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THE LETTERS OF THE
MARTYRS :

COLLECTED AND PUBLISHED IN 1564.



WITH A PREFACE

BY

MILES COVERDALE.

~~~~~

AND WITH INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,

BY THE

REV. EDWARD BICKERSTETH.

RECTOR OF WATTON, HERTS.

L O N D O N :

JOHN F. SHAW, SOUTHAMPTON ROW,  
RUSSELL SQUARE.

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**T. C. JOHNS, PRINTER,  
Red Lion Court, Fleet Street.**

# TO HER MAJESTY ADELAÏDE,

THE QUEEN DOWAGER.

MADAM,

It gave me singular pleasure to be informed by the Publisher that your Majesty had allowed him to dedicate this precious Relic of the Founders of our Established Church, entitled by the original Editor, Bishop Coverdale, "Certain Godly Letters of the Martyrs" to yourself, the beloved Queen Dowager of this Country.

The permission to dedicate this volume was given before our national affliction, in the loss of our late beloved Monarch, a cause of grief to the Country at large, but more especially such to yourself. The permission was given when you were surrounded with the splendours and influence of Royalty, but not then even unmindful how needful it is to have the provision here set before us for the day of trial

and sorrow. It is my hearty prayer that your Majesty may find in these precious Letters such seasonable truths as will very greatly comfort and sustain your mind in your present hours of seclusion and sorrow. The word of the living God has taught us, that, heavy as any trial may be in itself, when viewed in connection with those unseen and eternal things to which we are hastening, it must be called a light affliction which is but for a moment, and may be regarded, as working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

This Work is worthy of Royal Patronage. Did the principles contained in it universally prevail, righteousness and love would be general through our Country; and the Monarch would reign over a people, every where loyal, and wholly at peace with each other, from the only solid, and permanent principles, the fear and the love of the Most High God.

The Word of Him, who is the living God, was the great standard by which our Reformers tried every thing. Under the directions of that Word they laid those truly Christian foundations of Government, which so peculiarly distinguish our whole Constitution, and which are so clearly developed in the Coronation Service, the Parliamentary Prayers, the Articles, the Homilies, and the

Liturgy ; and thus was established at length the great and fundamental principle that Christianity is “part and parcel of the Law of this land.”

Never was it more needful to revert to these foundations than at the present time, when there is an universal restlessness from the desire for change, and an universal shaking of things long established.

Such a publication as this, now recovered from long oblivion and restored afresh to the present generation, disclosing to us the inward motives of the chief Founders of our Reformed Church, and the very spirit in which they sought the national prosperity, may it is hoped, be peculiarly seasonable, and specially adapted to lead all minds to return to those first, and now well-proved principles, which are the very foundation of our Country's welfare, greatness, and blessedness.

I do therefore consider it as a token of good to our land, that it pleased Almighty God to dispose you, by allowing the dedication of this Work to yourself, to take it thus under your patronage.

If it should appear on comparing the truths here set forth, with the sentiments current and prevalent in this day, that we have as a nation departed from the high standard of our Protestant

forefathers, we may be assisted by this seasonable re-publication, in obeying the directions of the Supreme Head of the Church, to those in such a state.—*Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.*

Every thing human is changing, fluctuating, and passing away. All earthly power, though entrusted of God to those who wield it, for the good of others, and to be honoured and submitted to by every one for conscience sake, is fading and transitory; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. It is the one thing sure amidst the vast variety of human sentiments; the one thing that is abiding amidst a dying world. The Reformers of the 16th century were mighty in the Scriptures, and therefore they were not only mighty to pull down all error, but mighty also in the more difficult and arduous work of instituting those standing Ordinances of God now amongst us which have been such a lasting blessing to our Land.

Nor may we be without the cheering hope that if their Institutions be duly prized by us and freely communicated from us, these Ordinances of our Protestant Forefathers may be a



yet more extensive blessing, through our beloved Country, to the whole earth. The loving-kindness of God is ever overflowing as well as unchangeable and enduring. Receiving through his love our Liturgy and really prizing it, British Christians have translated it into many foreign languages for the use of Jews and of Gentiles. Men may now behold, scattered over our wide-spread possessions in Asia, Africa, and America, as well as in vast regions, and also in remote Isles of the Ocean, not under British Dominions, congregations assembling from Sabbath to Sabbath, where the holy, pure, and heavenly prayers of our Liturgy are offering up by devout worshippers of every clime and of varied language, each addressing the true God in his own tongue wherein he was born. Nor are we without good hope that Britain, which received from Judea that inestimable treasure the word of God, will speedily render back to that Country for the use of Jewish Christian Congregations there, OUR PRECIOUS LITURGY, as an acceptable present to the daughter of Zion now sitting in the dust at Jerusalem. That summary of the faith and devotion of the Churches of Christ in successive ages, drawn from the Bible, already sounds forth in the Hebrew Language in a service at the Episcopal Jews' Chapel in London, and for transplanting it to

a Christian Church on the literal Mount Zion, the way is now prepared. May our merciful God thus realize to our Country that original promise made to the Father of the faithful, and sure to all his seed, *I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing!*

That it may please the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, long to preserve your Majesty to adorn by Christian graces your elevated station; and that all in authority over us may live in the personal enjoyment of the heavenly light and holy love of God's truth, and in the firm maintenance of that truth, and seeking its wide diffusion, as the true means of national greatness and prosperity, is the hearty prayer of one who has now the honour to subscribe himself, with deep respect,

Your Majesty's faithful servant,

EDWARD BICKERSTETH.

WATTON RECTORY,  
*Herts. August 10, 1837.*

# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

ON THE

## LETTERS OF THE REFORMERS.

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You have here before you, Christian reader, the choicest portion of the Book of Martyrs in the Letters of the Reformers, gathered by that eminent servant of God Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, the same to whom we are indebted for the first printed English Bible, which was completed October 4, 1535. The present volume was published by Coverdale in 1564. It contains the most spiritual letters of the Martyrs, written during their sufferings, and it is much to be regretted that this excellent work should have become so scarce and costly as to have been till now almost inaccessible.

The publisher, kindly acceding to the request of the author of these remarks, undertook to reprint it, and that at so reasonable a price, that it is hoped it may soon be in the possession of every Christian family in our country, preserving among us the hallowed memory of those faithful Martyrs for Christ, through whose sufferings, by the loving kindness of our God, the pure Gospel of Christ has been continued amongst us for 300 years.

This publication seems eminently seasonable at a period when some in our country seem relinquishing without regret, and rather hailing the change as a mark of freedom, those characters of our Constitution to which we owe, under God who gave all to us, so much of our national greatness, liberty and blessedness; I mean the truly Christian foundations of the English government in the profession and national maintenance of a pure Protestant form of religion,

and in a constitution requiring those in authority avowedly to act as God's ministers for good.

There has been much spoken and written on the subject of epistolary compositions, the faults to be avoided and the excellencies to be sought after; the danger of affectation and the beauty of simplicity; while the most important element, the themes of our mutual communion, has been too much overlooked. We see here a beautiful specimen of what Christian correspondence may be, and in its measure should ever be:—the heart full of the love of Christ, pouring out of this fulness, and seeking from its own blessed enjoyment of the truth to bring others to the same happiness; calm in the midst of the fiery trial from inward peace with God, and, with the holy love which the Gospel inspires, labouring to reclaim the wandering, to confirm the wavering, to comfort the feeble minded, and every where to hold forth the word of life, in the light of which is the true holiness and blessedness of men.

The very first letter in this volume by Archbishop Cranmer is full of instruction. On a careless reading, we might wonder why Coverdale should have inserted one at the very beginning that seems so humiliating. It was a scriptural judgment that led him to this. The spirit of the world is a spirit of proud self justification; the spirit of a Christian is self condemnatory; a spirit that makes us keenly sensitive to our own faults, and ever ready to confess them where we have been led into error. How different too is the standard of the world from that by which the Christian tries what is right before God. The world thinks that if we have acted conscientiously, it is a sufficient excuse for any error we have made, and quite enough to make sufferings from others unjust. The Christian sees and knows that he sins even when he does any thing wrong ignorantly, for his mind ought to have been more enlightened, and his conscience more tender. We may see too, in this first letter, that the more a Christian, under the

fear of having done wrong, shrinks from justifying himself in a question affecting personal reputation only, the more bold and faithful he may be in witnessing for the truth; as was proved by Cranmer himself afterwards, in his following Christ even to prison and to death.

The spirit of the reformers, as we see from these letters, was one of deep respect to rulers for their office sake, even when acting as enemies to the truth, and imbruing their hands in innocent blood. Thus Cranmer's dying exhortation at the stake to the people was this, "that next under God you obey your king and queen willingly and gladly; without murmuring or grudging, not for fear of them only, but much more for the fear of God, knowing that they are God's ministers, appointed by God to rule and govern you, and therefore whosoever resisteth them resisteth the ordinance of God."

We recognize here the same spirit which made St. Paul, when he learned that it was the High Priest who had ordered to smite him on the cheek before his cause was heard, thus excuse his own just rebuke; *I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest, for it is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.* It is the character, however, of the last days, fearfully verified in our times, *to despise dominion and speak evil of dignities; to be murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaking great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage, while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.* O that we may in humility learn of our pious forefathers the scriptural way to be a blessing to our country by holding forth the truth clearly in the spirit of love, by suffering for it willingly, and in all lawful things submitting ourselves cheerfully to those placed over us.

These letters seem to meet two opposite evils to which we are greatly exposed in these latter days: latitudinarianism and spiritual pride. In the infidel spirit of

latitudinarianism, some seem ready to give up that which the word of the living God has sanctioned and demands, and to think all modes of faith matters of indifference: let them here see men undergoing reproach, distress, and suffering, rather than give up one truth of God's word. On the other hand, there are those in great danger from spiritual pride, in different forms; some the pride of right doctrinal views, and others the pride of antiquity, of self-righteous formality, and such may here learn deep lessons of love to all men; the Martyrs shed their own blood that their countrymen who put them to death, might freely receive the Gospel of God's grace; a heart enlarged in love to all others is the sure and true result of genuine Christian doctrine.

Most seasonable are these letters to guard us against that return to papal doctrine and superstition to which some seem tending, instead of *standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, entangling themselves*, and thus seeking to entangle others *again with the yoke of bondage*. The apostle speaks of an unaccountable seduction of evil in this; *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth*. And it is said of the mystical Babylon, *by thy sorceries were all nations deceived*. May the clear developement given in these letters of the true character of popery as most cruel, deceitful and evil, help to dispel all its seductive witchery! May the spirit of genuine love to the souls of its deceived adherents here manifested, teach us how to manifest real and faithful love to them.\*

The beautiful spirit of faith given to the British reformers, enabling them to rise so superior to all the terrors with which they were surrounded, suggests to our minds the great importance of that distinction, which the apostle

\* Very much it is to be desired when so useful a republication of the early Fathers is about to be issued from the University Press at Oxford, that, what would be a still more valuable gift to the church, a republication on a similar plan of the British and Foreign Reformers, should issue from the University Press at Cambridge.

James makes between dead and living faith. He gives us a description of Christians in a low state, *hearers only and not doers of the word, deceiving themselves*, having respect of persons, paying great attention to the wealthy man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and despising the poor man in vile raiment; talking to the poor indeed in a friendly way, *be ye warmed and filled*, and yet not giving them what is needful. Such a faith he calls a dead faith, and the man who has this only is a vain man; and St. Jude describes Christians of this stamp as *trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit; twice dead, plucked up by the roots*. It is to be feared that this is on a very large scale the character of the faith of Christians, when the church has long been in a state of outward rest and tranquillity, as in the present day. O, how opposite to this is the faith of the church in a state of persecution! What liveliness, what energy of thought, what kindness of heart, what readiness to suffer, what fruitfulness in all holy feelings, what ardent love, what fervent prayer, what desire for the good of enemies, what boldness for Christ, what care to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world! The Lord ever makes an abundant recompense to his own children in their affliction, by greatly increasing their graces. May we be deeply humbled in comparing the lively faith of the Martyrs in their day, with our dead faith in these days of ease.

