition and

<sup>7</sup> 2 Theff. ii. 10, 11.

idolatry. May it spread and prevail, in God's good time, thro' the whole Christian world, and be carried every where to a closer conformity to the Christian rule; may we never forfeit so great a blessing by our unworthiness and abuse; but ever enjoy it ourselves, and transmit it down to the latest posterity.





## APPENDIX.

**I** SHALL add three historical passages relating to this subject, which I believe will be allowed to be very remarkable.

One is the noble challenge of the excellent Bishop *Jewel* in a sermon at *Paul's-Cross*, 1560. *If any learned man of all our adversaries, or if any learned men who are alive, be able to bring any one sufficient sentence, out of any one catholick doctor or father, or out of any old general council, or out of the holy scriptures of God; or any one example of the primitive church, whereby it may be clearly and plainly proved, That there was any private mass in the whole world at that time,----or that the People were then taught to believe that Christ's body is really, substantially, corporally, carnally, or naturally, in the sacrament,---I promise then that I will give over, and subscribe*

## A P P E N D I X.

*scribe to him. But I am well assured that they shall never be able truly to alledge one sentence ; and because I know it, therefore I speak it, lest you haply should be deceived.*  
Works, p. 58.

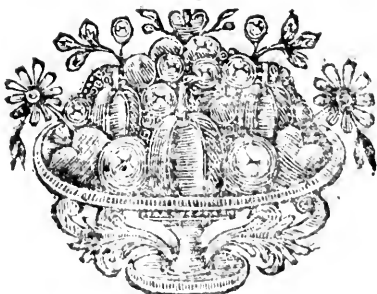
When Cardinal *Perron* was ask'd by some of his friends, in his last sickness, What he thought of *Transubstantiation*? He answered, That it was a MONSTER. And when they asked him, How then he had writ so copiously and learnedly about it? He replied, That he had done the utmost which his *wit* and *parts* had enabled him, to colour over this abuse, and render it plausible ; but that he had done like those who employ all their force to defend an ill cause. *Drelincourt, Reponse à lettres de Monseig. le Prince Ernest aux cinq Ministres de Pari. Genève 1664.*

The last is a passage of Archbishop *Usher*, a prodigy of *learning* and *humility* ; who having been so happy as to convert several *Roman* Priests from their errors, and enquiring diligently of them, What they, who *said Mass* every day, and were not obliged to confess *venial sins*, could have to trouble their Confessors with? They ingenuously acknowledged to him, That the chiefest part of their constant confession,

## A P P E N D I X.

was their *Infidelity* as to the point of *Transubstantiation*; and for which they mutually acquitted and absolved one another. Preface to Archbishop *Wake's Discourse of the holy Eucharist in two points, of the real Presence and Adoration*, 1688. who bore a noble part in the *Papish Controversy* in the Reign of King *James* the second.

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A SECOND  
DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

*Transubstantiation:*

IN WHICH THE

Sixth Chapter of St. *John's* Gospel is  
particularly considered.

PREACHED AT THE

Merchants Lecture at *Salters-Hall*,  
APRIL 22, 1735.

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By *W. HARRIS*, D. D.

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M DCC XXXV.





JOHN vi. 53.

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

**T**H O' the principal support of the doctrine of *Transubstantiation* is drawn from the words of the institution of the Lord's-supper, which I have already considered ; yet because this discourse of our Lord in this chapter is made great use of to this purpose by the Popish writers, and particularly insisted on in the late *Profession of faith*, and is the only place in the New Testament besides, which can give any colour or countenance to it ; I have therefore thought it might be proper to consider this matter at this time, which has been so often mistaken by them, and perhaps is not always

A 2                      distinctly

distinctly understood among our selves. It will be sufficient to the present purpose, and lead us to take in the whole chapter, so far as it relates to this subject, to consider a little particularly these two enquiries:

1. Whether this discourse of our Lord has any direct relation to the *Lord's-supper*?
2. If it has any reference to it, Whether there is any ground in it for the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*?

I. Whether it has any *direct* relation to the Lord's-supper: *i. e.* Whether this was the primary design of it, and what our Lord intended to instruct the people about at this time: If it was not, there can be no pretence for this doctrine in this discourse; and that it has no *direct* relation to it will I think sufficiently appear, by considering all the circumstances of the case, and fixing the true sense of it, *viz.* the *occasion* of speaking it; the *persons* to whom it was directed; the *time* of it, and the proper *meaning* of it, as here explained by our Lord himself.

1. Let us consider to this purpose the *occasion* of it. If we consult the former part of the chapter, we shall find that this was the miracle of the *loaves*, and the mention of the *manna* in the wilderness. Our Lord having crossed the sea, or the lake of *Galilee*  
in

in that part of it which washes the city of *Tiberias*, which was built by *Herod* in honour of *Tiberius Cæsar*; and went into the desert for greater retirement, the multitude who had seen his miracles followed him. The compassionate Redeemer, who was concerned for the bodies as well as the souls of men, was solicitous for their refreshment in so desolate a place, and *fed five thousand men, besides the women and children, with five barley loaves, and two small fishes*: A ver. 11. small provision for so great a number; but he *knew what he would do*; for when they — 6. were all filled they gathered the fragments together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments which remained over and above to — 12, 13. them who had eaten. Each of the twelve disciples filled his basket with fragments, as they had *distributed* the loaves to the people. Upon the sight of this miracle the multitude were so struck with amazement and conviction, that they said, *This is of a truth that prophet who should come into* 14. *the world*, i. e. the promised Messiah who has been so long expected: and in the sudden transport of their zeal, were for *taking him by force and making him their king*. 15. They were for lifting under him as their head and chief, agreeably to the worldly notions and spirit of the carnal *Jews*, expecting probably under such a captain to be delivered from the power of the *Romans*,

*mans*, as the *Israelites* were by *Mofes* from the *Egyptians*.

When they came back to *Capernaum* the next day, following *Jefus* and the disciples who departed the evening before, our Lord knowing the temper of their minds, and the motives of their action, reprov'd them for their worldly-mindedness; *Ye seek me not becaufe ye faw the miracle*, and attended to the true design of it, *but becaufe ye did*

21. *eat of the loaves and were filled*; and called off their minds from earthly things, and put them upon believing in him. He took the advantage of feeding their bodies to instruct their minds. They took offence at the freedom he used with them, and altered their mind and behaviour towards him: So changeable and inconstant is the mind of the multitude, and so easily, and sometimes unreasonably, do they run into the greatest extremes. They now demanded a sign of him; *What fign fheweft thou then, that we may believe? What doft thou work?* This was very unreasonable, when the multitude had followed him over the sea, because they *faw the miracles he had done on*

2. *them who were diseafed*; and they had seen the miracles of the loaves but the day before. Upon this occasion, they tell him of the manna in the wilderness; *Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, as 'tis*

31. *written, He gave them bread from heaven, q. d.*

If thou wouldst have us believe on thee, let us see such a miracle as *Moses* wrought in the wilderness, when he fed a whole nation of men for forty years, with bread from heaven. This was said by way of diminution and disparagement of the miracle he had wrought.

These two things occasioned our Lord's discourse in the following part of the chapter, and led him to speak of himself in this manner, under the figure of the *bread of God*, and the *bread from heaven*: a way <sup>32, 33.</sup> of speaking familiar in our Lord's discourses, and common among the *Jews*. So he took occasion from the *water of Jacob's well*, to discourse to the woman of *Samaria*, of the *waters of life*. This therefore <sup>Chap. iv.</sup> was very agreeable to the occasion, and a natural transition to such a description of himself, without any need to suppose the sacrament intended by it, which is not once mentioned throughout the whole chapter, nor any of the outward signs which belong to it; and which the occasion did not at all lead him to. This will further appear if you consider,

2. The *persons* who were spoken to. 'Tis plain from the beginning of the chapter, that they were the people of *Caper-naum*, who had followed him into the desert, and seen his miracles; and that they were spoken in the synagogue, where our  
Lord

Lord was used to take all opportunities of instructing the people, and teaching his doctrine; *These things said he in the synagogue as he taught at Capernaum.*

Now it will be to our present purpose to consider the *temper* and character under which they are here represented. It plainly appears, that they were *worldly-minded* and insincere; for they followed him not for the *miracle*, but for the *loaves*, and only to be fed and entertained by him, without their own labour and care. They were offended at him when he calls them to seek heavenly things, and to *labour not for the meat which perisheth*, but for *that which endureth to everlasting life*. And when he first told them of the *bread of God which cometh down from heaven*, and *giveth life to the world*; which they understood of the present life, and then they said, *Evermore give us this bread: Tho' Moses wrought many other miracles, they only take notice of the manna in the wilderness. They were wholly intent upon present good, and sensible gratification. They minded earthly things, and set their hearts and affections upon things on the earth, not on things above,*

Rom. xvi.  
18. *and were like those who served not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies.*

And they were *prejudiced* and captious, who instead of being willing to be instructed, and attend to his doctrine, misconstrued



construed his words, and understood him  
 in a gross and carnal manner, contrary to  
 the occasion and true design of them: So  
 they murmured at him, because he said, I  
 am the bread of life which came down from  
 heaven. They cavilled at his birth and  
 kindred, and reproached him with his mean  
 descent and appearance; *Is not this Jesus*  
*the son of Joseph, whose father and mother*  
*we know; how is it then that he saith, I came*  
*down from heaven;* as if they would charge  
 him with a falshood. So when our Lord  
 tells them, *No man can come unto me, ex-*  
*cept the Father who hath sent me draw him;*  
 he don't design to excuse them, but to  
 blame them. He drew them with the cords  
 of a man, by the powerful motives of his  
 doctrine and miracles, and the common  
 influences of his grace; and so the Father  
 is drawing men to Christ wherever the gos-  
 pel comes; but they drew back, and al-  
 ways resisted the Holy Ghost. They wrested  
 his words with great perverseness; *The*  
*Jews therefore strove among themselves, say-*  
*ing, How can this man give us his flesh to*  
*eat?* Some among the disciples, who seem-  
 ed to own and follow him, said, *This is a*  
*hard saying, who can bear it;* too hard to  
 be digested; and afterwards went back and  
 followed no more with him. \* They quit-

B

ted

\* ἐκ τούτου may refer either to χρόνος or to ῥήματι  
 understood; from that time, or upon the occasion of that  
 discourse: Our translators follow the former; I think the  
 latter more natural.

ted their appearing profession and regard to him when they found his doctrine was not for their turn, and was wholly calculated to promote their spiritual good, not their worldly interests and ends. Upon this account he tells them; *You also have*  
 36. *seen me, or known me, † and believed not.* This was the true reason of their offence, not the want of sufficient means of conviction; for they saw his miracles, the evidences of his divine authority and commission; but because they were not rightly disposed towards him, and did not like his doctrine. And he upbraids them at another time, *Thou Capernaum, who art exalted up unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained to this day: It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in*  
 Matt. xi. *the day of judgment, than for thee.* They  
 23. were incurably obstinate in their infidelity under all their advantages for faith, and tho' it was the place of his ordinary residence, and mighty works.

Now

† ἐωρακότες may probably signify a transient and careless view of things without due consideration, or close attention of mind to the true reason and design of them: but in the 40th, where he says, *Every one who hath seen the Son, and believeth on him, hath everlasting life*; the word θεωρεῖν may signify a close and attentive consideration, or deep contemplating and weighing the circumstances and reasons of the case, which belongs to upright minds, and is productive of faith.

Now is it at all likely, or suitable to this state of things, that our Lord should tell such people as these, in such circumstances, and upon such an occasion, of the sacrament of the Lord's-supper; the sacred institution peculiar to his followers, who were so disposed towards him, and were ready to forsake him? Would it not have been quite disagreeable to his usual conduct, to go off from the immediate occasion of his discourse, to a thing so foreign to it, and to persons so improper, and who were never like to have any concern in it? Add to this,

3. The *time* of it, or when our Lord held this discourse with the *Caparnaites*. 'Tis a circumstance of some consideration, and will give further light to the matter, if we can fix the time when it was spoken. It appears from the beginning of the chapter, that it was about the time of the passover: *And the passover, the feast of the Jews* was nigh; or near approaching. The passover was an annual commemoration of their deliverance out of *Egypt*, and the greatest *festival* in the Jewish church, and which occasioned the greatest resort from all quarters. It was observed in the middle of the month *Nisan*, which answers to our *March*, and so accounts for the expression in the 10th verse, that there was *much grass*

4.

## *A Second Discourse*

*in the place* where the five thousand were made to sit down.

This discourse happened a little *before* the celebration of the passover; and we find by the evangelists, that the Lord's-supper was instituted *at* the time of the passover, a little before his sufferings. Now supposing it was only the third passover after his baptism, which is the lowest computation, for some think it was the second; and there will be above a year's distance from the time of this discourse to the time of the institution. So that the Lord's-supper was not yet in being, and was not instituted till at least a whole year after. It can't be thought reasonable that our Lord should speak directly in a large discourse, to a multitude of people who were now offended with him, and grown averse to him, and of whom many forsook him, as soon as he had finished it, of the prime ordinance of the gospel worship, so long before the institution of it, and of which, I think, we find not the least mention or allusion to it, in any part of the gospel besides.

And tho' he speaks to them of his death, or giving *his flesh for the life of the world*, which was at as great a distance as the institution of the sacrament; yet that was the prime design of his coming into the world, and was only occasionally dropt under covert expressions, and not the professed subject of it neither. 'Tis much  
more

more reasonable to suppose that his discourse should turn upon some useful subject, and which more immediately concerned themselves, and was more suitable to the temper of the people, and the present circumstances of things, than that he should speak to them of a thing irrelative to the subject and occasion of it, which was not now in being, and could not be understood by any who heard it. But to come nearer to the matter ;

4. Let us consider the proper *meaning* of this discourse, as here explained by our Lord himself. And because this is the most direct and considerable proof, and upon which the merits of the cause must turn, I shall represent it more distinctly.

Now I observe in the first place, That our Lord explains himself by *believing* in him, or receiving and embracing his doctrine : And this he not only dropt occasionally, but is carried quite thro' the chapter, and repeated over and over, to lead them to a right sense of his words, and guard them from misconstruction. Thus he tells them, *This is the work of God, that ye BELIEVE on him whom he hath sent. \* I am the bread of life ; he who COMETH to me shall never hunger, and he who BELIEVE-*

VETH

\* The allusion here is lost in our translation, which would appear by thus rendering the 27th, *Work not chiefly for the meat which perisheth*, ἐργαζέσθε. 28th, *What shall we do, that we might work the works of God*, ἐργαζώμεθα. 29th, *This is the work of God*, τὸ τὸ εἶναι τὸ εἰπεῖν.

37. VETH *in me shall never thirst.* And, *All that the Father hath given me, shall COME to me; and him who COMETH unto me, I will in no wise cast out;* which is a usual expression in the New Testament, to signify *believing* in him, or becoming his disciples, and taking him for our teacher and
40. Lord. So again, *This is the will of him who sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and BELIEVETH in him, may have everlasting life.* And in another expression of
56. great force, to the same purpose: *He who eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, DWELLETH in me, and I in him.* This
- 1 Ep. iv. 16. is explained by the same apostle, *He who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* The sense is, he loveth me, and delighteth in me, and is thereby intimately united to me, and communicates from me, as the branches from the vine, or the food which is digested and incorporated with the body; and I have a special favour and regard to him, and will be present with him, and manifest myself to him.

From all this it appears plainly, That he speaks in these figurative expressions, taken from the occasion of his discourse, of *believing* in him or receiving his doctrine which he brought from heaven, and which is the proper food of the soul, as bread is of the body; all the precepts of purity and humility, of meekness and patience, of self-denial and heavenly-mindedness, and particularly the doctrine of his death, or *giving his*

his life for the world. And though this may seem a harsh figure in our language, yet it was very agreeable to the Jewish idiom, and easily understood among the Jews. Nothing was more frequent in the eastern languages, than to represent receiving a doctrine, and harkening to instruction, by *eating* and *drinking it*, or imbibing and digesting it, as proper nourishment and food. So we read in the Old Testament: *Wisdom* is introduced saying, *Come eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled*; i. e. the instructions which I have prepared: *Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness*. And so in the Prophet: *Ho, every one who thirsteth, come to the waters of life; come buy and eat; buy wine and milk, without money and without price*. And in the New Testament, our Lord speaks in the same figure: *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness*. And he says of himself, *My meat is to do the will of him who sent me*. The apostle speaks of being *nourished up in the words of faith and sound doctrine*. The first principles of christianity are called *milk for babes*, and the *sincere milk of the word*; and more improved knowledge, *meat for strong men*. The expression of *his flesh and blood*, in this sense, is no harder to be understood, than when the apostle says of the Christians,

Eph. v.  
30.

Christians, *Ye are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.\**

Besides, I observe again, That this *eating* and *drinking* stands connected with *eternal life*. This is very remarkable in the whole discourse, and repeated upon all occasions: He keeps this still in view, and holds it up to them continually, as the great benefit and advantage by him, and the necessary and inseparable consequence and effect of it. To this purpose 'tis remarkable, That he prefers it to the *manna* in the wilderness. When the *Jews* said, *Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness*; he answers, *My*  
 32, 33. *Father gives you the true bread from heaven, and which giveth life to the world.* And,  
 49. *This is the bread which came down from heaven, not as your fathers did eat bread in the wilderness, and are dead; but he who eateth of this bread shall live for ever.* And  
 58. again, *This is the bread which came down from heaven, that he may eat thereof and not die.* 'Tis of a noble original, of a more excellent kind; it serves a higher purpose, and is of a greater extent. 'Tis bread from heaven, and the bread of life, and which gives life to the world, and of which he who eateth shall live for ever.

So

\* The Talmudists frequently mention *eating the Messiah*, for partaking of his benefits. *Lighf.* Horæ Heb. in Joh. vi. 53. And *Philo Judæus* says, Το φαγεῖν ἐστὶν συμβολὸν τρεφῆς ψυχῆς. De Leg. Alleg. And *Clem. Alexan.* Βρωῖς τοῦ κρείττους ἢ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος ἢ ζωῆς ἐστὶν ἡ θεία ἐστία. Strom. Lib. 5.



So he speaks all along of *life* as the consequence of it; *He who cometh to me shall never hunger, and he who believeth in me shall never thirst*: He shall want no necessary help, and shall be satisfied with suitable good. So the final felicity is represented, *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.* And, *This is the will of him who sent me, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* Verily, verily, I say unto you, he who believeth on me hath everlasting life: hath a present right, and is secure of the future possession. *As the living Father sent me, and I live by the Father, so he who eateth me shall live by me.* And, *he who eateth this bread shall live for ever.* Here is life, and everlasting life; and raising up at the last day, to signify a state of glorious blessedness and immortality. So our Lord tells the woman of Samaria, in the same figure of speech, *But whosoever drinketh of the waters which I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the waters which I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

Now as all these various representations import something special and peculiar to the persons of whom they are spoken, and plainly signify the great blessings of the gospel, and benefit by the death of Christ;

so they all agree to the true sense of the expressions as here represented and explained ; that is, as they signify *faith* in him, or an hearty embracing his doctrine with an answerable subjection and dependence upon him. This is the great doctrine of the gospel, and constant language of it, particularly in the writings of this apostle :

Mark xvi. 16. *He who believeth shall be saved. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

John iii. 16. —36. *And, He who believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life. These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you*

Chap. xx. 31. *might have life thro' his name. And, God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live thro' him.*

10. But how does this agree to the *sacrament* ? Do all who partake of that obtain everlasting life ; and is this the necessary consequence of it ? Will it secure life to all who ever once partake of it, whatsoever they are otherwise ? Did *Judas* obtain eternal life, supposing he partook of the Lord's supper, as well as the rest of the apostles, when our Lord says here, *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil ?* Does every wicked man and unbeliever, who continues under the power of sin, and is condemned by the gospel, nevertheless

theless obtain everlasting life, if he comes to the sacrament? Can this be thought possible by any who believes the doctrine of Christ, or considers the nature of the future blessedness? No, the sacrament may be eaten and drunken *unworthily*, and to *condemnation*, but true faith is always connected with eternal life. And is this absolutely *necessary* to this end, and can none be saved without it? Can it be said in this sense, *Except you eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the son of man, you have no life in you?* Then, in the strictness of the expression, good men who died under the Old Testament and before Christ suffered, are perished, and could not have everlasting life, tho' they all *eat of the same spiritual meat, and drank of the same spiritual drink*, <sup>1 Cor. x,</sup> i. e. were true believers, according to the <sup>3.</sup> dispensation they were under. And then what must become of those who thro' discouragement and fear, or by any necessary and unavoidable means, as by sickness, or distance, are prevented and disabled all their lives? If then the case stands thus, as we plainly see it does, that the *eating his flesh* and *drinking his blood*, which is here spoken of, is necessarily connected with everlasting life, it cannot be understood of *sacramental* eating, but only of *believing* in him.

I observe again in the next place, That our Lord himself represents it as a *spiritual* thing,

thing, and to be *spiritually* understood. Besides the frequent expressions which run thro' the whole chapter to point out the true meaning, and guard against mistakes, when our Lord perceived that some of the disciples appeared dissatisfied, as well as the *Jews* murmured, he spake more directly to them in the close, and gave them the true *key* of the whole discourse; *It is the spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* q. d. The spirit is the principle of life to the flesh, and gives it vigour and motion; and when the spirit is withdrawn, the flesh signifies nothing, and cannot preserve its own life; so 'tis the spiritual sense of my words which has only power to give you life: the carnal sense can be of no use to this purpose, no, though you could eat my natural flesh. The words which I have spoken to you in this discourse are spiritual and efficacious; to be understood in a spiritual sense, and able to give life to the soul, as the spirit does to the flesh; and you ought to understand me all along of spiritual actions, and what relates to spiritual improvement, or the nourishment and food of the mind. 'Tis not therefore my living flesh, as you absurdly imagine, but my word and doctrine, which will make you spiritually alive, and live for ever. So the apostle says  
of

of the Jewish meats, 'Tis a good thing that the heart be established with grace, i. e. the gospel, or doctrine of grace, opposed to *diverse and strange doctrines*, in the former part of the verse; and *not with* Heb. xii. *meats which have not profited them who have been occupied therein.*

So 'tis plain the apostle *Peter* understood our Lord, tho' the *Jews* murmured and mistook him; for when upon occasion of some of the disciples *going back*, and *walking no more with him*, he said to the rest of them, *Will ye also go away?* *Peter* readily replies, *Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life?* which plainly refers to what our Lord had said just before, *My words are spirit, and they are life*: Thy doctrine is the means of spiritual life, and the true way to eternal life; or in the language of the apostle, the Acts v. 20. *words of this life*; or *words whereby we must be saved.* Acts xi. 14.

This might be farther illustrated by the parallel discourse of our Lord to *Nicodemus*, when he stumbled at our Lord's expression of being *born again*, as the *Jews* here murmured at his talking to them of *eating his flesh*, and said, *Can a man be born when he* John ii. *is old? Can he enter the second time into his* 4. *mother's womb and be born?* as they said here, *How can this man give us his flesh to* —5. *eat?* Our Lord answers, *Verily, verily, I say*

say unto you, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; which is exactly parallel to the words of the text, *Except you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*: It follows, that *which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit*; that is, 'Tis the spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. When he still continued perplexed, and said, *How can these things be?* Our Lord replies, *Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?* Art thou a learned man, and one of the great council, and understandest not what is so frequent in the Jewish language, and the writings of the rabbi's? Art thou unacquainted with the practice of the Jewish church, who, when they baptize a profelyte, call him a *new man*, and say, he is *born again*? †

I shall only further observe, That this discourse of our Lord was understood in this sense by the *antients*, who have any occasion to mention it, as far as I have observed, in the first three centuries. *Clemens Alexandrinus* \* says directly, “ When our Lord says, *Eat my flesh and drink my blood*, he allegorically means the drink of faith, and of the promises; and that  
“ our

† Vid. Lightf. Horæ Heb. in Joh. iv.

\* *Εν ἀρχῆς ἡ πίστις καὶ ἡ εὐαγγελία τὸ πνεῦμα ἀλλοθροῶν,*  
 † *αἷμα εἰς τὸ ἀλλοθροῶν.* Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* c. 6.

“ our Lord is by way of allegory, to them  
 “ who believe, meat, and flesh, and nou-  
 “ rishment, and food.” *Tertullian* † says,  
 “ Our Lord urges his intent by allegory,  
 “ and calls his word *flesh*, to be devoured  
 “ by the ear, ruminated upon by the mind,  
 “ and digested by faith.” *Origen* ‡ says,  
 “ We are said to drink of his blood, when  
 “ we receive his word, in which life con-  
 “ sists; and that he feeds mankind with  
 “ the flesh and blood of his word, as with  
 “ pure meat and drink.” *Eusebius* || says  
 expressly, “ His word and doctrine are  
 “ flesh and blood.” And *Jerom* † says,  
 “ In the true sense, the body and blood  
 “ of Christ, is the word and doctrine of  
 “ the scripture.”

And now, I think it seems plain upon  
 the whole, That this discourse of our Lord  
 relates to his doctrine and instruction, and  
 must be understood in a spiritual and figu-  
 rative sense; and that the Lord's-supper is  
 not at all directly spoken of or intended,  
 but quite another thing, as the proper sub-  
 ject of it. Having spoken so largely of  
 the

† *Auditu devorandas, ruminandus intellectu, & fide di-  
 gerendus. De Resur. carnis, cap. 36, 37.*

‡ *Orig. Homil. 16, 17.*

|| *ὥστε αὐτῶν ἐστὶ τὰ σήματα καὶ τοῦ λόγου αὐτοῦ ἡ σάρκα καὶ  
 τὸ αἷμα. De Ecclesiast. Theol. l. 3. c. 12.*

† *Licet & de mysterio possit intelligi, tamen verius cor-  
 pus Christi, & sanguis ejus, sermo scripturarum est. In  
 Psal. 147.*

the first enquiry, I shall need to be briefer on the second.

II. Whether if this discourse at all refer to the sacrament, there is any *ground* in it for the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*? And here I shall not propose to argue from the nature of the thing, but only from our Lord's discourse in this place; and that there is no sufficient ground for it, even upon that supposition, will appear from the following considerations.

I. If the Lord's-supper is not the *direct* subject of the discourse, but quite another thing, as we have shewed before; then nothing can be *inferred* from it, or built upon it, which relates to it. If our Lord is not professedly speaking of the sacrament, but of believing in him, and embracing his doctrine, then it cannot be inferred from hence, that we *eat his flesh, and drink his blood*, in a literal sense, in the Lord's-supper; for that would be an inference without any foundation, and would be inferring one thing of a quite different nature from another; as if I should say, 'tis mid-day because 'tis high tide, or dark night because 'tis low ebb, where there is no necessary connexion. We might at this rate infer any thing from any thing, and argue without any principles to proceed upon, and draw conclusions without premises.

If



If the true sense of these words has been rightly represented, there can be no pretence for the doctrine of *Transubstantiation* in them, and nothing but the meer *sound* of the words in two or three verses, without any regard to the true sense of them, or any relation to the context, and the evident occasion and design of the whole discourse. If the Lord's-supper is not the direct subject of it, however it may be alluded to, but spiritual eating and drinking by faith; a meer allusion can be no sufficient ground to raise any doctrine whatsoever, much less to justify any absurd and unreasonable opinion about it. It would be foreign to the matter, if the doctrine were never so true, and could not, at least, be inferred or proved from hence. This rank weed does not grow in this good soil: 'Tis no *plant of our heavenly Father's planting*. And this alone, if there was no other consideration, would be sufficient to strike off this pretence, and discharge this scripture from this service. But this is not all; for,

2. If there were any reference to the Lord's-supper in this discourse, it would evidently conclude the *wrong* way, and be so far from establishing *Transubstantiation*, that it would quite overthrow it. " *Transubstantiation is a wonderful conversion of the whole substance of bread and wine in the Lord's-supper, into the whole body and blood of Christ, so that there is no substance of bread and*

D

" wine

“ wine remaining, but only the accidents  
 “ and appearances of them.” Now it falls  
 out very unhappily here, that the whole  
 turn of our Lord’s discourse is quite oppo-  
 site to this; for he speaks of himself as be-  
 come *bread*, and under the notion of *bread*;  
 not of bread becoming *himself*. He does  
 not say, The bread which you are to eat  
 will become my body, and the wine, my  
 blood; but he says on the contrary, *I am*  
 35. *the bread of life: I am the living bread*  
 51. *which came down from heaven; and the*  
 58. *bread of God which came down from heaven.*  
 He is the *living bread*, as well as the *bread*  
*of life*, who is himself living, as well as  
 gives life to others, which cannot be said  
 of any other bread. So my *flesh is meat*  
 55. *indeed,\* my blood drink indeed; as he is the*  
 \* ἀληθῶς. *true light and the true wine, to signify not*  
 so much the *propriety* as the *excellency* of  
 it; that ’tis perfect in its kind, and prefer-  
 able to all others. This representation of  
 himself runs thro’ the whole chapter. He  
 came from heaven to be the living bread,  
 on which we are to feed and be nourished;  
 not the bread to become Christ, or his  
 real flesh and blood. This plainly contra-  
 dicts and overturns the doctrine of Tran-  
 substantiation, instead of supporting, or gi-  
 ving any countenance to it.