In reading these letters we may be led to see the faithfulness of that promise: *the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance*, connected with the assurance *he hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour*. Suffering for Christ's sake, brought them great contempt, much wondering scorn, with much temporal loss, bodily pain and affliction; but how has it issued? in lasting blessings to their country, and in real honour to themselves even now, while their happy spirits are still waiting for their full reward.

We see in the Old Testament what mercies came upon the seed of Abraham as the fruit of his self-denial and self-sacrifice for God. We see what mercies came upon the Jews for David's sake, (Psalms cxxxii. and lxxxix. Isa. xxxvii. xxxv. Jer. xxxiii. xxi. and xxvi.) and, though their national sins often brought down divine judgments, yet for Abraham's sake and for David's sake, they were mitigated and shortened; the faith of the pious forefathers availed to be a lasting blessing to the people.

In the same manner the faith of our pious reformers has been a rich blessing to this country. Their martyrdom and blood was the seed of the British churches. We should view this as a great motive to present self-denial. Looking forward at the generations yet to come, and the fulness of blessings yet in store for our world at the return and kingdom of our Redeemer, we may without rashness imagine that our reformers, nay, that each suffering believer now, may, in the ages to come, have an extent of usefulness and blessedness equal to that which we see already to have resulted from the faith of Abraham and the piety of David. *Of the increase of our Saviour's government and peace there shall be no end.* Such a hope may animate our hearts to many sacrifices.

The Christian's reward is a growing reward. Secular historians, indeed, now little delight in celebrating the praises of reformers and martyrs in the church of God. Very striking is the contrast drawn by Cowper respecting the patriot's and martyr's fame in this world; but in the close of this contrast he thus illustrates the higher excellence of the martyr:

\* \* A patriot's blood

Well spent in such a strife, may earn indeed,

And for a time ensure, to his beloved land,

The sweets of liberty and equal laws.

But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,

And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed

In confirmation of the noblest claim;



Our claim to feed upon immortal truth ;  
 To walk with God, to be divinely free ;  
 To soar, and to anticipate the skies.  
 Yet few remember them. They lived unknown,  
 Till persecution dragged them into fame,  
 And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew  
 No marble tells us whither. With their names  
 No bard embalms and sanctifies his song :  
 And history, so warm on meaner themes  
 Is cold on that. She execrates indeed  
 The tyranny that devoted them to the fire,  
 But gives the glorious sufferers little praise.

Let us learn too in their history the nature of true dignity and glory. It is not wealth, it is not rank, it is not literature, or success in arms, in science, in discovery. *Virtus vera nobilitas*, is the motto of one of our colleges. The true greatness of the christian is the union of righteousness and love, so as cheerfully to pass through sufferings for the good of others. This is the best embalming, far beyond those costly spices with which the Egyptians embalmed Israel. Words of truth, peace and love, breathing grace amidst cruel hatred, and patience amidst afflictions ; these are a more precious ointment than the richest eastern spices which Arabia or the east ever yielded, and yield a more enduring fragrance. Let every christian awake to an aim after this high standard, and the times of refreshing would speedily be given from the presence of the Lord, and the whole earth be as the paradise of God.

May it please Him of his goodness, by this blessed hope and its attendant glories, to strengthen the faith, revive the confidence, and restore the union of his church in the time of need. For indeed, if I have been led to a right understanding of the purposes of God as revealed in his word, and of the signs of the times as manifested in the actual state of all nations, and of the dispersed Jews, and in the fearful apostacy of the Gentile churches, the long predicted day of great tribulation preceding our Saviour's return, (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21. Jer. xxx. 7. Dan. xii. 1. Matt. xxiv. 41.

Rev. vii. 14. and xvi. 18.) is rapidly hastening to us ; a day of great trial and purification and glory to the church (Dan. xii. 10. and Rev. vii. 14.) and which will also lead on to the final overthrow of Satan and all his followers.

In this view we may be the more thankful for the publication of these letters, as eminently calculated to shew us the Christian's spirit in the time of suffering, and the sure support he may then receive from his God and Saviour. The present calm and quiet, with all the symptoms of the coming earthquake, is a gracious season of preparation, in which we are instructed by our Lord to act like the wise virgins, gathering in our vessels the oil of truth, such as will make our lamps shine brightly when midnight darkness may be closing around us. Let us count well the cost which the profession of the Gospel may demand. Let us be firmly established in God's truth, that we may boldly confess it in the day of trial. Let us now deny ourselves in little things, that we may have a prepared mind for greater sacrifices. Let us be encouraged to all this by recalling to our minds the power of the Holy Ghost in past ages, which alone can enable such weak creatures as we are to stand in the day of trial, by looking to Jesus whose eye is upon us, and who assures that if faithful unto death, he will give us the crown of life. Let us realize the greatness of the privilege of suffering for his name's sake, and the full glory to be given to all who have confessed our Redeemer on earth, who shall rise, at his coming, in the resurrection of life, and reign with him for ever and ever.

EDWARD BICKERSTETH.


WATTON RECTORY,  
Herts., August 10, 1837.



{ *For thy sake are we put to death every day,  
 And are counted as sheep appointed to be slain.* } *Psa. 44.*  
*Romans 8.*



{ *How long O Lord?  
 Behold, I come shortly.  
 Oh come Lord Jesus.  
 He will come, and not tarry.* } *Psalm 13.*  
*Apo. 22.*  
*Apo. 22.*  
*Abac. 2.*



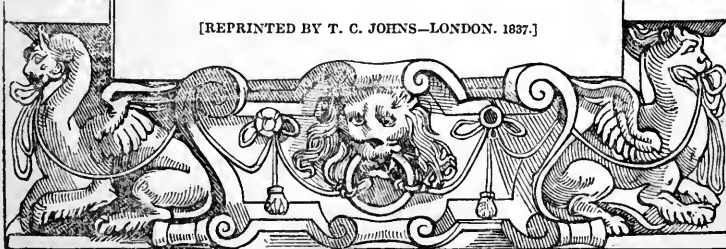
**Certain Most Godly,  
Fruitful, and Comfortable Letters**  
of such true Saints and holy Martyrs of  
God, as in the late bloody persecution  
here within this Realm, gave their  
libes for the defence of Christ's  
holy Gospel: written in the  
time of their affliction and  
cruel imprisonment.

*Though they suffer pain among men, yet is  
their hope full of immortality. Sap. 3.*

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Saint Martins. 1564.*

*Cum gratia et privilegio Regiæ Majestatis.*

[REPRINTED BY T. C. JOHNS—LONDON. 1837.]





# MILES COVERDALE

UNTO THE CHRISTIAN READER,

Most heartily wisheth the continual increase of heavenly taste  
and spiritual sweetness, in the same assured Salvation,  
which cometh only through Jesus Christ.

THE more nigh that men's words and works approach unto the most wholesome sayings and fruitful doings of the old ancient Saints, and chosen children of God, which loved not only to hear his word but also to live thereafter, the more worthy are they to be esteemed, embraced, and followed. And therefore, as we hear and read of many godly, both men and women, whose conversation in old time was beautified with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost (according as the Apostle describeth them in the 11th chapter to the Hebrews), so have we just cause to rejoyce, that we have been familiar and acquainted with some of those, which walked in the trade<sup>1</sup> of their footsteps. For the which <sup>1 track</sup> cause, it doth us good to read and hear—not the lying legends of feigned, false, counterfeited, and popish canonized saints, neither the trifling toys and forged fables of corrupted writers—but, such true, holy, and approved histories, monuments, orations, epistles, and letters, as do set forth unto us the blessed behaviour of God's dear servants. It doth us good, I say, by such comfortable remembrance

conceived by their notable writings, to be conversant with them, at the least in spirit.

St. Hierome, writing to one Nitia, and having occasion to speak of letters or epistles, maketh mention of a certain author named Turpilius, whose words, saith he, are these: “A letter or epistle is the thing alone that maketh men present which are absent. For among those that are absent, what is so present,<sup>1</sup> as to hear and talk with those whom thou lovest?” Also that noble clerk, Erasmus Roterodame, commending the book of the epistles or letters which St. Augustine did write, saith thus: “By some of Augustine’s books, we may perceive what manner of man he was, being an infant in Christ. By other some, we may know what manner a one he was, being a young man, and what he was being an old man. But by this only book” (meaning the book of the epistles or letters) “thou shalt know whole Augustine altogether.” And why doth St. Hierome or Erasmus say thus? No doubt, even because that in such writings, as in a clear glass, we may see and behold, not only what plentiful furniture and store of heavenly grace, wisdom, knowledge, understanding, faith, love, hope, zeal, patience, meekness, obedience, with the worthy fruits thereof, Almighty God had bestowed upon the same his most dear children, but also what a fatherly care he ever had unto them; how his mighty hand defended them: how his providence kept watch and ward over them; how his loving eye looked unto them; how his gracious ear heard their prayers; how he was always mindful of them, never forgot them, never failed them, nor forsook them; how the arms of his mercy were stretched out to embrace them, whensoever they faithfully turned unto him: how valiant also and strong in spirit, how joyful under the cross, how quiet and cheerful

<sup>1</sup> perhaps welcome



in trouble, he made them ; what victory over their enemies, what deliverance out of bonds and captivity, what health from sickness, what recovery from plagues, what plenty from scarceness—to be short, what help, at all need and necessity he gave and bestowed upon them.

By such like monuments also and writings, it is manifest and plain, how the same dear children of God in their time behaved themselves, as well towards him, as also towards their friends and foes : yea, what the very thoughts of their hearts were, when they prayed (as their manner was incessantly to do) ; when they confessed their sins and complained unto God ; when they gave thanks ; when they were persecuted and troubled ; when they were by the hand of God visited ; when they felt, not only the horror of death, the grief of sin, and the burden of God's displeasure by reason of the same, but also the sweet taste of his great mercy and eternal comfort, through Jesus Christ, in their conscience. Of the which things, like as we may evidently perceive rich and plentiful experience in the heavenly treasury of that most excellent book, which we commonly call David's Psalter ; so hath not God now in our days left himself without witnesses, yea, no more than he did in other ages before us : but, of his abundant goodness, even when the late persecution was most cruel, and the enemy's rage most extreme, he hath raised up such zealous men and women, as (by the wonderful operation of his Holy Spirit) of weak were made so valiant and strong in him, (as well against all idolatry, superstition, false doctrine, and corrupted religion, as against their own old blemishes and sins,) that they have turned to flight and confounded the whole rabble of such malicious Papists, as were the persecutors and murderers of them.