And when he speaks of *eating his flesh,*  
*and drinking his blood,* it plainly relates to  
 his *death*, and not to the *sacrament*; and  
 means

means the same thing which he had before called *bread*. This appears in another verse where he joins them both together, and makes them equivalent expressions; *The BREAD which I give is my FLESH, which I give for the life of the world.* His *flesh* must be understood in the same sense, in which he is said to be *bread*; for they are parallel expressions in this discourse, and both given for the same end. In the same sense therefore in which he is *bread*, in the same sense we are to *eat* him; and as the one can only be understood in a spiritual sense, for Christ cannot be literally bread, so must the other, by necessary consequence, be understood too.

And at this rate what must become of the doctrine of *communion in one kind*, when our Lord here expressly requires the *eating his flesh* AND *the drinking his blood*, as necessary to *everlasting life*: 'Tis his blood shed and poured forth, and not as contained in his body; the blood of his slain and crucified body, not of his living and glorified one; and we are to *drink*, and not to *eat* his blood: and so our Lord himself instituted it afterwards, when he said, *Drink ye all of it.* And tho' in a *figurative* sense they may both fitly signify the same thing, that is, believing in him; yet in a proper sense, as they understand it, it cannot signify the same thing, but two distinct things. So that *eating his flesh*,

51

Matt.  
xxvi. 27.

and *drinking his blood*, cannot be understood in the sense of *Transubstantiation*, or eating his natural flesh in the sacrament, but only of spiritual feeding on his doctrine, or believing on him.

3. Then the *Caparnaites* were in the right, and did not *misunderstand* his doctrine. They plainly understood him in a sense somewhat like that of *Transubstantiation*, tho' not altogether so absurd; and this was the ground of their offence, and of their leaving him at last: *The Jews*  
 41. *murmured at him because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And*  
 52. *how can this man give us his flesh to eat?*  
 60. And some of his disciples said, *This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* This occasioned their murmuring and offence. They plainly understood him in a gross and carnal sense, as if he meant to give them his natural flesh and blood to eat and drink, as the church of *Rome* understands it now.

Now then I ask, Whether they understood him right or wrong, and took his true meaning and design or not? If they understood him *right*, then why are they blamed; why does our Lord reprove them for their murmuring, and charge them with unbelief, and upbraid them for being offended? Why does he say, *Ye also have*  
 39. *seen me and believed not?* And again, *There*  
 64. *are some of you who believe not. Does this*  
 61. *also offend you?* Why is this made an argument

gument of unreasonable prejudice and offence, and reckoned an error and fault in them? It was certainly a gross mistake of his meaning, and a great stupidity in them, to understand him in so unreasonable a sense, when he had dropt so many hints to secure his meaning, and such ways of expression were so usual and well known among the *Jews*. Will any man of sobriety and understanding pretend to justify the *Caper-naites*, and maintain that they understood him in the sense he designed? I am sure that several of the greatest interpreters in the church of *Rome* understand it otherwise, as cardinal *Cajetan*, *Jansonius*, and others; and the *council of Trent* itself, after long debates about it, thought fit to compromise the matter, and leave it undetermined. †

If, on the contrary, they understood him *wrong*, then *Transubstantiation* cannot be right, and that sense of the words must necessarily be false; for that cannot be right in the *one*, which was wrong in the *other*. If the *Jews* mistook his meaning, the *Papists* cannot take it right. They plainly run into the same error which he blamed here in the carnal *Jews*. If this was the thing intended in these expressions, then they understood him, in the main, right; and did not mistake his meaning; and there was no ground  
of

† Utcunque juxta varias Patrum & Doctorum interpretationes intelligatur. *Conc. Trid. Sess. 21. c. 1.*

of offence, and forsaking him; or if there was, it was not owing to their *prejudices* and misunderstanding, but to the *nature* of his doctrine; and that indeed would always be a ground of offence to upright and disinterested men to the end of the world.

4. I argue from our Lord's *ascension* to  
 61, 62. heaven. This is referred to here: *When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if you shall see the son of man ascending up where he was before?* Some understand these words to refer to their objection against his *parentage*, and his calling himself the *bread of life which came down from heaven*, which is mentioned in *ver. 58*. You cannot wonder that I said I came down from heaven, when you shall see me ascend to heaven, and go up in a visible glory with the attendance of angels, from whence I came. This he often calls *going to the father*. He had spoken of this before; *No*  
 Chap. iii. *Man hath ascended up into heaven, but he*  
 13. *who came down from heaven, even the son of man who is in heaven.* The same person was to ascend to heaven, who came down from heaven, and as a proof and evidence that he did so. And when he ascended to heaven, he *sat on the right hand of God*: He resides and dwells there, invested with the highest dignity, and sovereign authority, and therefore cannot be bodily present here on earth.

But

But the reference seems more likely to *ver. 56.* where he speaks of *eating his flesh*, and *eating him*, and *living by him*, and *living for ever*; and their objection to him upon that account, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* and, *This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* Which is the immediate connexion of the words, and relates to the disciples who were to see him ascend: In relation to this, he says, *What and if you shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before?* q. d. You cannot think of eating my flesh on earth, when you shall see me ascend to heaven. This will be a sensible demonstration to the contrary, and make the thought of it utterly unreasonable and absurd. It will appear impossible to eat my natural flesh, when you shall see me ascend, tho' you must always do it in the sense I intend. So one of antients\* says, "He tells them of his ascension to draw off their minds from the gross conceptions of corporal eating his flesh."

This is plainly the force of our Lord's reasoning in this place; and tho' some men have found a way to bring down Christ from heaven to be sacrificed to God afresh, and continually devoured by men, yet this will reduce the matter to this plain opposition, that either *Transubstantiation* must destroy this reasoning of our Lord, or this reasoning will

\* *ἵνα τὸ σωματικῆς ἐννοίας αὐτῶν ἀρελικύση.* Athan. in illud Evang. *Quicumque dixerit.*

will destroy *Transubstantiation*: And which of these is the more reasonable, *judge ye within yourselves.*

I shall only further observe here, That tho' two or three of the antient writers chiefly after the third century, seemed to think, that this discourse might relate to the Lord's-supper, or at least be an *allusion* to it, and be fitly *accommodated* to it, as some devotional writers among the moderns also do; yet none of them ever understood it in the sense of *Transubstantiation*, or for literal eating his natural flesh, and drinking his blood, but only of eating and drinking him spiritually, and by faith, with respect to his doctrine and death; which tho' 'tis peculiarly proper in the ordinance of the Lord's-supper, yet was their present duty at that time, and is a necessary duty at all times, as well without the use of the sacrament, as with it. I shall only give you the testimony of St. *Austin* \* to this purpose, tho' in his later writings, he was of the same opinion with the more antient Fathers, as appears in his book *De civitate Dei*. He lays down this excellent rule of interpreting scripture; " If the say-  
" ing

\* Si præceptiva est locutio, aut flagitium aut facinus vetans, aut beneficentiam jubens, non est figurata. Si autem flagitium aut facinus videtur juberi, aut utilitatem aut beneficentiam vetari, figurata est. *Nisi manducaveritis, inquit, carnem filii hominis, & sanguinem biberitis, vitam in vobis non habebitis.* Facinus vel flagitium videtur juberi, figura ergo est, præcipiens passioni Domini esse communicandum, & suaviter atque utiliter in memoria recondendum, quod caro ejus pro nobis crucifixa & vulnerata sit. *De Doctr. Christi, Lib. 3. c. 16.*



“ ing is preceptive, either forbidding a wicked action, or commanding to do that which is good, it is no *figurative* saying ; but if it seem to command any wicked thing, or forbid what is profitable and good, it is *figurative*. This saying, *Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,* seems to command a wicked and flagitious thing ; it is therefore *a figure*, enjoining us to communicate in the passion of our Lord, and lay it up in dear remembrance that his flesh was crucified and wounded for us.”

I might add, that when the heathens, by misinformation, objected to the Christians their eating of man's flesh, they rejected it with detestation, and retort it upon their adversaries with great aggravation ; which they could not have done with any reason and truth, or any modesty and shame, if this doctrine had been true, and they had so understood the matter. \*

## E

## If

\* Ἄνθρωποιὼν σαρκῶν βροτὸς ἔσθ' ἰσχυροῦς. We Christians don't own the eating of human flesh. *Iust. Mart. Apol. 2.*

Παρ' ὑμῶν ἐκ ἔσθ' ἀνθρωποφαγία. Tatian cont. Græcos.

*Minutius Felix* represents it as a calumny of the devil. *Siratio, non instigatio dæmonis judicaret—His enim & hujusmodi fabulis iidem dæmones ad execrationis horrorem, imperitorum aures adversus nos referferunt—Sic est negotium dæmonum ; ab ipsis enim rumor falsus & feritur & fovetur. Minutii Oet.*

*Tertullian* says, They might be ashamed to object it to the Christians. *Hæc qui editis quantum abestis à convivii Christianorum.—Erubescat error vester Christianis, qui ne animalium quidem sanguinem in epulis esculentis habemus. Apol. c. 9.*

If any after all should think it strange that our Lord should repeat and *continue* this figurative way of speaking throughout the chapter, and after so great a mistake of his meaning, and offence to the *Jews* and to some of the disciples; I shall only say, That as these expressions were well understood among the *Jews*, and agreeable to their manner of speaking, and he had given sufficient hints quite thro' the discourse, to lead them to his true meaning, and prevent mistake, to honest and attentive minds, and accordingly we find the twelve understood his meaning, and took no offence at it; so it was very usual in our Lord's discourses to a mixed multitude, and when he had to do with unreasonable and prejudiced men, who shewed no disposition to receive and attend to his doctrine, but only to cavil and be offended, not to open his mind so freely that they could not mistake it, to put them upon enquiry, and for the exercise of their diligence, and the trial of their sincerity; perhaps too that they might not thro' their perverseness be hardened in their opposition to him. This is the reason assigned for his speaking to them so often in parables, *Matt.* xiii. 13.

I shall conclude all with two *remarks* of a different kind, from what has been said. The one is, That there is no foundation in scripture for the antient custom of *communicating infants*. This practice began early, and

and continued a considerable time in the Christian church, chiefly in *Africa*, and is observed in some of the Eastern churches to this day.\* But as it was plainly built upon a mistaken sense of these words, as if they related to the sacrament, and made it absolutely necessary to the salvation of every one; so when the words are rightly understood, there appears no foundation or pretence for so strange a thing. Indeed it has been disused in the church of *Rome* for several centuries, which however right in itself, is no great mark of her *infallibility*, and strict adherence to the *unanimous* sense of the ancient Fathers in interpreting scripture, to which nevertheless their priests are sworn at their ordination.

The other thing I would remark here is of a practical nature, and more importance, That we should carefully attend to the *spiritual* meaning, and true design of this discourse, that is, that we believe on Christ to everlasting life, or receive his doctrine, and depend upon his death, who came from heaven to reveal the will of God to men, and to *give his flesh for the life of the world*. It will signify nothing to our acceptance with God, and eternal life, to renounce the doctrine of *Transubstantiation* and the errors of *Popery*, if we have no participation with Christ by believing in him; if we have *no part in him*, and are not made *par-* Joh. xiii.

E 2

*takers*<sup>3.</sup>

\* Ludolp. Hist. Ethiop. Lib. 3. c. 6.

Heb. iii. *takers of Christ*; of his spiritual benefits by  
 14. a living faith.

As we have the clearest revelation of the will of God by him, and the free use of our *bible*, and many opportunities and helps for understanding it, which are denied the people in Popish countries; if we don't make an answerable improvement in a greater increase of knowledge and holiness, we shall incur a greater guilt and condemnation, and be more blameable, and more miserable than they. So our Lord tells *Caper-naum*, *Thou who art exalted up to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; and it shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.* Protestants will perish with greater aggravation than *Papists*, as they have greater advantages for their salvation; and I doubt not, but the *errors* of the *Papists* will be less criminal than the *ignorance* of Protestants, their *zeal* may justly reproach our *neglects*, and Popish *superstition* will fare better than Protestant *profaneness* or *irreligion*.

Let us not satisfy ourselves with understanding the true *meaning* of the words, but attend to the great *design* of them, to bring us to true faith in Christ, and to imbibe and digest his doctrine, or *mingle the word we hear with faith, that we may profit by it.* Let us be chiefly concerned about *eternal life*, to which he leads our thoughts quite through this discourse, and not be diverted by worldly cares, or unreasonable prejudice, from pursuing the great end of his doctrine

Heb. iv.  
2.

doctrine and death, and the principal care and business of our lives. As he took occasion from earthly things, from the *loaves* and *manna*, to speak of spiritual and heavenly things, let us be excited by our daily diligence and care about lower things, to a more earnest and vigorous concern about spiritual good, and to *labour for the meat which perisheth not, but endureth to everlasting life*. If we attend only to the present advantage by him, and rest in a meer outward profession, as the *Jews* here *followed* him for *the loaves*, we shall be in danger of being *offended*, and *forsaking* him too; especially if difficulties and trials should arise: but if we consider him as having the *words of eternal life*, we shall say with the apostle, *Lord to whom shall we go but only unto thee?* and closely adhere to him, and *continue in his word*. If our hearts are *established by grace*, we shall not be *carried about with diverse and strange* Heb. xiii. *doctrines*, nor like children be *tossed to and fro*, and *carried about with every wind of doctrine*, from whatsoever quarter it blows, Eph. iv. *by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness* 14. *whereby they lie in wait to deceive*. If we heartily embrace his doctrine by a sound faith and subjection of soul, and feed upon the *bread of life* for our daily nourishment and strength, we shall have *everlasting life* by him, and be *raised up at the last day*.

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A

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S A L T E R S - H A L L,

F E B R U A R Y 20, 1734-5.

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Ὁ το κλισμα θεοσκυων, και επι ονοματι τω  
Χριστη τωτο πεισι, Ειδωλαλατρης εστι, Χριστη  
ονομα τω ειδωλω θεμελιος.

Greg. Nyssen. de Placilla Fun. orat. V. 2. p. 965.

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ISAIAH xlii. 8.

*I am the LORD, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.*

**A**MONGST other things objected by Protestants against the church of Rome, her idolatrous worship is not the least considerable. This is indeed a very high charge, and the Papists would have reason for their complaints, if it could not be sufficiently supported: But this I think it easily may.

*Their veneration of Saints and Images* cannot, I apprehend, be clear'd from the charge of idolatry; notwithstanding all their endeavours to represent their doctrine on this head in the most harmless and inoffensive light.

'Tis my province in the course of this lecture, to discuss this subject: I will endeavour to do it in the most impartial manner; and will appeal to your own understandings for the verdict, whether the doctrine and practice of the church of

Rome is chargeable with idolatry on this account, or not.

In order to this, 'twill be proper in the first place to state the true notion of Idolatry ; and this I take to be, *the giving religious worship to any but the great G O D.* I ground the definition upon our Saviour's words ; the devil, we are told made him an insolent proposal of all the kingdoms of the earth, in case he would fall down and worship him : Christ parlies not with the temptation, but rejects it with the highest resentment, *Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy G O D, and him only shalt thou serve.*<sup>1</sup> The objection that the term [only] is not in the original *Hebrew*, from whence CHRIST quotes the passage, is an idle cavil : for allow it be not *expressly* there, yet if it be not *implicitly* and *virtually* there ; and the words are not to be understood in this exclusive sense, our Saviour's answer is nothing to the purpose ; and the devil might have reply'd upon this supposition, tho' God must be worshipp'd, yet others may be worshipp'd too. Besides ; our blessed Lord by having adopted the words for his own has made them gospel, and has taught us in what sense we are to understand that law of *Moses*, if we were at a loss before how to interpret it ; and he does by this likewise intimate to us, that the law is of perpetual obligation.

Nor can any thing be more express in confirmation of this notion of Idolatry, than the first commandment, *Thou shalt have no other Gods*

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 10. Vid. Deut. vi. 13. and x. 12, 20. and xiii. 4.

*Gods before ME*; <sup>2</sup> *i. e.* says the learned *Grotius*, besides me.<sup>3</sup> I think the commandment should rather be read, *there shall be to thee no other God before me*; the verb is in the singular number and so explain'd by the *Chaldee*; and so it excludes every other being from any share in religious worship, appropriating it entirely to DEITY: The *Arabic* version understands this to be the sense of the command, rendering it thus; *Let nothing be adored by thee besides myself*. Paying religious worship to any being, or adoring it, is making a God of it. I believe, all interpreters agree in this as the true meaning of the commandment, that we are not to worship any other God, but the LORD JEHOVAH. The Papists themselves allow, that to give proper divine honour to a creature is idolatry and a breach of this commandment; but they hope to free themselves from such an imputation, by a set of distinctions framed for that purpose; the force of which I shall enquire into hereafter: "We are forbidden, say they, by the first commandment to worship any creature for a God, or give it the honour which is due to GOD." †

The object of idolatry is a false God, that which really is no God, tho' honour'd as such by men. The apostle *Paul* supports this notion in that remarkable passage, *We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other*

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xx. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Grot. ad loc. The LXX read it *τλην εμν*: and the *Chaldee*, *Syriac* and *Arabic* versions put the same construction upon it.

<sup>4</sup> Abridgment of the Christian doctrine; said in the title page to be printed, *Basleæ* Anno 1680; tho' 'twas published in the college *De propaganda fide* at *Rome*.

*other God but one.*<sup>5</sup> By which we are to understand, not that an idol has no real being, or existence in the world; for the matter of an idol is for the most part some real thing: But the meaning is, an idol is no God in itself and only so in the conceit of the fond idolater, and therefore not worthy of divine honours. In this sense the Gods of the Heathens are said to be idols; *for all the gods of the people are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.*<sup>6</sup> The original word, translated *idols*, signifies *not-Gods*, or *no-Gods*, or *vanities*, *nothingnesses.*<sup>7</sup> 'Tis fit to take notice here, that the foundation, upon which the great GOD claims all religious worship as appropriate to himself, is such as makes it for ever impossible to give it to any other without an high affront to his Majesty: 'Tis upon the foot of creation; *All the Gods of the people are idols, but the LORD made the heavens: GOD is absolute monarch and lord over all created nature; and he expects the homage of all his creatures; All nations, whom thou hast made, shall come and worship before thee, oh Lord, and shall glorify thy name, for thou art great and doest wondrous things; thou art GOD ALONE.*<sup>8</sup>

Having thus stated the notion of idolatry, the merits of the cause betwixt us and the church of *Rome* are now to be tried; and by what follows, I think, it will evidently appear, that the veneration which Papists pay to *Saints* and *Images*, is justly charged to be idolatrous and antichristian.

It

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 4.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Vid. Druf. Obs. sacr. l. 16. c. 9. Vid. etiam Merc. Lex. advoc. *Idol.*

<sup>8</sup> Psal. viii. 10.

It will be proper, as the subject is double, to consider separately,

The veneration paid to *Saints* in the church of *Rome*; and

The regard they shew to *Images*, in their religious worship.

I. As to the high veneration the *Romanists* profess to *Saints*; there are several particulars considerable, such as, erecting temples and chapels in honour of them; dedicating altars to them; appointing holidays to be celebrated in remembrance of them; making vows, confessing sins, and directing solemn praises to them for blessings receiv'd; offering sacrifices to GOD for the honour of the saints; and particularly the sacrifice of the mass, which is surely a most religious act, forasmuch as CHRIST is said to be offer'd in it to the Father; placing a confident hope and trust in them; and in consequence hereof calling upon them not only as intercessors, but as the immediate protectors from all evils, and the liberal distributors of all blessings, both of grace and glory; besides a most stupid and superstitious regard to what they call their relics.

These are all instances of the *Romish* veneration of *Saints*, which might be severally consider'd; but I shall insist upon one only, namely, *their invocation or praying to Saints*.

I presume, I need not be more explicit and say, *departed Saints*: There is no danger of the church of *Rome's* being so much as suspected of too high a regard to the Saints of GOD while they

they are living; so far from it, that 'tis her known character to persecute and destroy the living, while they pretend to honour the dead; and in truth, the greatest piety cannot secure from her merciless hands, where any have courage enough to think for themselves in the matters of their GOD, or prefer the infallible directions of his word to the traditions and inventions of men, contrary to scripture, and oftentimes repugnant to common sense. This is crime enough to expose the most strictly good man to the most grievous sufferings; for as to these the church of *Rome* may vie with all the nations of the earth; never more cruelty practis'd by any set of men; and perhaps she is answerable for shedding more innocent blood, than all the religions and churches in the world put together.

But to expose this merciless disposition is not my province; you may expect it with the utmost advantage from a more able hand.

I return to my subject, INVOCATION OF SAINTS. Prayer is one of the principal branches of religious worship, which is the peculiar prerogative of the great GOD: If therefore men make the object of it a creature, then are they guilty of downright idolatry. But that I may be in no danger of carrying the charge against the *Romanists* too high, I will

I. Represent and fairly state the doctrine and practice of the church of *Rome* in this affair of *praying to the Saints*. The main difficulty here will be, to fasten any thing upon the *Papists*; which

which they will own as their doctrine ; for they have got a trick of denying every thing, which they are charged with, as an absurdity in their worship. The *Romish* religion, they tell us, is quite alter'd from what it once was ; nor will they adhere to any decrees of Popes, or councils, or the determinations of their most applauded champions, any further than they answer their purpose, even tho' all the while their practice is exactly agreeable to them.

The council of *Trent* conven'd in the 16th century, is what they pretend most to regard ; they universally agree to this, as to *doctrinals* ; tho' the *Gallican* church has never receiv'd or submitted to it, as to *discipline*. 'Tis a clause in Pope *Pius's* creed, which no Papist will scruple to subscribe : “ I undoubtedly receive and profess  
 “ all things deliver'd, defined and declar'd by  
 “ the sacred canons and general councils, and  
 “ particularly by the holy council of *Trent*.”<sup>3</sup>

This famous council then has decreed in reference to the matter now in debate, as follows ;  
 “ The holy synod commands all bishops, and  
 “ others whose office and business it is to teach ;  
 “ that they diligently instruct the faithful concerning the intercession and invocation of  
 “ Saints ; teaching them, that the Saints reigning with CHRIST do offer up their prayers  
 “ to GOD for men ; that it is good and profitable humbly to invoke the Saints ; and to fly  
 “ to their prayers, help and assistance, for the

<sup>3</sup> *Vid.* Profess. of Catholick Faith, p. 5. *A small book lately printed, and now in use for the reception of converts into the church.*

“ obtaining blessings from GOD thro’ his son  
 “ JESUS CHRIST.” To oblige to this practice  
 the same council adds, that “ those who deny  
 “ the Saints should be invocated, or assert that  
 “ they do not pray for men, or that an address  
 “ to them that they would pray for us is ido-  
 “ latry, or repugnant to the word of GOD, and  
 “ injurious to the honour of JESUS CHRIST  
 “ the one Mediator between GOD and men, or  
 “ say ’tis a foolish thing to supplicate the Saints  
 “ reigning in heaven by the voice or the mind :”  
 All such persons, who dare say any of these  
 things, are in the judgment of this *infallible*  
 council pronounced *to think impiously*. And a  
 little lower, after having mention’d some other  
 decrees about relicks, pictures and images, ’tis  
 added as what I suppose is to be referr’d to the  
 whole chapter; “ But if any one shall teach  
 “ or think contrary to these decrees, let him be  
 “ accursed.”<sup>9</sup> So that if the power and autho-  
 rity of the church of *Rome* be equal to her im-  
 posing and malicious spirit, every man who  
 thinks contrary to these impious opinions, must  
 necessarily be damned. Blessed be GOD, the  
 rewards and punishments of eternity are not at  
 the disposal of fallible men.

In defiance of all their curses, we may ven-  
 ture to pronounce concerning this their doctrine  
 and practice, that it is idolatrous and cannot  
 be acceptable to the great GOD.

It is true indeed they have endeavour’d to  
 soften and disguise their own doctrine, that so it  
 might appear with more advantage, or at least  
 have

<sup>9</sup> Vid. Conc. Trid. Sess. 25.



have its native deformity concealed. In all the disputes betwixt *Papists* and *Protestants* this has been their method. The present Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Dr. *Wake*, who deserves to be mentioned with honour for the noble part he bore in the controversies in King *James II*'s reign, represents this humour of the *Papists* in a very strong manner; "Popery, says he, in its proper colours is so unlike Catholic Christianity, that 'tis vain ever to hope to promote it, if it appears in its own shape. It is necessary therefore, that the religion, like the prophet, should come to us in *sheeps cloathing*, and the heresy be made look as orthodox as is possible. Some things are denied, others mollified, all disguised, and a double benefit thereby obtain'd; Popery is to be received as a very innocent harmless thing; and the Protestants, especially the ministers and first reformers, represented to the world, as a sort of people that have supported themselves by calumnies and lies, and made a noise about errors and corruptions, which are no where to be found, but in their own brains or books, but which the church of *Rome* detests no less than we." \*

The same method are the emissaries of *Rome* taking now; palliating every thing that appears shocking; striking out or explaining away those articles of faith, which they have not been able to vindicate against the force of objectors; and thus making a sort of new religion that may be less distastful. The books they now pub-

\* Present State of the Controv. &c. publish'd 1697, p. 10.

lish amongst us, represents most of the controverted articles of faith, in a very different manner from what their church does really profess, and their people continually practise. For you must know, that there is a vast difference betwixt Popery as it is set to view in *England*, and what it is as exercised in *Italy*, or any other Popish countries, where the civil government is subjected to it, and it is able without check or reserve to practise all its arts, and to appear without disguise with all its pageantry and pomp. But Protestants must not be told all at once; there are several mysterious and important things, which are not fit to be communicated to those, whom they are endeavouring to gain over to the *Romish* church: These things must be reserv'd, till their profelytes are got into safe custody; and afterwards when they have given away all liberty of judging for themselves, and are brought to believe every thing the church says to be true, then they may be trusted with the discovery of even the greatest absurdities; for they have now gone too far to recede; and if they discover any hesitation, or give suspicion of their being shocked at such discoveries, their sincerity is immediately question'd; and where the church has power in her hands, they must expect some motherly correction for their untowardness; and 'tis well if they escape being burnt for hereticks.

It will be proper here to consider the several evasions, whereby they think to excuse their worship of the *Saints* from the charge of idolatry; and the several arguments, by which they support

support the doctrine and practice of their church in this matter.

1. They tell us, that the veneration they pay to *Saints* is very different from that honour, which they give to GOD. “ There is no comparison between the one and the other : No, God forbid, *say they*, for this would be a high treason against his divine Majesty.”<sup>2</sup>

To support themselves herein, they have forged a number of distinctions, which if fairly examined cannot be of any service to their cause. They mention several kinds and degrees of worship ; *supreme* and *subordinate* ; *absolute* and *relative* ; *terminative* and *transient* ; *proper* and *improper* ; *primary*, and *secondary* ; these and many other distinctions they have contrived to puzzle the cause and delude the ignorant people.

I answer : *The nature of the thing will not admit such subtle distinctions.* Religious worship is but one, as the object of it is GOD alone. 'Tis plain our Saviour understood it so ; for in his answer to the devil (which I have mention'd before) he tells him that GOD alone is to be worshipp'd. If there were degrees in religious worship, we may presume that the devil himself had so much modesty as not to ask the highest degree of it ; nay he ask'd no more, than what the church of *Rome* seems to me to pay to *Saints* and *Images* every day ; *Fall down and worship me*, or by falling down worship and do honour to me : the outward act as it seems would have contented the devil. But this *Christ* refuses ;

<sup>2</sup> Prof. of Cath. faith, p. 39.

refuses ; and for this reason, because we are to worship the LORD our GOD, and serve him ONLY : And this must be understood to determine, that not the least degree of religious worship is to be given to a creature ; whether it be supposed to be a good or a bad spirit ; a living Saint in heaven or a wooden one on earth.

Again ; *The sacred scripture nowhere mentions any such distinctions* : If it did, we should have heard of it from our adversaries long ago, but they do not pretend any such thing ; their particular doctrines have no foundation in the book of GOD, and therefore they give us very little trouble on this head : They derive their original elsewhere, and are generally the offspring of vicious or aspiring minds. *St. Paul* tells us, that he deliver'd the whole counsel of GOD ; if therefore he says nothing of these distinctions, 'tis plain they have no foundation, nor are they of any use in the church of CHRIST.

Further ; *The common people neither know nor observe these distinctions* ; consequently they cannot plead the distinctions to excuse themselves from the charge of idolatry. Tho' by the by, I doubt not but the poor ignorant devotees of the church of *Rome* are in a less hazardous state than their wise and learned men ; who have opportunities and advantages of knowing better, but wilfully shut their eyes against the light. These subtle and nice distinctions may serve as toys for children to play with at present, but will not stand the test at the great day.