Whereby they that list not still to be blind, may plainly

behold and see, not only the terrible judgments of God over and against the wicked, but also his wonderful doings mixed with mercy in and towards his chosen; unto whom, as unto them that love him, he causeth all things to work for the best. So that with him, by the heavenly light of stedfast faith, they see life even in death: with him, even in heaviness and sorrow, they fail not of joy and comfort: with him, even in poverty, affliction, and trouble, they neither perish nor are forsaken. How else could they be so patient, so quiet of mind, so cheerful and merry in adversity and strait captivity? some being thrown into dungeons, ugly holes, dark, loathsome, and stinking corners; other some lying in fetters and chains, and loaded with so many irons that they could scarcely stir; some tied in the stocks with their heels upward; some having their legs in the stocks, and their necks chained to the wall with gorgets of iron; some, both hands and legs in the stocks at once; sometimes both hands in, and both legs out; sometimes the right hand with the left leg, or the left hand with the right leg fastened in the stocks with manacles and fetters, having neither stool nor stone to sit on, to ease their woeful bodies withal; some standing in most painful engines of iron, with their bodies doubled; some whipped and scourged, beat with rods, and buffeted with fists; some having their hands burned with a candle, to try their patience, or force them to relent; some hunger-pined, and most miserably famished. All these torments and many more, even such as cruel Phalaris could not devise worse, were practised by the Papists, the stout sturdy soldiers of Satan thus delighting in variety of tyranny and torments; upon the Saints of God, as it is full well and too well known, and as many can testify which are yet alive, and have felt some smart thereof. Yea and furthermore, so

ugly

Those engines are call Skevington's gyves, the form and manner whereof you shall see in the book of Martyrs, fol. 1651.

If these unmerciful monsters had the reward of their tyranny that Phalaris had, yet should they not have so much as they have justly deserved.

extremely were these dear servants of God dealt withal, that, although they were most desirous by their pen and writing to edify their brethren, other poor lambs of Christ and one to comfort another in him, yet were they so narrowly watched and straitly kept from all necessary helps, as paper, ink, books, and such like, that great marvel it is how they could be able to write any one of these or other so excellent and worthy letters. For so hardly were they used (as I said afore) for the most part, that they could not end their letters begun: sometime for lack of ease, being so fettered with chains, and otherwise handled as you have heard; sometime for lack of light, when they could neither see to write well, nor to read their letters again; and sometime through the hasty coming in of the keepers or officers, who left no corner nor bed-straw unsearched; yea, sometime they were put to so hard shifts, that like as for lack of pens they were fain to write with the lead of the windows, so for want of ink they took their own blood (as yet it remaineth to be seen); and yet sometime they were fain to tear and rend what they had written, at the hasty coming in of the officers.

Notwith-  
standing  
all this  
cruel deal-  
ing, they  
wrote very  
many wor-  
thy and  
fruitful  
letters  
more:  
whereof  
sundry are  
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book;  
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whose  
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remain,  
will bring  
them to  
light.

Thus, thus unkindly, thus churlishly, thus cruelly and unnaturally, were even they entreated and handled, whose most notable and godly writings are here set forth in this book. For the which, and such other monuments, great cause have we to praise God: which he himself hath preserved and brought to light, no doubt by his singular great providence; that hereby we being taught to have his mighty mercy and merciful working the more in reverent and thankful regard, might not only consider [with] what heavenly strength and rich possession of constant faith, of ardent zeal, of quiet patience, of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, he useth to arm them that can find in their hearts to abhor

all ungodliness both of doctrine and life, but also to join with them ourselves ; in such sort that, looking to Jesus our captain, abiding the cross and despising the shame, as they did for the joy that was set before them, [we] may with much quietness of a good conscience end this our short course, to his glory, to the edifying of his church, to the confusion of Satan, to the hinderance of all false doctrine, and to our own eternal comfort in the same our Lord and alone Saviour Jesus Christ. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, all glory, all thanks, and all praise, world without end. Amen.

# A TABLE OF THE LETTERS

*Contained in this Book, declaring by whom, and to whom, they  
were written.*

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## Letters of Doctor Cranmer,

*ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.*

|                                                                                                               |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| A Letter to Queen Mary . . . . .                                                                              | 1  |
| Another Letter to Queen Mary . . . . .                                                                        | 3  |
| To the Lords of the Council . . . . .                                                                         | 13 |
| A Letter wherein he reproveth the slanderous reports<br>that he had set up Mass again at Canterbury . . . . . | 14 |
| To a certain Lawyer . . . . .                                                                                 | 15 |
| To Mistress Wilkinson . . . . .                                                                               | 18 |

## Letters of Doctor Ridley,

*BISHOP OF LONDON.*

|                                                                   |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| To the Brethren dispersed abroad in sundry prisons, &c. . . . .   | 19 |
| To the Brethren which constantly cleave unto Christ, &c. . . . .  | 23 |
| To Queen Mary . . . . .                                           | 27 |
| In answer to West . . . . .                                       | 29 |
| To Master Hooper . . . . .                                        | 32 |
| A Letter sent unto him by Master Grindal being in exile . . . . . | 34 |
| An Answer written by him to the former Letter . . . . .           | 36 |
| A Letter to Dr. Cranmer and Dr. Latimer . . . . .                 | 40 |
| Eight several Letters to Master Bradford . . . . .                | 41 |
| Three Letters to Augustine Berneher . . . . .                     | 51 |
| To Mistress Mary Glover . . . . .                                 | 54 |
| To a Friend that came to visit him in the prison . . . . .        | 55 |
| A Letter of his cruel handling in Oxford . . . . .                | 56 |
| To Doctor Weston . . . . .                                        | 57 |

|                                                                                                  |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| To a Cousin of his . . . . .                                                                     | 58 |
| A Letter written to all his faithful Friends as his last<br>farewell . . . . .                   | 59 |
| Another farewell to the prisoners in the cause of Christ's<br>Gospel . . . . .                   | 77 |
| A Letter of his cruel handling in the Schools at Oxford,<br>and of his condemnation, &c. . . . . | 84 |

### Letters of Master Hooper,

*BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.*

|                                                                                                         |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To certain godly persons, instructing them how to use<br>themselves at the change of religion . . . . . | 85  |
| To certain of his relievers and helpers in the City of<br>London . . . . .                              | 88  |
| An answer to a Letter, whereby he was certified of<br>them that were taken at Bow Church Yard . . . . . | 90  |
| To the Prisoners in both Counters which were taken at<br>Bow Church Yard . . . . .                      | 90  |
| To certain of his Friends, exhorting them to stick to<br>the truth . . . . .                            | 92  |
| Another Letter to the same effect . . . . .                                                             | 94  |
| To a Merchant, by whom he had received comfort in<br>the Fleet . . . . .                                | 95  |
| A Letter of his cruel handling in the Fleet . . . . .                                                   | 96  |
| A Letter against false reports that he had recanted . . . . .                                           | 98  |
| To Mistress Wilkinson . . . . .                                                                         | 99  |
| To Mistress A. W. . . . .                                                                               | 99  |
| To Master Farrer, Doctor Taylor, Master Bradford, and<br>Master Philpot . . . . .                       | 101 |
| To Master John Hall and his Wife . . . . .                                                              | 103 |
| To one that was fallen from the truth of the Gospel . . . . .                                           | 104 |
| To the faithful in the City of London . . . . .                                                         | 106 |
| To a certain Woman, teaching her how to behave herself<br>in her widowhood . . . . .                    | 107 |
| A Letter, concerning a Woman that was troubled with<br>her Husband in matters of Religion . . . . .     | 108 |
| To his beloved W. P. . . . .                                                                            | 111 |
| To Master John Hall . . . . .                                                                           | 111 |
| An Exhortation to his Wife . . . . .                                                                    | 112 |
| To the Christian Congregation . . . . .                                                                 | 120 |
| A Letter of Master Bullinger to Master Hooper . . . . .                                                 | 125 |

### Letters of Doctor Taylor.

|                                                                               |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To Doctor Cranmer, Doctor Ridley, and Doctor Latimer . . . . .                | 129 |
| To a Friend of his, concerning his talk with the Com-<br>missioners . . . . . | 130 |
| A Letter concerning the cause of his condemnation . . . . .                   | 133 |
| To his Wife and Children . . . . .                                            | 135 |
| Another Letter to his Wife . . . . .                                          | 493 |

**Letters of Master Laurence Saunders.**

|                                                                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To Doctor Cramner, Doctor Ridley, and Doctor Latimer                              | 136 |
| To the Professors of the Gospel in the Town of Lichfield                          | 139 |
| To Mistress Lucy Harrington . . . . .                                             | 144 |
| Another to Mistress Harrington . . . . .                                          | 146 |
| To his Wife, Mistress Harrington, and Mistress Hurland                            | 147 |
| Another Letter to them . . . . .                                                  | 149 |
| A Letter concerning Doctor Weston's coming to him to<br>the Marshalsea . . . . .  | 150 |
| To his Wife, and certain other of his Friends . . . . .                           | 151 |
| Two other Letters to his Wife . . . . .                                           | 153 |
| To Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester . . . . .                               | 154 |
| To his Wife, and other of his Friends . . . . .                                   | 156 |
| Another Letter to his Wife, and certain other of his<br>Friends . . . . .         | 158 |
| Two Letters to Master Robert Glover and John Glover                               | 158 |
| To a certain Backslider from the truth of God's Word .                            | 159 |
| To Master Farrer, Doctor Taylor, Master Bradford, and<br>Master Philpot . . . . . | 161 |
| A Letter to Mistress Harrington . . . . .                                         | 162 |

**Letters of Master Philpot.**

|                                                                               |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| A Letter written to the Christian Congregation . . . . .                      | 165 |
| To John Careless, prisoner in the King's Bench . . . . .                      | 171 |
| Another Letter to John Careless . . . . .                                     | 173 |
| An answer of John Careless to the former Letter . . . . .                     | 176 |
| To certain godly Women going beyond the Seas . . . . .                        | 179 |
| An Exhortation written to a Sister of his . . . . .                           | 181 |
| To Master Robert Harrington . . . . .                                         | 183 |
| To Master Robert Glover, prisoner in Coventry . . . . .                       | 185 |
| To Mistress Hcath . . . . .                                                   | 186 |
| To John Careless . . . . .                                                    | 188 |
| To Mistress J. Hartipole . . . . .                                            | 189 |
| To a faithful Woman, exhorting her to be patient under<br>the Cross . . . . . | 191 |
| To certain of his Friends, as his last farewell . . . . .                     | 497 |

**Letters of Master Bradford.**

|                                                                                           |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To the faithful Professors of God's Word in the City of<br>London . . . . .               | 192 |
| To the true Professors of God's Word in the University<br>and Town of Cambridge . . . . . | 197 |

|                                                                                                                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To the Professors of the true Religion of Christ in Lancashire and Cheshire . . . . .                                                    | 201 |
| To the unfeigned Professors of the Truth dwelling at Walden . . . . .                                                                    | 206 |
| To the Honourable Lord Russell . . . . .                                                                                                 | 211 |
| Another Letter to the Lord Russell . . . . .                                                                                             | 213 |
| To Master Warcup, Mistress Wilkinson, and other his Friends . . . . .                                                                    | 215 |
| To Sir James Hales . . . . .                                                                                                             | 220 |
| To his Mother . . . . .                                                                                                                  | 223 |
| To Dr. Hill, Physician . . . . .                                                                                                         | 226 |
| To Mistress M. H. . . . .                                                                                                                | 229 |
| Another Letter to her . . . . .                                                                                                          | 233 |
| To his beloved W. P. . . . .                                                                                                             | 234 |
| To Mistress J. H. . . . .                                                                                                                | 235 |
| To Master Humphrey Hales . . . . .                                                                                                       | 238 |
| Another Letter to Master Humphrey Hales . . . . .                                                                                        | 240 |
| To certain of his Friends, encouraging to be joyful under the Cross . . . . .                                                            | 241 |
| To Master Laurence Saunders, prisoner in the Marshalsea                                                                                  | 245 |
| Another Letter to Master Saunders . . . . .                                                                                              | 246 |
| A Letter of comfort to a faithful Woman in her heaviness and trouble . . . . .                                                           | 247 |
| To his loving brethren B. and C. . . . .                                                                                                 | 253 |
| To the Lady Vane . . . . .                                                                                                               | 256 |
| Two other Letters to the Lady Vane . . . . .                                                                                             | 257 |
| To his dear friends R. and G. . . . .                                                                                                    | 259 |
| To Mistress Wilkinson . . . . .                                                                                                          | 262 |
| Another Letter to Mistress Wilkinson . . . . .                                                                                           | 263 |