Once more ; *Even their own learned men differ with respect to these distinctions, and do not equally maintain*

*maintain them.* Their grand advocate Cardinal *Bellarmino* scruples not to term the worship due to Saints, *an eminent kind of adoration*:<sup>2</sup> And says another man of great renown amongst them; “ We honour the Saints not only with  
 “ that worship, which we pay to men, who  
 “ excel in virtue, &c. or any other dignity;  
 “ but also with *divine* worship and honour,  
 “ which is an act of religion.”<sup>3</sup> This we take to be downright idolatry; but I suppose the writer himself had a distrust, that he had gone too far; and therefore to help himself off, he adds, “ but we do not give divine worship and  
 “ honour to the Saints for *themselves*; but for  
 “ GOD, who hath made them Saints.” But who can imagine, that he, whose name is **Jehovah**, will be thus trifled with, or suffer his glory to be thus given to others.

But there is another noted distinction which they have formed for their relief; we hear of it from every writer in the controversy; I mean their *Latria* and *Dulia*, two sorts of worship, as they assert; the former appropriate to GOD; but the other being of a lower nature may be paid to Angels and Saints; who having a middle sort of excellence between divine and human, are intitled to this middle sort of worship, betwixt that *honour* which is paid to GOD, and that *civil respect* which we pay to men according to their several ranks and excellencies. But this is a distinction without a difference; the promiscuous use of the words both by profane and sacred authors destroys the distinction entirely.

<sup>2</sup> Præf. de Eccl. triumph.

<sup>3</sup> Azor. Inst. Mor. l. 9. c. 10.

tirely.<sup>4</sup> Besides ; if there be any real difference in the signification of the two words, I apprehend that the latter, which the *Romanists* apply to Saints, is more emphatical and strong than the other ; for it properly signifies one devoted to the service of another ; and in this sense the *verb* is used by the evangelists,<sup>5</sup> *No man can serve two masters* ; where the meaning must be, no man can be entirely devoted or addicted to two, especially two that are opposite to each other in their tempers and commands.<sup>6</sup>

I cannot but observe here that several learned men of the *Romish* church have given up this long exploded distinction. *Ludovicus Vives* shows out of *Suidas* and *Xenophon*, that these two words are usually taken for one another.<sup>7</sup> Their learned *Durantus* allows the same as to *St. Paul's* use of the word.<sup>8</sup> Cardinal *Bellarmino*<sup>9</sup> and *Vasquez*<sup>1</sup> are forced to own the distinction to be unscriptural, and that both the *Hebrew* and *Greek* words are promiscuously used : But the learned *Nicolas Serrarius* speaks out most freely on this head, and tells us ; that it is “ the opinion of the most and the wisest  
“ among them, that it is one and the same  
“ virtue of religion, which containeth both  
“ *Latria* and *Dulia*.”<sup>2</sup>

But

<sup>4</sup> Hesychius. Glossa. LXX. Laurent. Valla ad Matt. iv.  $\Delta\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\tau$  pro Dei cultu usurpatur, Acts xx. 19. Rom. xii. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. vi. 24. and Luke xvi. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Vid. Gal. iv. 8, and *Whitby* ad loc.

<sup>7</sup> Vid. Not. in Aug. de Civ. Dei.

<sup>8</sup> De rit. Eccl. Cath. p. 410.

<sup>9</sup> De Sanct. Beat. l. 1. c. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Disp. 93. in 3. p. Sum. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In Litan. 2. q. 27.

But before I dismiss this head, 'twill be fit to observe that the *Romanists* have another sort of worship, which is peculiar to the Virgin *Mary* : She being a most eminent Saint above all the rest, must not be put off with that *low* worship they pay to Saints in common ; but must have something, tho' of the same kind, yet of a much higher degree : This they call *Hyperdulia* ; and 'tis fit every father should have the naming of his own child ; this sort of worship is their own production, they may therefore have full liberty to call it what they please. It is truly a very *hyperbolical* sort of worship ; and raises the blessed Virgin to a degree of honour, which she never expected ; and which I dare say she would highly resent, if she was acquainted with it ; and severely punish her fond votaries for their profaneness and blasphemies, if she had half the authority in heaven, which they talk of.

2. They tell us, that the honour which they pay to the Saints, they *terminate* on God, as its end : “ They reverence *the Saints* with an inferior honour as belonging to him, for his sake, and upon account of the gifts which they have receiv'd from him.”<sup>1</sup> The Bishop of *Condom*, the great reformer and new modeller of Popery in the last century, has taught them this evasion.<sup>2</sup> And here comes in their distinction of *relative* and *absolute* worship : which if it would serve their cause, will likewise justify all the idolatry of the Heathen world.

C

I may

<sup>1</sup> Prof. of Cath. faith, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Exp. Doct. Cath. Ch. §. 3. p. 4.

I may as well worship the *Sun* for GOD's sake and as belonging to him, as St. *Dominick*, St. *Francis*, or any other Saint the church of *Rome* can boast of; I am sure we are more beholden to that glorious luminary of heaven for the benefit the world receives from its heat and light, than for any good mankind has ever receiv'd from hundreds of nominal Saints in the *Romish* calendar. Besides; if I worship either the Sun, or Popish Saints, I shall not be excused from idolatry, by saying I act thus for GOD's sake, or because they belong to GOD: If this be the *reason* of my paying them worship, the *act* of worship terminates on the object 'tis directed to. This I suppose the *Romanists* will allow, when they are put in mind that according to their pretended scheme, the worship they pay to Saints is a very low degree of worship; and I presume they would not make the great GOD the object of any worship, but that which is supreme and most excellent. Besides; if I did a thing for GOD's sake, I ought surely to have GOD's warrant for it; or at least some signification, that my doing such a thing would be acceptable to his Majesty.

3. They excuse themselves further by saying, that if the honour they pay the Saints be judged too great, their church has no where *injoin'd* it, but only declared it to be in her opinion fit and lawful.

I allow that the Council of *Trent* says, 'tis good and profitable: A modest way of speaking! and would do no great harm, if every one was left to judge of the fitness and advantage of



of such a practice, and accordingly to follow it or not. But this is not the case. Even that same council goes further, and condemns all who think otherwise, as chargeable with *impious sentiments*. And besides; the creed of Pope *Pius IV*, compos'd by virtue of an order of this same council, (and lately publish'd) which every one in holy orders is obliged to subscribe and swear to, does expressly insist upon this as an article of faith; " I do constantly hold, that " the Saints reigning together with CHRIST " are to be invocated." And this I think amounts to an injunction. But 'tis the constant way of all imposers to represent their impositions, only as what they recommend and think good and profitable: They injoin the observance of them, but are asham'd to own it.-----This worship of Saints, the Papists say, is not injoined: But if I do not practise, and declare my belief of it, I cannot be admitted as a *member* (or at least not as a *priest*) of *that* church; out of which it seems salvation is not to be found.-----Not injoin'd; but every priest solemnly swears to preach and teach it; and therefore if the common people are to be doers of the word as well as hearers of it, they must consider themselves as obliged to this practice.-----Not injoin'd; but if a man disbelieves it, or will not conform to it, he is immediately pronounced a Heretic, may lose his life for it, or however must expect everlasting damnation in the world to come.

4. We are told, the church of *Rome* means no more by addresses to the Saints, than merely

to beg their prayers : *Ora pro nobis*. They only pray to Saints to pray for them ; “ prayer to “ Saints in any other sense, as if they were the “ authors or disposers of grace and glory, they “ condemn as superstitious and impious.”<sup>3</sup> So the new converts are taught ; but they can’t expect to be believed by any, who have convers’d much with Popish writings ; unless such only, who leave it to the infallible church to determine for them the sense of what they read. We disclaim her pretensions, and therefore take the liberty to question the truth of this excuse ; and if I am not greatly mistaken, we are able to confront them to the intire satisfaction of all sincere inquirers after truth. Let any man read their books of devotion, their *hours*, their *offices*, their *rosaries*, their *breviaries*, and their *missals*, and then say whether it be not most daring confidence in the church of *Rome*, to say they only beg the Saints prayers ; ’tis *protestatio contra factum* in the most egregious manner ; they might with equal modesty tell us, when we read their books, that we don’t see a word, a syllable or a letter in them ; that ’tis all a *deceptio visus* : There’s nothing but blank paper, never stain’d by ink ; the words are only imprinted upon our imaginations. If my senses deceive me not, I read such and such direct addresses to the Saints ; and if my reason fails me not, I am sure those prayers are more than a bare asking the Saints to pray for us.

In answer to this plea of the *Romish* church, I shall suggest a few hints,

1. They

<sup>3</sup> Prof. of Cath. faith, p. 42.

1. They formally pray to the Saints, and with an equal shew of devotion, as they pay to GOD himself. These addresses to Saints are attended with all the solemnities of religious worship; they are mix'd in the same service with prayers to GOD; the supplicants are in the same humble posture upon their bended knees, or prostrate on the ground with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven; and all this in places dedicated to GOD's service, and at the hours and seasons appointed for it.

2. They apply to the Saints for their *help and assistance* as well as their prayers: so the council of *Trent* teaches:<sup>5</sup> by which they mean more than their prayers, or else 'tis an idle tautology. No question but they meant more, tho' they did not care to speak more plainly: they left it open for others to act at pleasure; and to this is owing the monstrous heaps of blasphemous expressions, which zealous *Romanists* in the heat of their devotions have address'd to the Saints.

If they do not expect their *help*, as well as their prayers, what is meant by begging the Saints to *make haste to their relief*? and why do they pray to particular Saints in particular cases? Their Saint *Peter* sure must have the greatest interest in the court of heaven, next to the *Virgin Mary*; methinks they should run to him upon all occasions. But the truth is, they have borrow'd their theology from the *pagans*; and so they have a variety of Saints and Saintesses, to answer the Gods and Goddeses in the heathen world. And as the several kingdoms of the earth

were

<sup>5</sup> Ad eorum orationes, opem auxiliumque confugere. *Seff.* 25.

were formerly supposed to be under the protection of different Gods; in like manner are they now consign'd over to the guardianship of several *Romish* Saints. Time was when these nations of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* were taught to apply for help to *St. George*, *St. Andrew*, and *St. Patrick*. Blessed be GOD our eyes were open'd by the Reformation: And I trust we are now under a surer protection; that GOD himself will be our defence; and that neither *Rome* nor hell shall ever prevail against us.

The church of *Rome* has also particular Saints for particular disorders; which plainly intimates, that their trust is in the Saint apply'd to; or else they might beg the prayers of one Saint as well as another. They have *St. Anthony* for inflammations; *St. Petronilla* for the ague; *St. Sigismund* for fevers; *St. Margarita* for help in child-bearing; *St. Roch* for the plague; and infectious disorders; *St. Apollonia* for the tooth-ach; *St. Lucia* for sore eyes; *St. Ottilia* for deafness: There is a number of others, who preside over the *learned professions*; or over *particular societies*; or who will protect the *soldier* and the *sailor* from wars and tempests. Besides many hundreds more, which are not worth naming: There is however one Saint, who I fear does not come in for his share of devotions, tho' perhaps as much needed, and I question not as able to help as any of them; I would especially recommend it to the new converts to pay their first compliments to him; 'tis one *St. Matburin*, who it seems has an admirable nostrum for the cure of folly.

To these their tutelary Saints the *Romanists* address their prayers, imploring their help, and asking from them such blessings as none but GOD can give. The mariners in the ship with *Jonah*, when in danger of being cast away, *cried every man unto his GOD*.<sup>8</sup> Natural religion teaches to run to GOD, whom the winds and the waves obey: But a *papist* is directed to have recourse to the help of St. *Nicholas*. And thus in cases of sickness, or any other distress, we are to call upon GOD, the great physician and an almighty Saviour; he has encouraged us to *call upon him in the day of trouble*, he has bid us do so, he has promis'd *deliverance*, and then expects that we should *glorify him*.<sup>9</sup> To pray to the Saints therefore for these blessings, and to direct thanksgivings to them, when we are deliver'd from threatenng evils, is an unwarrantable infringement of the prerogatives of GOD, and a giving his glory to others, which he will highly resent and punish.

Innumerable instances of such prayers to Saints for their help might be produced out of the devotional writings of *Romanists*, and such as are licensed and allow'd by authority. They can't deny that St. *Peter* is invocated, “to untie the bonds of their iniquity, and to open the gates of heaven to them:” and that all the apostles are called upon, “to absolve them from their sins, to heal all their spiritual disorders, and to increase their virtues.” If their memories fail, we can tell them of prayers to Saints, that they would “illuminate; furnish with all grace; grant the pardon of sin; protect from the power of the devil;

<sup>8</sup> Jon. i. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Pfal. l. 15.

“ vil ; comfort under all troubles ; bleſs with  
 “ health of body, vigour of mind and peace of  
 “ conſcience ; and finally that they would deliver  
 “ them from hell, and raiſe them to the enjoy-  
 “ ment of heaven.” All this I preſume is more  
 than a bare aſking their prayers. I am amazed  
 that any in the *Romiſh* church ſhould have the  
 front to deny their praying for the Saints im-  
 mediate help. One of their own writers tells us,  
 that “ the prayers made to and deliver’d by the  
 “ Saints are *better* than thoſe made by CHRIST.”<sup>1</sup>

Their grand champion Cardinal *Bellarmino* by  
 way of plea ſays ; “ that tho’ the words uſed upon  
 “ thoſe occaſions may ſeem to imply more, than  
 “ a bare praying to the Saints to pray for us, yet  
 “ this is the whole they intend.”<sup>2</sup> A ſorry ex-  
 cuſe truly ! I dare ſay they do not imagine, that  
 all who uſe ſuch prayers mean no more by them :  
 How many thouſands are there who uſe them  
 without any ſuch intention ? and how can the  
 ſenſe of a prayer be known but by the natural  
 ſignification of the words uſed ? What is the rea-  
 ſon that ſuch forms have not long ago been al-  
 ter’d and new modell’d and adjusted to the mean-  
 ing of the words, when they have been ſo often  
 objected againſt the church of *Rome* ? Sure that  
*infallible* church can frame prayers in a more  
 conſiſtent manner, to make words and ſenſe a-  
 gree ! ’Tis plain the governors of that church do  
 ſcandalouſly neglect the ſouls of men by not al-  
 tering theſe forms, and ſo the ignorant are led  
 into inares ; or elſe that they approve of ſuch  
 prayers,

<sup>1</sup> Salmeron in 1 Tim. ii. diſ. 8. p. 467.

<sup>2</sup> De beat. Sanct. I. 1. c. 17.

prayers, and desire the common people should understand them according to the common use of the words. I doubt not but this latter is the true case; for by this practice many profitable ends are answer'd for the good of the church; and this appears to me to be the grand view aim'd at in the whole scheme of Popery; *By this craft they get their gain.*

I must under this head take particular notice of the *hyperdulia*, or extravagant worship, which the *Roman* church pays to the *Virgin Mary*; and which cannot without the most open inconsistency be said to intend no more than asking her prayers.

In mere compassion to my auditory I must omit many instances in support of the charge I have advanc'd against the church of *Rome*; they are such blasphemous expressions, which truly pious Christians will scarce be able to bear the hearing; and yet 'twill be necessary to mention some: for otherwise we shall be told that the charge is false. The *Roman Breviaries*, the *Offices* of the blessed *Virgin*, and our *Lady's Psalter* will furnish us plentifully. These books, tho' loaded with blasphemies, are not prohibited; nor have they ever undergone any ecclesiastical censure; and therefore in all reason may be supposed to be allowed by the church. *Our Lady's Psalter* particularly is allow'd and approv'd, tho' 'tis no better than a vile burlesque of *David's Psalms*; the name of *LORD* being cras'd, and the name *Lady* being put in the room; so that the just flights of devotion used by the sweet singer of *Israel* to the great *GOD*, are here sacrilegiously

legiously apply'd to the Virgin *Mary*. 'Twas the notable performance of Cardinal *Bonaventure*, a *Franciscan* friar ; it is printed at large in the fourth Tome of his Works under publick licence, [by the command of Pope *Sixtus V*, and the permission of superiors.] And for this and other his extraordinary piety, this blasphemous creature was afterwards canonized for a Saint.

The high titles the *Romish* church gives the Virgin *Mary* in their addressees are not to be born : I'll give you a specimen, for all which I have my vouchers. She is called the “ mother  
 “ of mercy ; queen of heaven ; fountain of  
 “ compassion ; the vein of pardon ; the hope  
 “ of the world ; the sure refuge of the distressed ; the cause of all creatures ; the founder  
 “ of all blessings ; the author of salvation ; sovereign light of the world ;” and to finish the whole, she is address'd to as “ the inexhaustible  
 “ fountain of all good, and all perfect,” or absolutely perfect. There are none of these titles can be applied to her with propriety ; and most of them not without the highest blasphemy and idolatry : Particularly can the character of *all perfect*, and *inexhaustible fountain of all good* be applied to any being but God without horrid blasphemy ? To address to any but God under this character is barefac'd idolatry : The invoking and venerating the Virgin *Mary* as such, is making an idol of her ; but lest they should be thought to be wanting in any instance of respect to her, they tell us “ that God has given  
 “ her half his kingdom ; and that no favours  
 “ are



“ are granted here on earth, but what first pass  
 “ thro’ her holy hands; without her there is no  
 “ pardon; ’tis she procures the expiation of our  
 “ sins, and ’tis thro’ her prayers our souls are  
 “ cleansed;”<sup>1</sup> and another of their writers says,  
 “ ’tis morally impossible that any who has a  
 “ true devotion for this good Lady can be  
 “ damned.”<sup>2</sup>

Again; they expect help from the Virgin  
*Mary* by virtue of her authority in heaven:  
 ’Twas originally a mad flight of *Bonaventure’s*,  
 “ Oh empress and our most kind Lady, by the  
 “ authority of a mother command thy most  
 “ beloved Son;” But it is to be found in the  
*Mass-Book*, printed at *Paris* 1634. I’ll men-  
 tion a passage or two out of prayers directed to  
 this exalted *Lady*. “ Oh mother of my God,  
 “ be pleased to make me partaker of that faith,  
 “ that devotion, that love and humility, that  
 “ purity and holiness, with which thou thy self  
 “ didst often communicate, *i. e.* receive the Eu-  
 “ charist.”<sup>3</sup> Again, “ We praise, we bless, we  
 “ glorify, we give thee thanks, we love thee,  
 “ with all our heart, with all our soul, with  
 “ all our strength; we offer, give, consecrate,  
 “ sacrifice to thee this same heart; take it, pos-  
 “ sels it whole, purify it, enlighten it, sanctify  
 “ it; that thou mayst live and reign in it now,  
 “ and always and throughout all ages.”<sup>4</sup>

Once more; the frequency of their addres-  
 ses to the Virgin *Mary* is an evidence of their

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<sup>1</sup> L’Off. de la Sainte Vierge Marie, *Leige* 1681. p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Mendos. Virid. l. 2. prob. 9.

<sup>3</sup> L’Ange Conduct. dans la devotion Chretienne. p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 185.

undue respect to her. Their *Rosary*, which they pretend the Virgin *Mary* herself inspired, and deliver'd to St. *Dominic* about the year 1220; and which, one of them says, is *a book that cannot be valued at its full worth*, consists of an hundred and fifty *Ave Marias*, and fifteen *Pater Nosters*; so that here are *ten* addresses to the Virgin, to *one* directed to God; an equitable proportion before! Is not this exalting a creature above God? But no wonder at this, if it be the opinion of the *Romanists* in general, which St. *Bernardine* declares as his own, that the Virgin's reply to the Angel *Gabriel's* salutation; *Behold the handmaid of the LORD, be it unto me according to thy word*; <sup>5</sup> was so highly meritorious, "that by that act she has done more for God, than God for her and all mankind; and that men may say to their comfort, that upon the Virgin's account God is more obliged to man, than they are to God."<sup>6</sup> Oh horrid blasphemy! Monstrous impiety! This the language of a *Roman* Saint, venerated as such by the holy church; it should rather be abhorr'd as the language of a tongue set on fire by Hell.

I have been the larger on this head, as it is the turning point of the controversy; and I hope I have sufficiently show'd that the church of *Rome* does something more, than pray to Saints to pray for them. And yet they add,

5. That what they do is really no more than desiring the prayers of fellow-saints on earth.<sup>7</sup> This plea is confuted by what has been just mentioned,

<sup>5</sup> Luke i. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard. Senens. Serm. 61. c. 1. c. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Prof. of Cath. Faith, p. 43. Vid. Bp. Condom loc. cit.

mentioned, upon supposition that the *Romish* church actually prays to Saints for their assistance. But we will wave that ; and only say, that common sense will really point out a vast difference between the two cases mention'd. Besides ; the council of *Trent* meant more : This is plain, because they found the reason of *praying to* the Saints upon *their reigning with CHRIST* ; which would be downright nonsense, upon supposition that the regard paid to the Saints in heaven, was not something more than the regard due to Saints on earth ; and the invoking the *former* was not widely different from asking a share in the prayers of the *latter*. The same council directs to invoke the Saints, *in the manner of supplicants* ; which surely insinuates more than the bare asking a favour of a living friend, with whom we converse. When fellow-saints are removed out of the reach of civil conversation, they are no longer to be applied to for any favour ; and it would be no greater an absurdity to fall down upon my knees here at *London*, and to pray to a living Saint at *York* ; than to direct a prayer to a departed Saint, supposed to be in *Heaven*. Every one sees a manifest difference between bowing the knee in a civil salutation of a friend present with me ; and the bowing down in a solemn prayer, and calling aloud to a fellow-saint, who neither hears nor sees me.

6. The church of *Rome* pleads antiquity for this practice. The council of *Trent* speaks of it as the usage of the *apostolic* and *catholic* church  
from

from the *beginning* of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> *Bellarmino*<sup>2</sup> and *Azorius*<sup>3</sup> assert, it was approved by all the *Greek* and *Latin* fathers. In answer to this I would offer two things,

1. That supposing what they assert be true; yet this will not prove the lawfulness or fitness of the practice. It proves no more, than that those fathers were of that opinion; but this does not infer an obligation upon us to be of the same mind. Our religion is to be learnt from the sacred Scriptures, and from no other authority. If the word of GOD appoints any religious worship, I am bound upon my allegiance to my LORD and MASTER to conform to it: If the word of GOD is silent as to any act of religion, all the fathers, councils and popes that ever were have no authority to bind my conscience; 'tis a bold invasion of the rights of JESUS CHRIST, the only lawgiver to his church; and in duty to him I am bound to bear my testimony against such unwarrantable usurpation. He has left no deputy, or vicar on earth, neither has he qualified any for so important a trust. But

2. I deny the truth of their assertion; and insist upon it, that they have not antiquity on their side. There are fathers against fathers, councils against councils, popes against popes; and some of each sort against themselves; so that if we were to be guided by authority, we should be at a loss where to fix, and every one must be allow'd to chuse his own master. However, if antiquity be of any consequence in determining matters of

<sup>1</sup> Sess. 25.

<sup>2</sup> De eccl. triumph. l. 1. c. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Inst. mor. T. 1. l. 7. c. 10.

of religion, the earliest must be the best: and this is clearly against the church of *Rome* in the affair now before us.

Archbishop *Usher*, who had as accurate a knowledge of antiquity as most men, tells us, that “as to the first 400 years after CHRIST, “for nine parts of that time, not one true testimony can be produced out of any father *in favour of this doctrine*; but these kind of men (says he) have so inured their tongues to talk of ALL fathers and ALL writers, that they can hardly use any other form of speech; having told such tales as these so often over, that at last they persuade themselves that they be very true in good earnest.”<sup>4</sup>

Cardinal *Perron*, *Richlieu*, and other learned writers amongst the *Romanists* own, that the invocation of Saints was not practis'd for the three first centuries: The reason they assign is a very remarkable one, and what should for ever have kept that practice out of the Christian church; 'tis this, because praying to the Saints would have been too much like the pagan idolatry, and so have obstructed the spreading of the gospel, the heathen justifying themselves by this practice. And by the by, I verily believe that the superstitions and fopperies of Popery have done more prejudice to the Christian cause, than all the open opposition made by Jews or Infidels.

The first symptoms of this worship did not appear till towards the end of the fourth century; it seems to spring out of the regard which the Christians at that time show'd to the memory of the

<sup>4</sup> Anf. to Jesuit's Challenge, p. 421. 434.

the martyrs; they frequented their tombs and erected altars there, praying to GOD and engaging themselves to a strict imitation of the virtues and piety of the departed martyrs: But by degrees, as the church got into easier circumstances, men grew wanton and superstitious; and the regard they at first paid to GOD at the tombs of the martyrs, adoring him for the advantage of their examples, dwindled into praises and eulogiums of the Saints themselves. In these they used some apostrophes and rhetorical addresses: from hence arose a superstitious regard to them, and at last it grew up to a direct invocation and adoring of them.<sup>6</sup>

It would be endless to multiply quotations out of the fathers, which I am furnished with; I shall entirely wave them, and only further add, that it does not appear that any publick prayers to Saints were establish'd till *A. D.* 787 by the 2d council of *Nice*: and this council was condemn'd by another held at *Francofurt A. D.* 794: and the invocation of Saints was likewise condemn'd by a former council held at *Constantinople A. D.* 754, where no less than 338 bishops were present.<sup>7</sup> It is upon the whole plain, that this was no doctrine of the first and purest ages of Christianity; and by what authority it becomes a duty now, it concerns them to consider, who plead for the practice.

7. It is further pretended, that out of reverence to the divine Majesty, they apply to him by the Saints, and this argues great humility.

Thus

<sup>6</sup> *Vid.* Span. Chr. fac. p. 865.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* 1313, & seq.

Thus in *St. Paul's* time, there was a set of men attempted to introduce into the church *Angel-worship* upon the same pretence of humility. The apostle condemns it, as an instance of humility, which GOD had not commanded nor did he expect: *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility*, or, as it may be render'd, a volunteer in humility; pleasing himself in his humility, or affecting it.<sup>8</sup> The pagan idolaters pleaded the same excuse for the worship of their inferior Gods; and said, "By these we go to the great GOD, as by officers we go to a King." *St. Ambrose* refuted this plea in favour of *beathen* idolatry, and it will serve equally for a confutation of the *popish*. His words are to this effect, "Is any man so mad or unmindful of his salvation, as to give the king's honour to an officer of his court? which if a man does, he is justly condemned as guilty of treason: and yet they think themselves not guilty, who give to a creature the honour due to GOD's name, and forsaking GOD adore their fellow-servants, as tho' any thing greater than that was reserved for GOD himself." He goes on and shews the difference of the two cases; "therefore (says he) we go to a king by his officers and nobles, because the king is but a man, and knows not of himself whom he may most fitly employ in the administration of his affairs: his officers and courtiers must enquire the characters of men, and recommend to him; a king is not able to do all by himself. But there is no need of one to recommend us to

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<sup>8</sup> Col. ii. 18. ΘΕΛΩΝ ΕΝ ΤΑΠΕΙΝΟΦΡΕΣΙΑΙ

“ the favour of GOD ; a devout mind is a sufficient recommendation to him, from whom nothing can be concealed, and who knows the deserts of all.”<sup>9</sup>

I can't help remarking here, that one grand cause of errors both in faith and practice, is a pretending to be wise above what is written ; and concluding what is fit to be settled in the matters of GOD, from what is usually done amongst men. 'Tis a foolish conceit, that GOD is *such an one as ourselves*, which disposes men to make alterations in the constitution and settlement of his kingdom, and boldly to invade his royal prerogative: GOD will surely sooner or later *reprove* those, who dare treat him in so free a manner.<sup>1</sup>

But when the church of *Rome* is got into this fit of modesty (for 'tis not her natural temper) let her be ask'd ; Where is humility or reverence to the great GOD in pretending to dictate to him, or determine the fittest way of access to him, when he himself has directed a very different one? An earthly king would severely resent such saucy insolence ; and would not treat the daring offender with that patience and forbearance, which the blessed GOD exercises towards men. It is well for us, that GOD is not altogether such an one as ourselves. - - - I am sure the *Romish* church would give a much stronger evidence of her reverence to GOD, than ever yet she has given ; if she would closely adhere to the declarations of GOD's will, as they are recorded in the sacred Scriptures ; and make that infallible book the only

<sup>9</sup> Ambr. Comm. ad Rom. i.

<sup>1</sup> Psal. l. 21.



ly rule, whereby to regulate faith, and worship, and manner of life.

Having fully stated the *Romish* doctrine of invoking the Saints, and fairly consider'd all they have to say in support of such a practice;

II. I shall now produce some arguments against it, to show that it is not only *unprofitable*, but likewise *unlawful*.

I. We have no command of GOD for it. In all our disquisitions about religion we are to consider the blessed GOD, as the rector of the world, who has an unquestionable right to prescribe laws to his rational creatures: these laws, sufficiently notified, we are bound to obey. Accordingly GOD has reveal'd his mind to man in the sacred Scriptures, those standing oracles of our holy religion. Whatever institutions we meet with there as appointed by GOD, we are religiously to comply with; whatever else is appointed by others, if it have no foundation in the word of GOD, we are so far from being obliged to the practice of it, that in honour to GOD we ought to protest against it, as a bold usurpation of the divine authority.