| To Master Richard Hopkins . . . . .                                                                                                      | 264 |
| Another Letter to Master Richard Hopkins . . . . .                                                                                       | 271 |
| To Doctors Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, prisoners in Oxford . . . . .                                                                   | 273 |
| To his friend Master Shaleross and his Wife . . . . .                                                                                    | 275 |
| To his godly friends, G. and N. exhorting them to be patient under the cross . . . . .                                                   | 279 |
| Another Letter to certain Godly Persons to the same effect . . . . .                                                                     | 281 |
| Another Letter to the same persons . . . . .                                                                                             | 284 |
| To John Careless . . . . .                                                                                                               | 286 |
| To Master John Hall and his Wife, prisoners in Newgate                                                                                   | 287 |
| A Letter to Mistress Hall . . . . .                                                                                                      | 290 |
| An Admonition to certain Professors of the Truth, that they consent not to the shrinking, halting, and double-faced gossellers . . . . . | 291 |
| To his friend, Master R. and his Wife . . . . .                                                                                          | 294 |
| To Sir W. Fitzwilliams, Knight . . . . .                                                                                                 | 296 |
| To his friend, Master Coker . . . . .                                                                                                    | 298 |
| To a Friend of his, instructing him how he should answer his adversaries . . . . .                                                       | 299 |
| To a Friend of his, entreating of God's election and predestination . . . . .                                                            | 301 |



|                                                                                                                                                    |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To a Woman, desiring to know whether she might come to the popish mattins . . . . .                                                                | 308 |
| To the Lady Vane . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 310 |
| To Master John Philpot . . . . .                                                                                                                   | 314 |
| To R. Cole and N. Shetterden . . . . .                                                                                                             | 314 |
| To Robert Cole . . . . .                                                                                                                           | 316 |
| To Mistress Elizabeth Brown . . . . .                                                                                                              | 317 |
| Another Letter to Mistress Brown . . . . .                                                                                                         | 318 |
| A Letter to a friend of his, whom he called Nathaniel . . . . .                                                                                    | 319 |
| To certain Godly Men, exhorting them to patience and constancy in the truth . . . . .                                                              | 322 |
| To Mistress W. and Mistress W. . . . .                                                                                                             | 325 |
| To Mistress M. H. . . . .                                                                                                                          | 327 |
| To all the Professors of the Gospel within the realm of England . . . . .                                                                          | 328 |
| To Master George Eaton . . . . .                                                                                                                   | 342 |
| Another Letter to Master Eaton . . . . .                                                                                                           | 345 |
| A Letter to his Mother, as his farewell . . . . .                                                                                                  | 346 |
| A Letter to his Mother, as his last farewell . . . . .                                                                                             | 349 |
| To One by whom he had received much comfort in his imprisonment . . . . .                                                                          | 350 |
| To Mistress A. W. . . . .                                                                                                                          | 351 |
| Another Letter to Mistress A. W. . . . .                                                                                                           | 352 |
| To certain Relievers of him and others in their imprisonment . . . . .                                                                             | 353 |
| To Doctor Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer . . . . .                                                                                                   | 358 |
| To the Lady Vane . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 359 |
| Two Letters of Augustine Berneher . . . . .                                                                                                        | 360 |
| To certain Men not rightly persuaded in the Doctrine of Election, &c. . . . .                                                                      | 361 |
| To Trew and Abington free-will Men . . . . .                                                                                                       | 364 |
| Another Letter to Them . . . . .                                                                                                                   | 365 |
| To Queen Mary, the Council, and Parliament . . . . .                                                                                               | 366 |
| A Letter entreating of the place of St. Paul, concerning the desire and groanings of the creature, for the deliverance of God's children . . . . . | 367 |
| To certain Men, maintaining the heresy of man's free-will with the Pelagians and Papists . . . . .                                                 | 500 |

**Letters of Master Whittell.**

|                                                                         |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To his dear friend, J. Careless . . . . .                               | 376 |
| To Thomas Went and others . . . . .                                     | 378 |
| To the Professors of the Gospel in the City of London . . . . .         | 379 |
| To John Careless . . . . .                                              | 384 |
| To Master Fils and Cutbert . . . . .                                    | 386 |
| A Letter declaring how cruelly he was handled of Bonner . . . . .       | 502 |
| To a faithful Woman exhorting her to patience under the cross . . . . . | 504 |

**Letters of Master Robert Samuel.**

|                                                                                        |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| An exhortation to the patient suffering of afflictions . . .                           | 387 |
| A Letter to the Christian congregation, called the faith<br>of Robert Samuel . . . . . | 393 |

**Letters of Master John Hullper.**

|                                                        |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To the Christian congregation . . . . .                | 397 |
| Another Letter to the Christian congregation . . . . . | 402 |

**Letters of Master Robert Glover.**

|                                                      |     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| A Letter to his Wife : . . . . .                     | 405 |
| To the Mayor of Coventry, and his Brethren . . . . . | 416 |
| To his Wife and whole Family . . . . .               | 417 |

**Letters of Master Robert Smith.**

|                                                          |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To the true and unfeigned Professors of the Gospel . . . | 418 |
| A Letter to a Friend of his, to beware of Idolatry . . . | 424 |
| A Letter to his Wife . . . . .                           | 424 |

**Letters of Master Bartelet Green.**

|                                                            |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To his beloved in the Lord, Mistress Elizabeth C. . . .    | 425 |
| To certain Gentlemen of the Temple . . . . .               | 427 |
| To certain of his Friends, a little before his death . . . | 505 |

**Letters of Master John Careless.**

|                                                                                                     |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To certain in Newgate, condemned to be burned . . . .                                               | 429 |
| To Master Green, Master Whittell, and certain other<br>in Newgate, condemned to be burned . . . . . | 433 |
| To William Timms . . . . .                                                                          | 436 |
| To Mistress A. R. . . . .                                                                           | 439 |
| To his beloved sister, M. C. . . . .                                                                | 442 |
| Another Letter to M. C. . . . .                                                                     | 444 |
| To his dearly beloved, T. V. . . . .                                                                | 445 |
| Another Letter to T. V. . . . .                                                                     | 447 |
| To all the faithful Flock of Christ in the City of London                                           | 450 |
| To his Wife . . . . .                                                                               | 462 |
| To his dear sister, M. C. . . . .                                                                   | 464 |

|                                                                        |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To his faithful brother, Augustine Berncher . . . . .                  | 466 |
| To H. Adlington, condemned to die . . . . .                            | 469 |
| To W. Aylesbury . . . . .                                              | 473 |
| Two Letters to T. V. . . . .                                           | 475 |
| To Mistress Mary Glover . . . . .                                      | 479 |
| To Master John Bradford . . . . .                                      | 482 |
| To a Friend, by whom he had been comforted in his<br>trouble . . . . . | 485 |
| Another Letter to the same Person . . . . .                            | 486 |
| His Christian exercise . . . . .                                       | 488 |
| An Admonition to Mistress Jane Glascock . . . . .                      | 491 |
| To one Mistress Cotton . . . . .                                       | 506 |

### Letters of Master John Marsh.

|                                                                     |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| To the Professors of God's Word in the Town of<br>Langton . . . . . | 512 |
| To certain of his Friends at Manchester . . . . .                   | 519 |

### Letters of other Men.

|                                                                               |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| A Letter of Master John Rough . . . . .                                       | 507 |
| A Letter of Cuthbert Simpson . . . . .                                        | 508 |
| A Letter of Cuthbert Simpson, of his cruel handling in<br>the Tower . . . . . | 529 |
| A Letter of William Coker . . . . .                                           | 509 |
| A Letter of N. Shetterden . . . . .                                           | 510 |
| A Letter of the Lady Jane Grey . . . . .                                      | 510 |
| A Letter of Stephen Cotton to his brother J. Cotton . . . . .                 | 524 |
| A Letter of Richard Rothe to certain Condemned at<br>Colchester . . . . .     | 525 |
| A Letter of the Prisoners of Canterbury Castle . . . . .                      | 526 |
| A Letter of Doctor Ridley to Master Cheke, in King<br>Edward's days . . . . . | 527 |
| A Letter of Thomas Leaver to Master John Bradford.                            | 530 |

### NOTICE TO THE READER.

In the following pages the ancient spelling of Scripture names is frequently retained ; thus :—

|                                               |          |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Esay</i> , or <i>Esais</i> , for . . . . . | Isaiah   |
| <i>Jeremy</i> . . . . .                       | Jeremiah |
| <i>Elias</i> , or <i>Hely</i> , . . . .       | Elijah   |
| <i>Eliseus</i> . . . . .                      | Elisha   |
| <i>Jonas</i> . . . . .                        | Jonah    |
| <i>Osee</i> . . . . .                         | Hosea    |

In the Marginal References, moreover,

*Cant.* stands for *Canticles*, or *Solomon's Song*,

*Apoc.* or *Apo.* for *Apocalypse*, or *Revelation*.

# Letters of the Martyrs.

CERTAIN GODLY AND FRUITFUL LETTERS

OF

DOCTOR CRANMER,

Late Archbishop of Canterbury; who first being imprisoned in the Tower of London, and afterward in Oxford, was there cruelly burnt for the true testimony of Christ's Gospel, in the Year of our Lord, 1556, the 16th day of February.

Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, to Queen Mary.

Most lamentably mourning and moaning himself unto your highness, Thomas Cranmer, although unworthy either to write or speak unto your highness, yet having no person that I know, to be mediator for me, and knowing your pitiful ears ready to hear all pitiful complaints, and seeing so many before to have felt your abundant clemency in like case, am now constrained most lamentably, and with most penitent and sorrowful heart, to ask mercy and pardon for my heinous folly and offence, in consenting and following the testament and last will of our late Sovereign Lord, King Edward the Sixth, your Grace's brother; which will, God knoweth, God he knoweth, I never liked; nor never any thing grieved me so much that your grace's brother did; and if by any means it had been in me to have a-letted<sup>1</sup> the making of that will, I would have done it; and what I said therein, as well to his counsel as to himself, divers of your majesty's counsel can report, but none so well as the Marquis of Northampton, and the Lord Darcy, then lord chamberlain to the king's majesty, which two were present at the communication between the king's majesty and me. I desired to talk with the king's majesty alone, but I could not be suffered, and so I failed of my purpose: for if I might have communed with the king alone, and at good leisure, my trust was, that I should have prevented him from that purpose; but, they being present, my labour was in vain. Then when I could not dissuade him from the said will, and both he and his privy-council also informed me that the judges and his learned counsel said, that the act of entailing the crown, made by his father, could not be prejudicial to him, but that he, being in possession of the crown, might make his will thereof; this seemed very strange unto me: but, being the sentence of the judges, and other his learned counsel in the laws of this realm, (as both he and his

He desired to be released of his offence for consenting unto King Edward's will, and so he was, but after was accused of heresy, which he best liked for then he knew his cause was Christ's.

<sup>1</sup> hindered

counsel informed me,) methought it became not me, being unlearned in the law, to stand against my prince therein. And so at length I was required by the king's majesty himself, to set to my hand to his will, saying that he trusted that I alone would not be more repugnant to his will, than the rest of the counsel were (which words surely grieved my heart very sore) : and so I granted him to subscribe his will, and to follow the same ; which when I had set my hand unto, I did it unfeignedly, and without dissimulation. For the which, I submit myself most humbly unto your majesty, acknowledging mine offence with most grievous and sorrowful heart, and beseeching your mercy and pardon ; which my heart giveth<sup>1</sup> me shall not be denied unto me, being granted before to so many, which travailed<sup>2</sup> not so much to dissuade both the king and his counsel as I did. And whereas it is contained in two acts of parliament, (as I understand,) that I, with the Duke of Northumberland, should devise and compass the deprivation of your majesty from your royal crown, surely it is untrue : for the duke never opened his mouth to me, to move me to any such matter, nor I him ; nor his heart was not such towards me, seeking long time my destruction, that he would either trust me in such a matter, or think that I would be persuaded by him. It was other of the counsel that moved me, and the king himself, the Duke of Northumberland not being present. Neither before, nor after, had I ever any privy communication with the duke of that matter ; saving that, openly at the counsel table, the duke said unto me, that it became not me to say to the king as I did, when I went about to dissuade him from the said will.