In the case before us, the practice of the *Roman* church is altogether *voluntary*, without any direction of GOD, our adversaries themselves being judges; for they don't attempt the proof of it out of Scripture.

Now supposing that GOD, as the fountain of honour, may, consistently with his own dignity, make a grant of some sort of religious worship to Angels or eminent Saints, his favourite friends, dear to him; yet if he has not seen fit any where

to make this grant, who dare give his glory to another? Who can answer to his Majesty the bold infringement of his prerogative? Can the invocation of Saints be thought agreeable to GOD, when he has not given us the least intimation that it is so? If this was necessary or fit, is it not surprizing that when so many directions are given about prayer in the word of GOD, we should no where be taught this lesson? Especially when we are bid to pray for one another, and to ask the prayers of fellow-christians in our afflictions, is it not astonishing that we should not be directed to the *Virgin Mary*, or some other Saint of interest in the court of heaven, whose prayers the church of *Rome* tells us are very meritorious? - - - But not one word in all the book of GOD looking this way. And can any one suppose that a matter of this consequence would have been omitted, if GOD had intended or expected any such thing? But there is neither command, nor example, nor promise to encourage the practice, nor threatening to those who neglect it, upon which to graft this doctrine, in the whole Bible.

Their own doctors bear testimony to this; *Bannes*, *Cotton*, *Bellarmino* and *Perron*: and this latter confessed to *Isaac Casaubon*, that he himself never prayed to Saints, but only as he went in procession.<sup>1</sup> He had the checks of conscience, that what he did was wrong, but yet he must save appearances, and do it to secure his credit with men of that interest in which he was embark'd: parallel to the case of *Naaman*, *In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, &c.*<sup>2</sup>

In

<sup>1</sup> *Vid* Andr. opusc. posthuma.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings v. 18.

In a word, nothing must be allowed in GOD's worship, but what we have his warrant for; so that the very silence of scripture is enough to condemn the praying to Saints. But,

2. The scriptures are very strong against this worship. Our Saviour's answer to the devil, already mention'd, appropriates religious worship to GOD, and consequently excludes the Saints from any right or claim to prayer, which is a principal part of worship.

The worship of *Angels* is expressly forbid by the Apostle; and the christian converts, to whom he writes, are warn'd against being *beguiled* into the practice:† By parity of reason the worship of Saints must be condemned; the Saints cannot be supposed to have higher pretensions to this homage than the Angels, if they be allowed to have equal. An Angel reproved St. *John* for an attempt to worship him; *he fell at his feet to worship him*, (a common posture of *image-worshippers* in the *Romish* church:) *see thou do it not*, says the Angel, *I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of JESUS; worship GOD*:‡ He is the only adequate object of religious worship; the highest Angels and the most exalted Saints in the heavenly world, are but our fellow-servants; we all belong to one family and serve the same master; those *above*, indeed, in a higher station; we *below*, in the station assigned us for the present, but in expectation of advancement in GOD's due time.

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† Col. ii. 18.

‡ Rev. xix. 20.

The *doctrine of devils*, which the apostle tells *Timothy* of,<sup>3</sup> as what would be taught in the apostacy of the latter times, I apprehend to be nothing else than this idolatrous worship of Saints in the *Romish* church, borrow'd from the worship of Dæmons or inferior Gods in the Pagan world. A parallel might be drawn between the one and the other;<sup>4</sup> but instead of that, I close this head with a passage of one of their own writers; “Many Christians, says he, do for the most part transgress in a good thing, that they worship the Saints and Saintesses, no otherwise than they worship GOD himself; nor do I see in many things, wherein there is any difference between the opinion which they have of their Saints, and that which the *Gentiles* maintain'd concerning their Gods.”<sup>5</sup>

3. This practice highly derogates from the honour of GOD. As GOD was the maker of all things, so 'tis his glory to have all his creatures depend upon him, and direct their eyes to him for the support of the several natures which he has given them, and for a supply of needful blessings. Praying to the Saints for a supply of our wants must certainly lessen our sense of dependance upon GOD, and obligation to him; and this intringes his honour.

It is an affront to GOD, as it is without his warrant or direction. And,

It is injurious to GOD, as it argues low and mean thoughts of his Majesty. It looks as if

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<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Vid. *Jes. Mede* of the apostacy of the latter times.

<sup>5</sup> Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 8. c. 27.

we did not esteem him that almighty, wise, and good being, which he really is. For did we firmly believe his infinite *wisdom*, we should scarce pretend to prescribe or settle the way of approach to him, and that different from his own appointment.---- Were we thoroughly persuaded of his immense *goodness* and *compassion*, we should not desire such a number of advocates, as if GOD were almost inexorable.---And were our minds properly impress'd with a sense of his *almighty power*, we should not run to Saints or Angels for their help; but have recourse to him, who is the LORD of angels and men, and can employ any of his creatures as instruments to compass his ends, and to promote the happiness of those who trust in him and pray to him.

4. It is highly injurious to *Jesus Christ*. And thus it is *partly*, as it defeats one grand end of his coming into the world, and setting up the gospel-kingdom in it, *viz.* to destroy *idolatry*, which in the strongest sense is the work of the devil. See 1st Epistle of *John*, and the chapter where the text is.

But it is *principally* injurious to CHRIST'S intercession. The *Papists* can't allow this; tho' every one may see, that having recourse to the prayers, the help and assistance of Saints must be an affront to that *one mediator between GOD and men, the man CHRIST JESUS*: it is an insinuation, that he is not thought sufficient to manage man's cause with GOD without the aid of assisting Saints or Angels. As the notion of two Gods is heresy against *natural* religion; so the doctrine of more mediators and intercessors than one,

one, is heresy against the gospel. *There is one GOD, and one mediator between GOD and men, the man CHRIST JESUS, who gave himself a ransom for all.*<sup>6</sup> Now is not applying to the Saints for their prayers and their help a barefaced opposition to this gospel doctrine, and an open injury to the blessed JESUS? But it seems these men are better acquainted with the mind of CHRIST than his own Apostles; or otherwise St. *John* was greatly mistaken, when he tells us; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous:* He should surely have said, we have many advocates: But this doctrine was not true in St. *John's* days, tho' the church of *Rome* has determined it now.

I presume mother church was in one of her fits of modesty, or in a penitential mood, when she appointed this worship of Saints: For besides the profit it brings in, which we do but hint at: I can imagine but two inducements she could have to institute so extraordinary a service; namely, *either*, the good mother was sensible of the abominations of her children; nor had reason to imagine they would mend their manners, when they had the benefit of her indulgences; and so concluded they would stand in need of all the prayers and all the merits she could scrape together for them: *Or else*, being conscious how she had departed from the gospel of CHRIST, she concluded that she could not with any modesty apply to him, whom she had highly affronted, and therefore she directs her

her poor children to the patronage of others, whom for that purpose she had exalted to great honours.

According to the constitution of the gospel, we may as lawfully make to ourselves more Gods, as we may more mediators than one.

But to evade the force of this reasoning, the *Romish* church has framed a very subtle distinction between a mediator of *redemption*, and a mediator of *intercession*; the former, they say, belongs to CHRIST *solely*, the other the Angels and Saints in heaven are intituled to. But the scriptures give no countenance to such a distinction. They plainly teach us, that the intercession of CHRIST is founded upon the meritoriousness of his death and sufferings; his giving himself a *ransom* for us, and being the *propitiation* for our sins, claims for him, and supports the character of our *intercessor*. These are mutually dependent and closely connected. He is exalted to the right hand of GOD, as a reward of his sufferings, and there he sits to make intercession for us: Whoever therefore advance any to be assessors with CHRIST in this important work, they undervalue his merits, and rob him of his glory.

The close connexion of redemption and intercession our adversaries seem to be aware of; and therefore to solve the difficulty, *Bellarmino* says, the Saints are *mediators by participation*; but this is with the same propriety, as he elsewhere calls them *Gods by participation*. Accordingly the church of *Rome* makes no scruple in her publick prayers to beg GOD's pardon, mercy and

favour on account of the merits of the Saints ; and prays to them to obtain blessings by virtue of their merits : They depend upon the merits of the Saints, and put themselves under their protection with the utmost satisfaction of mind, as if they were Gods. Bishop *Stillingfleet* to this purpose says, “ I have known myself intelligent persons of their church, who commit their souls to the Virgin *Mary's* protection every day, as we do to almighty GOD's ; and such who thought they understood the doctrine and practice of their church as well as others.” <sup>1</sup> In the celebration of the *Mass*, the priest says thus, “ We pray thee, oh LORD, by the merits of thy Saints (he kisses the altar) whose relics are here, and of all thy Saints, that thou wouldst grant us the pardon of all our sins, Amen.” <sup>2</sup> Not a word of CHRIST in the prayer. But none of their doctors, that I know of, ever deny'd the merits of their Saints, and therefore we may discontinue this head ; for every one must see that by this practice great dishonour is done to CHRIST, as if he needed the assistance of the Saints, in order to the success of his intercession : Nay, some amongst them have carried the matter further, and have not scrupled to say, “ that the intercession of the Saints is sometimes *more available* than CHRIST's.” <sup>3</sup> And another says, “ he cannot tell which to

<sup>1</sup> Of Idol. of the Church of Rome, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Miss. Rom. Ed. Paris, 1684.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. *Salmer.* ubi sup. cit. *Hen. Fitz-Simon* of the *Mass*, l. 2. p. 2. c. 3.



“prefer, the Mother’s milk, or the Son’s blood.”<sup>4</sup>

5. This invocation of Saints is highly absurd. For,

It does *not appear that they have any knowledge of our affairs here on earth, or can hear our prayers.* The *Romanists* prove they have, thus; It is said *there is joy in the presence of God over one sinner that repenteth*:<sup>5</sup> And ’tis said the Saints *shall be equal unto the Angels*;<sup>6</sup> therefore the Saints know of the repentance of sinners, and by parity of reason, they know other things. But we shou’d remember that our likeness to Angels, as there mention’d, is to commence at the resurrection; and then I presume there will be no further room or need of prayers to the Saints. But if the inhabitants of heaven have any knowledge of our affairs, ’tis most likely to suppose they have it by revelation from GOD; and upon this supposition ’tis monstrously absurd to pray to them; for then it will be thus: First pray to a Saint, then GOD tell that Saint, who it is that prays, and what he prays for; then the Saint must go back to GOD and pray for such person, and for such a mercy desired. Can any thing be more absurd than this, to send GOD upon the errands of his creatures; or to suppose that to be done in heaven by GOD and his servants, which would be laugh’d at as a foolish and ridiculous farce, if acted between a king and his subjects, or a master and his servants on the stage of this world.

<sup>4</sup> *Car. Scribar.* in *Amphit.* honor.

<sup>5</sup> Luke xv. 10.

<sup>6</sup> c. xx. 76.

Again; if they could hear our prayers, 'twould be absurd to pray to them, because *they have no power or authority to intercede*. Those who pretend to imploy them in this service, should be able to produce their commission.

Further; Praying to them supposes, *that they are possess'd of divine perfections*, and so makes Gods of them. Particularly it supposes, that they are *omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, and all-sufficient*: These are incommunicable perfections of DEITY, and can't belong to any creature; and yet these must be supposed to be in the Saints, if all men, from all parts of the earth, and in all circumstances are to direct their prayers to them: I'll give a specimen of such a prayer; "My dear Angel St. *Michael*, all the "Angels, my patrons and patronesses, Saints "and Saintesses, whose feast is celebrated this "day; come and keep me company, and assist "me in my necessities."<sup>7</sup> Besides; the power of knowing the hearts of men is by consequence ascribed to the Saints by this practice of the church of *Rome*; nor can the charge be evaded, since the council of *Trent* speaks of *mental* prayer as well as *vocal*. Mental prayers can come within the knowledge only of him, who searches the heart; which GOD claims as his peculiar prerogative, *I the LORD search the heart*;<sup>8</sup> nor will he give this glory to another.

Once more; this is absurd, because we may be sure, that the *Saints themselves will not admit this worship*. St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* with the

<sup>7</sup> Large Confess. &c. p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Jer. xlii. 10.

greatest abhorrence rejected it, while they were on earth, as an abominable indignity to the great GOD: and I presume they have not less reverence for the divine Majesty now they are got to heaven. The *Romanists* use this sort of arguing to prove that the Saints in heaven pray for those below; because they did so when they themselves were on earth, and their charity is increased by their sight of GOD in heaven.<sup>9</sup> And I suppose charity is not the only grace or virtue the Saints will be perfected in, when they are got to heaven: Their *charity* is not so perfected sure, as to destroy their other graces; it is not so improved, as to abate their reverence to GOD, or their zeal for the honour of their Saviour; their humility can't be turn'd into a proud aspiring to be equal with the son of GOD. It was part of their excellence, while on earth, to have humble thoughts of themselves, and an admiring sense of obligation to CHRIST their redeemer; they had learnt to account themselves but *unprofitable servants* to the great GOD; and when they had done their best, 'twas the humble language of their souls, *Not I, but the grace of GOD that was with me.* And I presume they will not be less sensible of obligation to GOD, or of their own unworthiness, when they have reach'd heaven; they will then cast their crowns at the foot of GOD's throne, ascribing the glory of all his works both in the kingdom of providence and of grace to him, *Thou art worthy to receive all honour and glory and praise.*<sup>1</sup> They, holy

<sup>9</sup> Prof. of Cath. Faith, p. 41.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv. 10.

fouls, have no notion of merit; and therefore know themselves not to be qualified to intercede for others.

I am inclin'd to think, that the *Romish* church was aware of this, and doubted whether truly pious Saints above would undertake to mediate men's concerns with GOD: And therefore to do them justice, they do not rigidly insist upon it, that the Saints they worship, should be such only as *pass'd the time of their sojourning in the fear of GOD*, truly good and pious fouls; 'tis not necessary with them, that they should be strictly *Saints*, in the full sense of that word, or in the esteem of GOD; 'tis enough for their purpose if they are Saints of the Pope's making; and therefore no wonder that we meet with such a different variety of names in their calendar; every man may pick and chuse his patron, for there is choice enough.

Some few there are on the roll, whose praise is in the church of CHRIST; such as were great instruments of promoting the gospel, while here on earth; and these I doubt not shine now with a glory, like the sun in the kingdom of our Father above.

But others there are, who have left no remembrances of them, only such as must raise the just indignation of every pious mind: Men of most wicked and profligate lives, monsters in nature for cruelty, and of the most bloody dispositions. Witness here St. *Dominic*, whose memory will ever be abhorr'd, for his having been the author and contriver of that cursed engine of persecution, the *Inquisition*: Witness likewise

likewise a Saint of our own country, the famous *Thomas à Becket*, who had no good quality belonging to his character; pride and treachery composed the man; he was a rebel to his king, and a traitor to his country; but being a bigot to the church, his sins were absolved, (*N. zeal for the church will cover a multitude of sins!*) and he was raised to the dignity of a *Romish* Saint; and became in a manner the idol of this part of the world for near 200 years: he perfectly eclips'd the glory of the other Saints for a while; nay, we are told, that whereas there were three altars in the cathedral church of *Canterbury*, one erected to the honour of *CHRIST*, another to the *Virgin Mary*, and a third to this *St. Thomas*; the offerings at his shrine came to about 1000 *l.* when those to the *Virgin* came not to 5 *l.* and to *CHRIST* nothing at all. And a noted historian tells us, that in one year, *viz.* *A. D.* 1420, there were no less than 50,000 foreigners came in pilgrimages to pay their homage at this tomb.<sup>2</sup> Upon the whole, the church of *Rome* has no reason to fasten the charge of idolatry in the *heathen* world, on their worshipping evil Spirits; they can match the worst of them with some of their Saints.

Others of this sacred tribe could be thus advanced, one would think, for nothing but their folly. Their great *St. Francis*, according to their own accounts, may be justly suspected of wanting common sense. His throwing away his cloaths, and running about stark naked, was such a freak, that he ought either to have been

<sup>2</sup> *Rapin's Hist. of Eng. V. 3. p. 48.*

whipp'd about the streets by way of punishment for his impudence, or have been confined for a madman. His preaching to birds and beasts, and talking to them as fellow-creatures, was stupid and ridiculous.

Once more; There are other Saints on their list, who never had any real existence; no other being, but the imaginary one, which their own legends have given them: and their accounts of them are so romantic, that one would imagine they could not themselves believe there ever were such persons: witness their monstrous giant *St. Christopher*, who carried CHRIST cross an arm of the sea; *St. Longinus* the Roman soldier, who thrust the spear into CHRIST'S body on the cross; *St. George*; *St. Ursula* with her 11000 virgins: and many others, whose names are preserved among the *Romish* Saints, though they never had a being amongst living men.

6. This worship of Saints is very imprudent. For supposing it be allowable, 'tis a round about way; which common prudence would forbid us to use, unless GOD himself had directed it. No prudent man would try twenty methods to effect a thing, which could as well or better be done one particular way. The sacred scripture tells us the direct way to the father is by *Jesus Christ*: *I am the way, the truth and the life*, says he of himself; nay he speaks it exclusively of all others, *no man cometh unto the father but by me*<sup>3</sup>. The great GOD has directed me to come to him by his Son, and has assured me of success in this way:

<sup>3</sup> John xiv 6

way: Now though perhaps I may be vain enough to think, that it would be more humble and more respectful to go to God by the intercession of Angels or Saints; yet if I desired success, common prudence would teach me to take the way, which God has appointed.

Besides; supposing it to be a doubtful case, whether we should give religious worship to Saints or not; prudence would forbid my doing it, because it is safer not to do it. ----- If *Protestants* are in the right, the *Papists* are guilty of a most heinous sin, in giving God's glory to others: if *they* are in the right, then *we* are wanting in some respect, which we might have given to the Saints; but were not bound by any command of God to do it; for this is not pretended. If we are in the right, the church of *Rome* is exposed to the dreadful resentments of God for sinning against him: if we are not in the right, all we lose is the benefit we might receive by the prayers of Saints: but I apprehend we shall not feel the loss, if we can secure, (I pray God we all of us may!) an interest in the prevailing intercession of CHRIST our redeemer.

I close with remarking, that the *Romish* manner of making Saints is a great objection against worshipping them. This is done by the Pope, with a heap of ridiculous ceremonies, and for the sake usually of immense sums of money, given by princes who are desirous of the glory of procuring canonization for some favourite friend; +

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\* V. Picart's Cerem. and rel. cust. Vol. I. p. 386.

drawn up to Heaven by a cord of gold, and if it was not for the power of that metal, hundreds of them had never been supposed to be there.---- But what horrid, insolent arrogance is this, for a sinful earthly man to pretend to make these petty Gods: If his *Holiness* had this power, the *Romanists* might with some sort of propriety stile him *our Lord God the Pope*; and need not deny, or be asham'd of it afterwards. Monstrous impiety, for a sinful creature to constitute himself the distributor of heavenly blessings! And this he effectually does by appointing the Saints, whose prayers and merits procure them, and by whose hands they are convey'd.

II. I am now come to the II<sup>d</sup> branch of my subject, which is the *worship of IMAGES*. I must be brief in my remarks upon this. Let us *first* enquire what the doctrine of the church of *Rome* is in relation to this matter, and then examine the reasons against it.

Their late book for the use of converts declares, that “ they do not think it unlawful to “ have the Images of GOD the Father, and of “ the blessed TRINITY; and they make no “ difficulty of painting GOD the Father, under “ the figure of a venerable old man”<sup>5</sup>. But I think the scripture is exceeding plain against this, and I take it to be absolutely unlawful to make any such representations of GOD: he is a spirit, and therefore cannot be likened to any thing that is corporeal. *To whom will you liken GOD? or what likeness will ye compare unto him*<sup>6</sup>? But the-

<sup>5</sup> Id. Ibid. p. 49.

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah xl. 18, &c.



the *Romanists* say, that they do not think such Images of GOD unlawful, “ provided they be “ not understood to bear any likeness or resemblance of the divinity”<sup>7</sup>: But for what end are Images designed, if not to represent the prototype?

But the Council of *Trent* has expressly authorized the making and use “ of Images of “ CHRIST and of the Virgin *Mary*, and of other “ Saints, and has appointed that they should be “ placed in churches, and that due honour and “ veneration be given to them”. The *Romish* doctors differ about the veneration due to Images; some say, they are to be worshipped *properly*, so as to terminate the worship on the very Images; others say, *analogically* or *improperly* so as to terminate the worship upon the prototype or original, whose Image it is. [ I suppose these doctors will then allow that some worship is terminated on the Saints, not all on GOD. ] Some argue for the *same sort* of worship as is due to the original; others say an *inferior and different* one. Their doctors thus differing, the council has left it at large: though there is one clause, which blabs what they mean; their learned men may be acquainted with it, but it was not safe to trust it with the common people: they mean in truth to command every thing, which has been established by the decrees of councils, but especially of the 2d Council of *Nice*.<sup>8</sup> Now 'tis well known in the learned world that this Council of

<sup>7</sup> *Isaiah* xl. 18, &c.

<sup>8</sup> *Conc. Trid. Sefs.* 25.

*Nice* expressly confirms the *adoration of Images*. They say thus, “ It is our opinion that the Images of the glorious Angels and Saints are to be adored: but if any man is not so minded, but doubts about the adoration of Images, him the Synod pronounces accursed”. Hence learn the sense of the fathers of *Trent*; and that this is the real opinion of the church of *Rome* may be inferr’d from the constant practice of her votaries.

Our adversaries say, they do not pray *to* the Images, but only *before* them; and that “ because the sight of a good picture or Image helps to enkindle devotion in the heart”. How a devout frame of mind towards GOD should be rais’d by the sight of the Image of St. *Francis*, the picture of St. *Dominic*, or the shrine of St. *Thomas of Canterbury*, I am at a loss to conceive: and if any devotion be thus artificially rais’d, I imagine it cannot be of much account with that GOD who searches the heart, and requires truth in the inward parts. They would have us believe, that they pay no regard at all to the Image, but only thro’ that to the original: This pretension is extremely confident. A naked representation of what they do with reference to the Images, will be a sufficient confutation of this bold evasion.

The Images of Saints are in their churches; placed there by authority; the people fall down on their knees before them, or lie prostrate at their feet; they offer incense to them; they erect altars, and direct prayers to them; they make vows before them; and they kiss them. These  
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are all acts of adoration, and their learned doctors will defend this devotion. These were the expressions of *Heathen* idolatry; and why they should not be interpreted so now, I know not. These actions plainly show that their regard is to the Image itself. Let me particularly mention the ceremony of *kissing* the Images. To *kiss* in a religious sense is to *adore*; thus idolaters were wont to kiss their gods. *Pliny* mentions the *kiss* as a sacred rite used in their adorations. The sacred scriptures also mention this<sup>9</sup>. *Cicero* tells us of a brazen statue of *Hercules*, that the chin and lips of it were worn off by those who did *adore* him: And I can tell you of a brazen statue of *St. Peter* in the great church of *Rome*, whose toes are worn off by those who *adore* him: And I am well assured by some ingenious gentlemen of unquestionable integrity, who have actually seen this famous Image; that it bears those marks of venerable antiquity, by which every one skill'd in that sort of learning knows it to have been a statue of *Jupiter* in Pagan *Rome*. The worship truly seems to me to be the same in Papal *Rome*; and therefore the Images may serve as well now as heretofore, only altering the names.<sup>1</sup>

That they have a regard to the images themselves does also appear from hence, that they ascribe miracles to them; they are stupid enough to think, that some images bleed, others weep; some

<sup>9</sup> 1 Kings xix. 18. Job xxxi. 27. and Hof. xiii. 2

<sup>1</sup> V. Dr. *Con. Middleton's Letter from Rome*; a most curious and entertaining piece, printed *London*, 1729

some give a gracious nod to the devotees in token of acceptance of their prayers and offerings, and are made to bend the body, or reach forth the hand towards their deluded worshippers; they imagine there goes forth from them a power of healing; and they tell us, that by the touch of them diseases, otherwise incurable, have been and are removed; and as they have particular Saints for the cure of different disorders, so likewise have they several pictures and images of the same Saint, which have their different powers of performing mighty feats. I will mention one instance; I have it upon very good authority, and I suppose most of our *Italian* merchants know the truth of it.

Tho' there are in *Italy* many pictures and Images of the Virgin *Mary*; yet there is a picture of high renown, call'd *Madona di monte negro*: She belongs to a convent on the black mountain near *Livorne*; 'tis an ugly piece of daubing, (not greatly adapted to enkindle devotion, one would think) pretended to be found under ground by a shepherd, to whom it was reveal'd, that he should carry it to the place where it now resides, and that a church should be built there; which in process of time was done, with a handsome convent and a comfortable subsistence for a number of Monks: This *Madona* brings her masters great gain by the wonderful cures she works; she is peculiarly serviceable in epidemical distempers; upon which occasion she has been applied to for help, even by whole communities: Witness the city  
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of *Livorne*; when such a distemper raged there, this *Lady*, at the intercession of the citizens, was brought down from the black mountain, attended by the several confraternities with great pomp; the citizens first giving a large security to return her safe, when she had stopp'd the infection; the *Great Duke* himself likewise became bound. She was placed on the high altar in the *Dome*, or great church, whither crowds of people flock'd to worship her. The mighty feat was after a time perform'd; and the *Lady* safely conducted home again, bringing back a handsome gratuity to the Monks, who lent her: For the *Great Duke*, to shew his sense of obligation to the *Lady* for preserving his city, presented her with a crown of diamonds, valued at 30,000 crowns.

If all this does not suppose virtue to be lodged in the Image itself, and that regard is shewn to it, I know not what can.

A practice so absurd can never be thought to be appointed by GOD; nor should one imagine that reasonable creatures could ever be *beguil'd* into it.

The sacred scripture is full and express against every thing of this nature. The II<sup>d</sup> commandment so strongly forbids it, that the *Papists* often leave it out of their common catechisms and manuals; and this before is done, lest serious people should, by discovering so plain a law of GOD against so constant a practice of the church, be frighten'd away from her. Disobedience to parents, murder, adultery, theft, &c. are

are no more a breach of *other* commandments, than bowing down to graven Images is a violation of the *second*; and by virtue of her dispensing power the *Romish* church may as well rob us of all as of one.

But I refer you to the sacred scriptures; your acquaintance with which will furnish you with passages enough, that condemn this worship as idolatrous.

Antiquity, which our adversaries are so fond of, is against them in this article: The primitive church, for the first four centuries, knew no such custom; the Christians then always objected it against the heathens; which no doubt they would have retorted, had there been room. So averse were many of the fathers against Images and pictures, that they would not allow so much as making them at all; but this was carrying the matter too far. Some of the heathens themselves would not admit Images into their temples. The worship of them was not established in the church till towards the end of the eighth century. <sup>1</sup>

As for the excuse which the *Romish* church pleads for herself, that many Protestants allow Images and pictures in their churches, they bow to the altar, and at the name of JESUS, (which, say they, is an Image or remembrance of our Saviour to the ear, as the crucifix is to the eye) that they erect churches, and keep holidays in memory of the Saints, and the like. The ob-

<sup>1</sup> *Vid.* Spanh. Chr. Sac. p. 1306.

jection no way concerns us; and therefore 'tis fit to leave it for any to answer, who find their practice affected by it.

I close with a few remarks,

1. Let us thank GOD, that our lot is cast in a land, where we are not subjected to the absurdities and impositions of *Rome*. Time was, when this was the case with *England*, but GOD has deliver'd us. Let us shew our gratitude to GOD by doing all we can to support the Protestant government under which we live, against all the restless attempts of our enemies.

2. Let us closely adhere to the scriptures: We should take all our directions from that unerring guide; make it the rule of our faith, our worship, and our lives. And let us always bear our testimony against any additions made to it; or any thing in the worship of GOD appointed only by fallible men.

3. Let us possess our minds with a just abhorrence of Popery, and guard against it, as a religion, in many things, contrary to the gospel, and subversive of Christianity.

4. Let us pity and pray for our fellow-creatures, who are under the *Romish* yoke. Tho' we ought to detest many of the doctrines and practices of the church of *Rome*; yet we do not, we dare not wish ill to any of their persons; the worst we wish them is conversion and forgiveness; and I am persuaded we shall all heartily concur in this address to GOD, in their behalf, with which I close my discourse: " LORD have  
" mercy upon them, convince them of their

“ mistakes, convert them from their errors, re-  
“ form them from their superstitions and idola-  
“ tries, mend their tempers and dispositions to-  
“ wards their fellow-creatures, restrain their  
“ power, recover them to thy pure worship,  
“ that they may receive the truth as it is in  
“ JESUS, forgive their sins, and save their  
“ souls. *Amen.*

*F I N I S.*