Now, as concerning the estate of religion, as it is used in this realm of England at this present, if it please your highness to allow me, I would gladly write my mind unto your majesty. I will never, God willing, be author of sedition, to move subjects from the obedience of their heads and rulers, which is an offence most detestable. If I have uttered my mind to your majesty, being a Christian queen and governor of this realm, (of whom I am most assuredly persuaded, that your gracious intent is, above all other things, to prefer God's true word, his honour and glory,) if I have uttered, I say, my mind unto your majesty, then I shall think myself discharged ; for it lieth not in me, but in your grace only, to see the reformation of things that be amiss. To private subjects it appertaineth not to reform things, but quietly to suffer that they cannot amend ; yet, nevertheless, to shew your majesty my mind, in things appertaining unto God, methink it my duty, knowing that I do, and considering the place which in times past I have occupied. Yet will I not presume thereunto, without your grace's pleasure first known, and your permission obtained ; whereof I, most humbly prostrate to the ground, do beseech your majesty : and I shall not cease daily to pray to Almighty God,

<sup>1</sup> assuredly

<sup>2</sup> laboured

for the good preservation of your majesty from all enemies, bodily and ghostly, and for the increase of all goodness, heavenly and earthly, during my life—as I do and will do, whatsoever come of me.

### Another Letter to Queen Mary.

May it please your majesty to pardon my presumption, that I dare be so bold to write to your highness: but very necessity constraineth me; that your majesty may know my mind rather by mine own writing, than by other men's reports. So it is that upon Saturday, being the seventh day of this month, I was cited to appear at Rome, the eightieth day after, there to make answer to such matters as should be objected against me, upon behalf of the king, and your most excellent majesty: which matters, the Thursday following, were objected against me by Dr. Martin and Dr. Story, your majesty's proctors, before the Bishop of Gloucester, sitting in judgment by commission from Rome. But alas, it cannot but grieve the heart of any natural subject, to be accused of the king and queen of his own realm, and specially before an outward<sup>1</sup> judge, or by authority coming from any person out of this realm, where the king and queen, as if they were subjects within their own realm, shall complain and require justice at a stranger's hands against their own subject, being already condemned to death by their own laws; as though the king and queen could not do or have justice within their own realm against their own subjects, but they must seek it at a stranger's hands, in a strange land; the like whereof (I think) was never seen. I would have wished to have had some meaner adversaries; and I think that death shall not grieve me much more, than to have my most dread and most gracious sovereign lord and lady (to whom, under God, I do owe all obedience,) to be mine accusers in judgment within their own realm, before any stranger and outward power.

But forasmuch as in the time of the prince of most famous memory, King Henry VIII., your grace's father, I was sworn never to consent that the Bishop of Rome should have or exercise any authority or jurisdiction in this realm of England, therefore, lest I should allow his authority contrary to mine oath, I refused to make answer to the Bishop of Gloucester, sitting here in judgment by the pope's authority, lest I should run into perjury.

Another cause why I refused the pope's authority is this:—that his authority, as he claimeth it, repugneth to the crown imperial of this realm, and to the laws of the same, which every true subject is bound to defend. First, for that the pope saith, that all manner of power, as well temporal as spiritual, is given first to him of God; and that the temporal power he giveth unto emperors and kings to use it under him, but so as it be always at his command-

The king and queen make themselves no better than subjects, in complaining of their own subject to an outward judge, as though they had no power to punish him.

<sup>1</sup> foreign

The cause why he would not make answer to the pope's commissary, is to avoid perjury.

The second cause is for that the pope's laws are contrary to the crown and laws of England.

ment and beck. But, contrary to this claim, the imperial crown and jurisdiction temporal of this realm is taken immediately from God, to be used under him only, and is subject unto none but to God alone.

Moreover, the imperial laws and customs of this realm, the king in his coronation, and all justices when they receive their offices, be sworn, and all the whole realm is bound to defend and maintain. But, contrary hereunto, the pope by his authority maketh void, and commandeth to blot out of our books, all laws and customs being repugnant to his laws, and declareth accursed all rulers and governors, all the makers, writers, and executors of such laws or customs, as it appeareth by many of the pope's laws; whereof one or two I shall rehearse. In the decrees, *Distin. x.*, is written thus: "*Constitutiones contra canones et decreta præsulum Romanorum vel bonos mores nullius sunt momenti.*" That is, The constitutions or statutes enacted against the canons and decrees of the Bishops of Rome or their good customs are of none effect. Also, "*Extra de sententia excommunicationis, noverit. Excommunicamus omnes hæreticos utriusque sexus, quocunque nomine censeantur, et fautores, et receptatores, et defensores eorum: necnon et qui de cætero servari fecerint statuta edita et consuetudines contra ecclesiæ libertatem, nisi ea de capitularibus suis intra duos menses post hujusmodi publicationem sententiæ fecerint amoveri. Item excommunicamus statutarios, et scriptores statutorum ipsorum; necnon potestates, consules, rectores, et consiliarios locorum, ubi de cætero hujusmodi statuta et consuetudines editæ fuerint vel servatæ; necnon et illos qui secundum ea et præsumperint judicare, vel in publicam formam scribere judicata.*" That is to say, "We excommunicate all heretics, of both sexes, what name soever they be called by, and their favourers, and receptors, and defenders; and also them that shall hereafter cause to be observed statutes and customs made against the liberty of the church, except they cause the same to be put out of their books or records, within two months after the publication of this sentence. Also we excommunicate the statute makers, and writers of those statutes; and also the potentates, consuls, governors, and counsellors of places where such statutes and customs shall be made or kept; and also those that shall presume to give judgment according to them, or put into public form of writing the matters so judged." Now by these laws, if the Bishop of Rome's authority, which he claimeth by God, be lawful, all your grace's laws and customs of your realm, being contrary to the pope's laws, be naught, and as well your majesty, as your judges, justices, and all other executors of the same, stand accursed among heretics; which God forbid! And yet this curse can never be avoided, if the pope have such power as he claimeth, until such times as the laws and customs of this realm, being contrary to his laws, be taken away and blotted out

The oath of the king and justices, and the duty of subjects



of the law books. And although there be many laws of this realm contrary to the laws of Rome, yet I name but a few : as, to convict a clerk<sup>1</sup> before any temporal judge of this realm, for debt, felony, murder, or for any other crime ; which clerks, by the pope's laws, be so exempt from the king's laws, that they can be no where sued but before their ordinary. Also the pope by his laws, may give all bishoprics and benefices spiritual ; which, by the laws of this realm, can be given but only by the kings, and other patrons of the same, except they fall into the lapse. By the pope's laws, *jus patronatus* shall be sued only before the ecclesiastical judge ; but by the laws of this realm, it shall be sued before the temporal judge. And to be short, the laws of this realm do agree with the pope's laws like fire and water.—And yet the kings of this realm have provided for their laws, by the *præmunire* : so that if any man have let<sup>2</sup> the execution of the laws of this realm by any authority from the see of Rome, he falleth into the *præmunire*. But to meet with this, the popes have provided for their laws by cursing. For whosoever letteth<sup>3</sup> the pope's laws to have full course within this realm, by the pope's power standeth accursed. So that the pope's power treadeth all the laws and customs of this realm under his feet ; cursing all that execute them, until such time as they give place unto his laws.—But it may be said, that notwithstanding all the pope's decrees, yet we do execute still the laws and customs of this realm. Nay, not all quietly, without interruption of the pope. And where we do execute them, yet we do it unjustly, if the pope's power be of force, and for the same we stand excommunicate, and shall do, until we leave the execution of our own laws and customs. Thus we be well reconciled to Rome, allowing such authority, whereby the realm standeth accursed before God, if the pope have any such authority.

These things, as I suppose, were not fully opened in the parliament house, when the pope's authority was received again within this Realm ; for if they had, I do not believe that either the king or queen's majesty, or the nobles of this realm, or the commons of the same, would ever have consented to receive again such a sovereign authority, so injurious, hurtful, and prejudicial, as well to the crown, as to the laws and customs and state of this realm, as whereby they must needs acknowledge themselves to be accursed. But none could open this matter well but the clergy ; and *that*, such of them as had read the pope's laws, whereby the pope hath made himself as it were a God. These seek to maintain the pope, whom they desired to have their chief head, to the intent they might have (as it were,) a kingdom and laws within themselves, distinct from the laws of the crown, and wherewith the crown may not meddle ; and so, being exempted from the laws of the crown, might live in this realm like lords and

The pope's laws and the laws of England are contrary.

<sup>1</sup> clergyman

<sup>2</sup> hindered

<sup>3</sup> hindereth

kings, without damage or fear of any man, so that they please their high and supreme head at Rome. For this consideration, I ween, some that knew the truth, held their peace at the Parliament; whereas, if they had done their duties to the crown and whole realm, they should have opened their mouths, declared the truth, and shewed the perils and dangers that might ensue to the crown and realm. And if I should agree to allow such authority within this realm, whereby I must needs confess that your most gracious highness and also your realm should ever continue accursed, until you shall cease from the execution of your own laws and customs of your realm, I could not think myself true, either to your highness, or to this my natural country, knowing what I do know. Ignorance, I know, may excuse other men; but he that knoweth how prejudicial and injurious the power and authority which he challengeth every where is to the crown, laws and customs of this realm, and yet will allow the same, I cannot see in any way how he can keep his due allegiance, fidelity and truth to the crown and state of this realm.

The Papists to set up a kingdom of their own, dissemble the known truth and are false to the crown.

The third cause why he could not allow the pope.

The pope's religion is against Christ's religion.

Why Latin service ought not to be restored in England.

Another cause I alleged, why I could not allow the authority of the pope; which is this, That by his authority he subverteth not only the laws of this realm, but also the laws of God; so that, whosoever be under his authority, he suffereth them not to be under Christ's religion purely, as Christ did command. And, for one example, I brought forth, that whereas by God's laws all Christian people be bound diligently to learn his Word, that they may know how to believe and live accordingly, for that purpose he ordained holydays, when they ought, leaving apart all other business, to give themselves wholly to know and serve God. Therefore God's will and commandment is, that when the people be gathered together, the ministers should use such language as the people may understand and take profit thereby, or else hold their peace. For as an harp or lute, if it give no certain sound that men may know what is stricken, who can dance after it? for all the sound is in vain: so is it vain and profiteth nothing, saith Almighty God by the mouth of St. Paul, if the priest speak to the people in a language which they know not for else he may profit himself, but profiteth not the people, saith St. Paul. But herein I was answered thus, that St. Paul spake only of preaching; that the preacher should speak in a tongue which the people did know, or else his preaching availeth nothing. But if the preaching availeth nothing, being spoken in a language which the people understand not, how should any other service avail them, being spoken in the same language? And that yet St. Paul meant not only of preaching, it appeareth plainly by his own words; for he speaketh by name expressly of praying, singing, praising, and thanksgiving of God, and all other things which the priests say

in the churches, where unto the people say *Amen*; (which they used not in preaching, but in other divine service:) that whether the priests rehearse the wonderful works of God, or the great benefits of God unto mankind above all other creatures, or give thanks unto God, or make open profession of their faith, or humble confession of their sins, with earnest request of mercy and forgiveness, or make suit or request unto God for any thing; then all the people, understanding what the priests say, might join their minds and voices with them and say, *Amen*—that is to say, allow what the priests say; that the rehearsal of God's universal works and benefits, the giving of thanks, the profession of faith, the confession of sins, and the requests and petitions of the priests and the people, might ascend up into the ears of God altogether, and be as a sweet savour, odour, and incense in his nose: and thus was it used, many hundred years after Christ's ascension. But the aforesaid things cannot be done, when the priests speak to the people in a language not known; and so they or their clerk in their name say *Amen*, but they cannot tell whereunto: whereas Saint Paul saith, How can the people say *Amen* to thy well-saying, when they understand not what thou sayest? And thus was St. Paul understood of all interpreters, both the Greeks and Latins, old and new, school-authors and others, that I have read, until about thirty years past; at which time one Eckius, with other of his sort, began to devise a new exposition, understanding St. Paul of preaching only. But when a good number of the best learned men reputed within this realm, some favouring the old, some the new learning, as they term it—(where<sup>1</sup> indeed that which they call the old, is the new, and that which they call the new, is indeed the old),—but when a great number of such learned men of both sorts were gathered together at Windsor for the reformation of the service of the church, it was agreed by both without controversy, not one saying contrary, that the service of the church ought to be in the mother tongue; and that St. Paul in chapter xiv. to the Corinthians was so to be understood. And so is St. Paul to be understood in the civil law, more than a thousand years past: where Justinianus, a most godly emperor, in a synod writeth on this manner; “Jubemus ut omnes, episcopi pariter et presbyteri, non tacito modo, sed clara voce quæ a fidei populo exaudiatur, sacram oblationem et preces in sacro baptisinate adhibitas celebrent, quo majori exinde devotione in depromendis Domini Dei laudibus audientium animi efferantur. Ita enim et divus Paulus docet in epistola ad Corinthios; si solummodo benedicat spiritus, quomodo is qui privati locum tenet, dicet ad gratiarum actionem tuam, Amen, quandoquidem quid dicas non videt? Tu quidem pulchre gratias agis, alter autem non ædificatur.” That is to say: “We command, that all bishops and priests celebrate the holy oblation

1 Cor. 14.

and prayers used in holy baptism, not after a still and close manner, but with a clear loud voice, that they may be plainly heard of the faithful people, so as the hearers' minds may be lifted up thereby with the greater devotion, in hearing the praises of the Lord God. For so Paul teacheth also in the epistle to the Corinthians: If the spirit do only bless or say well, how shall he that occupieth the place of a private person, say *Amen* to thy thanksgiving? for he perceiveth not what thou sayest. Thou dost give thanks well, but the other is not edified.—And not only the civil law, and all other writers a thousand and five hundred years continually together, have expounded St. Paul not of preaching only but of other service said in the church; but reason also giveth the same, that if men be commanded to hear any thing, it must be spoken in a language which the hearers understand; or else, as St. Paul saith, what availeth it to hear? So that the pope giving a contrary commandment, that the people coming to the church shall hear they know not what, and answer they know not whereto, taketh upon him to command not only against reason; but also directly against God.

The pope commandeth both against God and natural reason.

The sacrament ought to be received in both kinds of all Christians.

And again I said, Whereas our Saviour Christ ordained the sacrament of his most precious body and blood, to be received of all Christian people under the forms both of bread and wine, and he said of the cup, Drink ye all of this; the pope giveth a clean contrary commandment, that no layman shall drink of the cup of their salvation: as though the cup of salvation by the blood of Christ pertained not to laymen. And whereas Theophilus Alexandrinus (whose works St. Jerome did translate about eleven hundred years past) saith, that if Christ had been crucified for the devils, his cup should not be denied them; yet the pope denieth the cup of Christ to Christian people, for whom Christ was crucified: so that if I should obey the pope in these things, I must needs disobey my Saviour Christ. But I was answered hereto, (as commonly the papists do answer,) that under the form of bread is whole Christ's flesh and blood; so that whosoever receiveth the form of bread, receiveth as well Christ's blood as his flesh. Let it be so: yet in the form of bread only, Christ's blood is not drunken but eaten; not received in the cup under form of wine as Christ commanded, but eaten with the flesh under the form of bread; and moreover the bread is not the sacrament of his blood, but of his flesh only; nor the cup is not the sacrament of his flesh, but of his blood only; and so the pope keepeth from all lay persons the sacrament of their redemption by Christ's blood, which Christ commanded to be given unto them. And furthermore, Christ ordained the sacrament in two kinds, the one separated from the other, to be a representation of his death, where his blood was separated from his flesh, which is not represented in one kind alone; so that the lay people

receive not the whole sacrament whereby Christ's death is represented, as he commanded. Moreover, as the pope taketh upon him to give the temporal sword or royal and imperial power to kings and princes, so doth he likewise take upon him to depose them from their imperial states, if they be disobedient to him; and commandeth the subjects to disobey their princes, assoyling<sup>1</sup> the subjects as well of their obedience, as of their lawful oaths made unto their true kings and princes—directly contrary to God's commandment, who commandeth all subjects to obey their kings or other rulers under them. One John, Patriarch of Constantinople in the time of St. Gregory, claimed superiority above all other bishops; to whom St. Gregory writeth, That therein he did injury to his brethren which were equal with him, that is to say, the bishop of Rome, of Alexandria, and of Antiochia, in which were patriarchial sees, as well as Constantinople, and were brethren one to another. But, saith St. Gregory, if any one shall exalt himself above all the rest to be the universal bishop, the same passeth<sup>2</sup> in pride: but now the bishop of Rome exalteth himself, not only above all bishops, but also above all kings and emperors, and above the whole world, taking upon him to give and take away, to set up and put down, as he shall think good. And as the devil, having no such authority, yet took upon him to give unto Christ all the kingdoms of the world, if he would fall down and worship him; in like manner the pope taketh upon him to give empires and kingdoms, being none of his, to such as will fall down and worship him and kiss his feet. And moreover his lawyers and glosers<sup>3</sup> so flatter him, that they say he may command emperors and kings to hold his stirrup when he lighteth upon his horse; and to be his footmen; and that if any emperor or king give him any thing, they give him nothing but that is his own, and that he may dispense against God's Word, against the Old and New Testament, against St. Paul's Epistles, and against the Gospel. And furthermore, whatsoever he doth, although he draw innumerable people by heaps with himself into hell, yet may no mortal man reprove him; because he, being judge of all men, may be judged of no man; and thus he sitteth in the temple of God, as he were a god, and nameth himself God's vicar, and yet he dispenseth<sup>4</sup> against God. If this be not to play Antichrist's part, I cannot tell what is Antichrist, (which is no more to say, but Christ's enemy and adversary;) who shall sit in the temple of God, advancing himself above all other, yet by hypocrisy and feigned religion, shall subvert the true religion of Christ, and, under pretence and colour of Christian religion, shall work against Christ, and therefore hath the name of Antichrist. Now if any man lift himself higher than the pope hath done, who lifteth himself above all the world; or can be more adversary to Christ, than to dispense against God's

<sup>1</sup> freeing<sup>2</sup> surpasseth

The devil and the pope are like

<sup>3</sup> flatterers<sup>4</sup> relaxeth God's law

The pope is Antichrist, that is, Christ's enemy. Therefore the pope is Antichrist

laws; and, where Christ hath given any commandment, to command directly the contrary; that man must needs be taken for Antichrist. But until the time that such a person may be found, men may easily conjecture where to find Antichrist. Wherefore seeing the pope thus, to overthrow both God's laws and man's laws, taketh upon himself to make emperors and kings to be vassals and subjects unto him, specially the crown of this realm, and the laws and customs of the same, I see no mean<sup>1</sup> how I may consent to admit this usurped power within this realm, contrary to mine oath, mine obedience to God's law, mine allegiance and duty to your majesty, and my love and affection to this realm. This that I have spoken against the power and authority of the pope, I have not spoken, (I take God to record and judge,) for any malice I owe to the pope's person—whom I know not, but I shall pray to God to give him grace, that he may seek above all things to promote God's honour and glory, and not to follow the trade of his predecessors in these latter days: nor I have not spoken it for fear of punishment and to avoid the same, thinking it rather an occasion to aggravate, than to diminish my trouble: but I have spoken it for my most bounden duty to the crown, liberties, laws, and customs of this realm, but most especially to discharge my conscience in uttering the truth to God's glory; casting away all fear, by the comfort which I have in Christ's words, who saith, *Fear not them that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul; but fear him that can cast both body and soul into hell.* He that, for fear to lose this life, will forsake the truth, shall lose the everlasting life; and he that for the truth's sake will spend his life, shall find everlasting life. And Christ promiseth to stand fast with them before his Father, which will stand fast with him here: which comfort is so great, that whosoever hath his eyes fixed upon Christ, cannot greatly pass<sup>2</sup> of this life, knowing that he may be sure to have Christ stand by him in the presence of his Father in heaven.

<sup>1</sup> method

Luke 12.

<sup>2</sup> value

Matt. x.

The sacraments have the names of those things where of they are sacraments.

<sup>3</sup> where

As touching the sacrament, I said, that forasmuch as the whole matter standeth in the understanding of these words of Christ, *This is my body, this is my blood;* I say, that Christ in these words made demonstration of the bread and wine, and spake figuratively, calling bread his body, and wine his blood; because he ordained them to be the sacraments of his body and blood. And where<sup>3</sup> the papists say in these two points contrary unto me, that Christ called not bread his body, but a substance uncertain, nor spake figuratively; herein I said I would be judged by the old church, and that doctrine which could be proved the elder, that I would stand unto. And forasmuch as I have alleged in my book many old authors, both Greeks and Latins, which about a thousand years after Christ continually taught as I do; if they could bring forth but one old author that saith in these two

points as they say, I offered, six or seven years ago, and do offer yet still, that I will give place to them. But when I bring forth any author that speaketh in most plain terms as I do, yet saith the other part, that the authors meant not so: as if they would say, that the authors spake one thing and meant clean contrary. And upon the other part, when they cannot find any one author that saith in words as they say, yet say they, that the authors meant as they say. Now, whether they or I speak more to the purpose herein, I refer it to the judgment of all indifferent hearers. Yea, the old church of Rome, about a thousand years together, neither believed nor used the sacrament as the church of Rome hath done of late years. For in the beginning, the church of Rome taught a pure, and a sound doctrine of the sacrament: but after that, the church of Rome fell into a new doctrine of transubstantiation; and with the doctrine they changed the use of the sacrament, contrary to what Christ commanded, and the old church of Rome used above a thousand years. And yet to deface the old, they say that the new is the old: wherein, for my part, I am content to the trial to stand. But their doctrine is so fond and uncomfortable, that I marvel that any man would allow it, if he knew what it is: and whatsoever<sup>1</sup> they bear the people in hand,<sup>2</sup> that which they write in their books hath neither truth nor comfort. For, by their doctrine, of one body of Christ is made two bodies; one natural, having distance of members with form and proportion of a man's perfect body, and this body is in heaven; but the body of Christ in the sacrament, by their own doctrine, must needs be a monstrous body, having neither distance of members, nor form, fashion, or proportion of a man's natural body; and such a body is in the sacrament (teach they), and goeth into the mouth with the form of bread, and entereth no farther than the form of bread goeth, nor tarrieth no longer than the form of bread is by natural heat in digesting, so that when the form of bread is digested, that body of Christ is gone. And forasmuch as evil men be as long in digesting as good men, the body of Christ (by their doctrine) entereth as far, and tarrieth as long, in wicked as in godly men. And what comfort can be herein to any Christian man, to receive Christ's unshapen body, and it to enter no farther than the stomach, and to depart by and by, as soon as the bread is consumed? It seemeth to me a more sound and comfortable doctrine, that Christ hath but one body, and that hath form and fashion of a man's true body; which body spiritually entereth into the whole man, body and soul: and though the sacrament be consumed, yet whole Christ remaineth and feedeth the receiver unto eternal life, if he continue in godliness, and never departeth until the receiver forsake him. And as for the wicked, they have not Christ within them at all; who cannot be where Belial is. And this is my faith, and (as me seemeth) a

<sup>1</sup> howsoever<sup>2</sup> behave towards

The papists make Christ two bodies.

sound doctrine according to God's word, and sufficient for a Christian to believe in that matter. And if it can be shewed unto me that the pope's authority is not prejudicial to the things before-mentioned, or that my doctrine in the sacrament is erroneous (which I think cannot be shewed), then I was never nor will be so perverse to stand wilfully in mine own opinion, but I shall, with all humility, submit myself unto the pope, not only to kiss his feet, but another part also.

<sup>1</sup> *consideration*

Another cause why I refused to take the Bishop of Gloucester for my judge, was respect<sup>1</sup> of his own person being more than once perjured. First, for that he, being divers times sworn never to consent that the Bishop of Rome should have any jurisdiction within this realm, but to take the king and his successors for supreme heads of this realm, as by God's laws they be; contrary to this lawful oath, the said Bishop sat then in judgment by authority from Rome, wherein he was perjured, and not worthy to sit as a judge.

The second perjury was, that he took his bishopric both of the queen's majesty and of the pope, making to each of them a solemn oath; which oaths be so contrary, that in the one he must needs be perjured. And furthermore, in swearing to the pope to maintain his laws, decrees, constitutions, ordinances, reservations, and provisions, he declareth himself an enemy to the imperial crown, and to the laws and state of this realm; whereby he declareth himself not worthy to sit as a judge within this realm. And for these considerations I refused to take him for my judge.

### This was written in another Letter to the Queen.

<sup>2</sup> *direct*

I learned by Dr. Martin, that at the day of your majesty's coronation, you took an oath of obedience to the pope of Rome; and the same time you took another oath to this realm, to maintain the laws, liberties, and customs of the same. And if your majesty did make an oath to the pope, I think it was according to the other oaths which he useth to minister to princes; which is, to be obedient to him, to defend his person, to maintain his authority, honour, laws, lands, and privileges. And if it be so, then I beseech your majesty to look upon your oath made to the crown and the realm, and to expend and weigh the two oaths together, to see how they agree, and then to do as your grace's conscience shall give<sup>2</sup> you; for I am surely persuaded, that willingly your majesty will not offend, nor do against your conscience for nothing. But I fear me there be contradiction in your oaths, and that those that should have informed your grace thoroughly, did not their duties therein. And if your majesty ponder the two oaths diligently, I think you shall perceive that you were



deceived, and then your highness may use the matter as God shall put in your heart.—Furthermore, I am kept here from company of learned men, from books, from counsel, from pen and ink, saving at this time to write to your majesty, which all were necessary for a man in my case. Wherefore I beseech your majesty, that I may have such of these as may stand with your majesty's pleasure. And as for mine appearance at Rome, if your majesty will give me leave, I will appear there, and I trust that God shall put in my mouth to defend his truth there, as well as here; but I refer it wholly to your majesty's pleasure.

Your poor orator,<sup>1</sup> T. C. <sup>1</sup> petitioner

### To the Lords of the Council.

In most humble wise sueth unto your right honourable lordships Thomas Cranmer, late Archbishop of Canterbury, beseeching the same to be a means<sup>2</sup> for me unto the queen's highness, for her mercy and pardon. Some of you know by what means I was brought and trained unto the will of our late sovereign lord, king Edward the sixth, and what I spake against the same: wherein I refer me to the reports of your honours. Furthermore, this is to signify unto your lordships, that upon Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday last past, were open disputations here in Oxford against me, Master Ridley, and Master Latimer, in three matters concerning the sacrament. First, of the real presence; secondly, of transubstantiation; and, thirdly, concerning the sacrifice of the mass. How the other two were used I cannot tell; for we were separated, so that none of us knew what the other said, nor how they were ordered. But as concerning myself, I can report that I never knew nor heard of a more confused disputation in all my life. For albeit there was one appointed to dispute against me, yet every man spake his mind and brought forth what him liked without order; and such haste was made, that no answer could be suffered to be given fully to any argument; and in such weighty and large matters there was no remedy, but the disputations must needs be ended in one day, which can scanty<sup>3</sup> well be ended in three months. And when we had answered them, then they would not appoint us one day to bring forth our proofs that they might answer us again, being required of me thereunto; whereas I myself have more to say than can be well discussed in twenty days. The means to resolve the truth, had been to have suffered us to answer fully to all that they could say, and then they again to answer to all that we could say. But why they would not answer us, what other cause can there be, but that either they feared the matter, that they were not able to answer us? or else (as by their haste might well appear), they came not to speak the truth, but to condemn us in

<sup>2</sup> to intercede

They put to him three questions, but they suffered him not to answer fully in one.

<sup>3</sup> scarcely

post haste, before the truth might be thoroughly tried and heard? For in all haste we were all three condemned of heresy, upon Friday. This much I thought good to signify unto your lordships, that you may know the indifferent handling of matters, leaving the judgment thereof unto your wisdoms; and I beseech your lordships to remember me, a poor prisoner unto the queen's majesty, and I shall pray, as I do daily, to God, for the long preservation of your good lordships in all godliness and felicity.

### A Letter

Wherein he reproveth and condemneth the false and slanderous reports of the Papists, which said that he had set up Mass again at Canterbury.

As the Devil, Christ's ancient adversary, is a liar and the father of lying, even so hath he stirred up his servants and members to persecute Christ and his true word and religion with lying, which he ceaseth not to do most earnestly at this present. For whereas the prince of famous memory, king Henry the eighth, seeing the great abuses of the latin mass, reformed something therein in his time; and also our late sovereign lord, king Edward the sixth, took the same whole away for the manifold errors and abuses thereof, and restored in the place thereof Christ's holy supper, according to Christ's own institution, and as the apostles in the primitive church used the same; the devil goeth about by lying to overthrow the Lord's holy supper, and to restore his latin satisfactory mass, a thing of his own invention and device. And to bring the same more easily to pass, some have abused the name of me, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, reporting abroad that I have set up the mass at Canterbury, and that I offered to say mass at the burial of our late sovereign prince, king Edward the sixth, and also that I offered to say mass before the queen's highness, and at Paul's church, and I wot not where. And although I have been well exercised these twenty years to suffer and bear evil reports and lies, and have been much grieved thereat, but have borne all things quietly; yet when untrue reports and lies turn to the hindrance of God's truth, they be in no wise to be suffered. Wherefore these be to signify unto the world, that it was a false, flattering, lying, and dissembling monk, which caused mass to be set up there, without mine advice or counsel: *Reddat illi Dominus in die illo*. And as for offering myself to say mass before the queen's highness, or in any other place, I never did it, as her grace well knoweth. But if her grace give me leave, I shall be ready to prove against all that will say to the contrary, that all that is said in the holy communion set out by the most innocent and godly prince, king Edward the sixth, in his high court of parliament, is conformable to the order

Behold  
Satan  
sleppeth  
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cruel de-  
sire to re-  
venge  
could abide  
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This was  
Dr. Thorn-  
ton, after-  
ward a  
cruel mur-  
derer of  
God's  
saints, of  
whose hor-  
rible end,  
read in the  
book of  
Martyrs  
p. 1706.

which our sovereign Christ did both observe and commanded to be observed, and which his apostles and primitive church used many years: whereas the mass in many things not only hath no foundation of Christ, his apostles, nor the primitive church, but is manifestly contrary to the same, and containeth many horrible abuses in it. And although many unlearned and malicious do report, that Master Peter Martyr is unlearned, yet if the queen's highness will grant thereunto, I with the said Master Peter Martyr, and other four or five which I shall choose, will, by God's grace, take upon us to defend not only the common prayers of the church, the ministration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies, but also all the doctrine and religion set out by our sovereign lord, king Edward the sixth, to be more pure and according to God's word, than any other that hath been used in England these thousand years: so that God's word may be the judge, and that the reasons and proofs upon both parties may be set out in writing, to the intent as well that all the world may examine and judge thereon, as that no man shall start back from his writing. And where<sup>1</sup> they boast of the faith that hath been in the church this thousand and five hundred years, we will join with them in this point, and that the doctrine and usage is to be followed which was in the church a thousand and five hundred years past: and we shall prove that the order of the church, set out at this present in this realm by act of parliament, is the same that was used in the church a thousand and five hundred years past, and so shall they be never able to prove theirs.

### An Epistle

To a certain Lawyer for his advice and counsel touching his appeal.

The law of nature requireth of all men, that, so far forth as it may be done without offence to God, every one should seek to defend and preserve his own life. Which thing when I about three days ago bethought myself of, and therewithal remembered how that Martin Luther appealed in his time from pope Leo the tenth, to a general council; lest I should seem rashly and unadvisedly to cast away myself, I determined to appeal in like sort to some lawful and free general council. But seeing the order and form of an appeal pertaineth to the lawyers, whereof I myself am ignorant, and seeing that Luther's appeal cometh not to my hand; I purposed to break my mind in this matter to some faithful friend and skilful in the law, whose help I might use in this behalf; and you only among other came to my remembrance, as a man most meet in this university for that purpose. But this is a matter that requireth great silence, so that no man know of it before it be done. It is so, that I am summoned to make mine

answer at Rome, the sixteenth day of this month: before the which day I think it good after sentence pronounced to make mine appeal. But whether I should first appeal from the judge delegate to the pope, and so afterward to the general council; or else leaving the pope, I should appeal immediately to the council; herein I stand in need of your counsel. Many causes there be, for the which I think good to appeal. First, because I am by an oath bound never to consent to the receiving of the bishop of Rome's authority into this realm. Besides this, whereas I utterly refused to make answer to the articles objected unto me by the bishop of Gloucester, appointed by the pope to be my judge, yet I was content to answer Martin and Story; with this protestation, that mine answer should not be taken as made before a judge, nor yet in place of judgment, but as pertaining nothing to judgment at all. And, moreover, after I had made mine answer, I required to have a copy of the same, that I might, either by adding thereunto, by altering, or taking from it, correct and amend it as I thought good. The which though both the bishop of Gloucester and also the king and queen's proctors promised me, yet have they altogether broken promise with me, and have not permitted me to correct my said answers according to my request; and yet notwithstanding have, as I understand, registered the same as acts formally done in place of judgment. Finally, forasmuch as all this my trouble cometh upon my departing from the bishop of Rome and from the popish religion, so that now the quarrel is betwixt the pope himself and me, and no man can be a lawful and indifferent judge in his own cause; it seemeth, me think, good reason that I should be suffered to appeal to some general council in this matter: especially seeing the law of nature, as they say, denieth no man the remedy of appeal in such cases. Now, since it is very requisite that this matter should be kept as close as may be, if perhaps, for lack of perfect skill herein, you shall have need of further advice, then I beseech you, even for the fidelity and love you bear to me in Christ, that you will open to no creature alive whose the case is. And forasmuch as the time is now at hand, and the matter requireth great expedition, let me obtain this much of you I beseech you, that laying aside all other your studies and business, for the time, you will apply this my matter only, till you have brought it to pass. The chiefest cause in very deed, to tell you the truth, of this mine appeal is, that I might gain time, if it shall so please God, to live until I have finished mine answer against Marcus Antonius Constantius, which I have now in hand. But if the adversaries of the truth will not admit mine appeal, as I fear they will not, God's will be done! I pass not upon it,<sup>1</sup> so that God may therein be glorified, be it by my life or by my death. For it is much better for me to die in Christ's quarrel and to reign with him, than

This Constantius was Stephen Gardiner, as constant indeed as a weathercock, who thus named himself writing against this good father.  
<sup>1</sup> I regard it not

here to be shut up and kept in the prison of this body; unless it were to continue yet still awhile in this warfare for the commodity<sup>1</sup> and profit of my brethren, and to the further advancing of God's glory: to whom be all glory for evermore. *Amen.* There is also yet another cause why I think good to appeal: that, whereas I am cited to go to Rome to answer there for myself, I am notwithstanding kept here fast in prison, that I cannot there appear at the time appointed. And moreover, forasmuch as the state I stand in is a matter of life and death, so that I have great need of learned counsel for my defence in this behalf; yet when I made my earnest request for the same, all manner of counsel and help of proctors, advocates and lawyers, was utterly denied me.

Your loving friend, T. C.

THE SAME IN LATIN.

Naturæ lex hoc ab omnibus postulat, ut, quatenus citra divini numinis injuriam fieri potest, quisque vitam tueatur suam. Quod cum tribus abhinc diebus mihi in mentem venisset, simulque memoriæ occurrisset appellatio Martini Lutheri, a Leone decimo ad concilium generale; constitui et ipse concilium generale legitimum et liberum appellare, ne temerè et inconsulto vitam proderem meam. Verum cum appellationis materia ad legis peritos spectet, cujus ego ignarus sum, cumque Lutheri appellatio ad manum mihi non sit; decrevi amico alicui fido et jurisperito consilium meum hac in re pandere, cujus opera in hoc negotio uterer: ac tu quidem unus occurristi, qui mihi in hac academia visus es ad hoc munus idoneus. Sed summam hæc res taciturnitatem postulat, ut, antequam res fiat, nemo resciscat. Dies mihi dictus est ut respondeam Romæ 16 hujus mensis, ante quem mihi provocandum esse puto, ac post sententiam appellandum. Sed an mihi primum provocandum et appellandum sit a iudice delegato ad ipsum Pontificem, ac deinde ad concilium generale, an omisso Pontifice ad concilium primum appellandum sit, consilio mihi opus est tuo. Porro appellationis causæ mihi multæ sunt. Primo quod juramento astrictus sim, nunquam me consensurum in auctoritatem Romani Pontificis. Deinde cum ego respondere omnino renuerem, ad articulos mihi objectos ab Episcopo Glocestrensi iudice delegato, respondebam tamen doctori Martino et Storeo, cum hac protestatione, quod responsio mea non daretur iudici neque in iudicio, sed extrajudicialis esset: et post responsum datum petebam responsionis meæ copiam, ut eandem mihi emendare liceret, vel addendo, vel mutando, vel subtrahendo. Quamquam hæc mihi promissa sunt, et a Glocestrensi et a procuratoribus regis et reginæ, omnino tamen fefellerunt fidem, non dantes emendandæ responsionis meæ copiam, et nihilominus (ut audio) inter acta judicialia adscripserunt. Postremo, cum causa defectionis a Romano pontifice et a papistica religione in jus vocor, ut jam mihi lis sit adversus pontificem Romanum, et nemo æquus iudex sit in causa propria; æquum mihi videtur ut concilium appellem, præsertim cum jus naturæ (ut aiunt) appellationis remedium nemini negandum censeat. Jam cum ad hanc rem maxima taciturnitate opus sit, si forsan ob rerum imperitiam aliorum consiliis tibi opus sit, obtestor tum te per christianam fidem ac charitatem, ut cujus causa sit nemini significes. Et cum jam instet tempus, et mature opus sit facto, hoc me sinas a te impetrare, ut sepositis aliis studiis atque negotiis, huic uni incumbas quousque perfeceris. Potissima sane appellationis meæ causa est ut (si ita Deus voluerit) donetur eousque vivendi tempus, quousque ceptum contra Marenm Antonium Constantium responsum absolvero. Quod si veritatis hostes meæ appellationi deferre nolint, (quod existimo) fiat voluntas Dei! susque deque fero, modo glorificetur Deus, sive per vitam, sive per mortem. Melius est enim multo, mori pro Christo et cum illo regnare,

quam in hoc carnis ergastulo concludi; nisi in fratrum utilitatem, ad majorem Dei gloriam propagandam, liceat aliquamdiu militare. Cui sit omnis gloria in ævum, Amen. Est et alia appellationis causa, quod cum Romam vocatus sim illic dicturus causam, interim carcere detineor ut comparere mihi ad dictum diem non liceat. Cum autem de statu et vita mea agitur, et pro defensione mea Jurisperitorum consilio mihi opus esset, quum id peterem, negatum est omne advocatorum, procuratorum et jurisconsultorum consilium et auxilium. Vale.

### To Mistress Wilkinson, a godly matron,

Exhorting her to fly in time of persecution, and to seek her dwelling where she might serve God according to his word.

The true Comforter in all distress is only God, through his Son Jesus Christ; and whosoever hath him, hath company enough, although he were in a wilderness all alone; and he that hath twenty thousand in his company, if God be absent, is in a miserable wilderness and desolation. In him is all comfort, and without him is none. Wherefore, I beseech you, seek your dwelling there, as<sup>1</sup> you may truly and rightly serve God, and dwell in him, and have him ever dwelling in you. What can be so heavy a burden as an unquiet conscience, to be in such a place as<sup>1</sup> a man cannot be suffered to serve God in Christ's true religion? If you be loth to depart from your kin and friends, remember that Christ calleth them his mother, sisters, and brothers, that do his Father's will. Where we find therefore God truly honoured according to his will, there we can lack neither friend nor kin. If you be loth to depart for<sup>2</sup> slandering of God's word, remember that Christ, when his hour was not yet come, departed out of his country into Samaria, to avoid the malice of the scribes and Pharisees; and commanded his apostles, that if they were pursued in one place they should fly to another. And was not Paul let down by a basket out at a window to avoid the persecution of Areta? And what wisdom and policy he used from time to time to escape the malice of his enemies, the Acts of the apostles do declare. And after the same sort did the other apostles: albeit, when it came to such a point, that they could no longer escape danger of the persecutors of God's true religion, then they shewed themselves that their flying before came not of fear, but of godly wisdom to do more good; and that they would not rashly, without urgent necessity, offer themselves to death, which had been but a temptation<sup>3</sup> of God. Yea, when they were apprehended and could no longer avoid, then they stood boldly to the profession of Christ: then they shewed how little they passed of<sup>4</sup> death; how much they feared God more than men; how much they loved and preferred the eternal life to come above this short and miserable life. Wherefore I exhort you, as well by Christ's commandment as by the example of him and his apostles, to withdraw yourself from the malice of your and God's enemies,

<sup>1</sup> where

Matt. 12.

<sup>2</sup> for fear of.

John 4.

Matt. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Cor. 11.

<sup>3</sup> a tempt-  
ing

<sup>4</sup> cared for,  
regarded.

into some place where God is most purely served ; which is no slandering of the truth, but a preserving of yourself to God and the truth, and to the society and comfort of Christ's little flock. And that you will do, do it with speed, lest by your own folly you fall into the persecutors hands. And the Lord send his Holy Spirit to lead and guide you wheresoever you go ; and all that be godly will say, Amen.

T. C.

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## LETTERS OF DOCTOR RIDLEY,

Late Bishop of London : who, after long imprisonment, was spitefully and cruelly martyred in Oxford, for the constant confession of God's true religion ; in the year of our Lord God, 1555, the 16th day of October.

To the brethren remaining in captivity of the flesh, and dispersed abroad in sundry prisons, but knit together in unity of spirit and holy religion, in the bowels of the Lord Jesus.

Grace, peace, and mercy be multiplied among you. What worthy thanks can we render unto the Lord for you my, brethren ? namely, for the great consolation which through you we have received in the Lord ; who (notwithstanding the rage of Satan, that goeth about by all manner of subtle means to beguile the world, and also busily laboureth to restore and set up his kingdom again, that of late began to decay and fall to ruin,) remain yet still unmoveable as men surely grounded upon a strong rock. And now, albeit that Satan by his soldiers and wicked ministers daily (as we hear) draweth numbers unto him, so that it is said of him that he plucketh even the very stars out of heaven, whilst he driveth into some men the fear of death and loss of all their goods, and sheweth and offereth to other-some the pleasant baits of the world, namely, riches, wealth and all kind of delights and pleasures, fair houses, great revenues, fat benefices, and what not ? and all to the intent they should fall down and worship (not in the Lord, but in the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil,) that great beast and his image, and should be enticed to commit fornication with the strumpet of Babylon, together with the kings of the earth, with the lesser beast, and with the false prophets, and so to rejoice and be pleasant with her, and to be drunken with the wine of her fornication : yet blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath given unto you a manly courage ; and hath so strengthened you in the inward man, by the power of his Spirit, that you can contemn

Apoc. 12.

Apoc. 18.

as well all the terrors, as also the vain flattering allurements of the world, esteeming them as vanities, mere trifles, and things of nought: who hath also wrought, planted, and surely stablished in your hearts so steadfast a faith and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, joined with such constancy, that by no engines of Antichrist, be they never so terrible or plausible, ye will suffer any other Jesus or any other Christ to be forced upon you, beside him whom the prophets have spoken of before, the apostles have preached, and the holy martyrs of God have confessed and testified with the effusion of their blood. In this faith stand ye fast my brethren, and suffer not yourselves to be brought under the yoke of bondage and superstition any more. For ye know, brethren, how that our Saviour warned his beforehand, that such should come as would point unto the world another Christ, and would set him out with so many false miracles and with such deceivable and subtle practices, that even the very elect (if it were possible) should be thereby deceived; such strong delusion to come did our Saviour give warning of before. But continue ye faithful and constant, and be of good comfort: and remember that our grand Captain hath overcome the world; for he that is in us is stronger than he that is in the world, and the Lord promiseth unto us, that, for the elect's sake, the days of wickedness shall be shortened. In the mean season abide ye, and endure with patience as ye have begun; endure, I say, and reserve yourselves unto better times, as one of the heathen poets said. Cease not to show yourselves valiant soldiers of the Lord, and help to maintain the travailling faith of the Gospel. Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promises. For yet a very little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry; and the just shall live by faith: but if any withdraw himself, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, saith the Lord. But we are not they which do withdraw ourselves unto damnation, but believe unto the salvation of the soul. Let us not suffer these words of Christ to fail out of our hearts, by any manner of terrors or threatenings of the world: fear not them which kill the body—the rest ye know. For I write not unto you as to men which are ignorant of the truth, but which know the truth: and to this end only; that we, agreeing together in one faith, may take comfort one of another, and be the more confirmed and strengthened thereby. We never had a better or a more just cause either to contemn our life, or shed our blood: we cannot take in hand the defence of a more certain, clear, and manifest truth. For it is not any ceremony for the which we contend; but it toucheth the very substance of our whole religion, yea, even Christ himself. Shall we, either<sup>1</sup> can we, receive and acknowledge any other Christ, instead of him who is alone the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father? and is the

Gal. 5.

1 John 4.

Virgil's  
Æneid, 1.

Heb. 10.

John 2.

1 or



brightness of the glory, and lively image of the substance, of the Father? in whom only dwelleth corporally the fulness of the Godhead, who is the only way, the truth, and the life? Let such wickedness, (my brethren) let such horrible wickedness, be far from us. For although there be that are called gods, whether in heaven, either in earth, as there be many gods and many lords, yet unto us there is but one God, which is the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him: but every man hath not knowledge. This is life eternal, (saith St. John) <sup>John 17.</sup> that they know thee to be the only true God; and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ. If any therefore would force upon us any other God, besides him whom Paul and the apostles have taught, let us not hear him, but let us fly from him and hold him accursed. Brethren, ye are not ignorant of the deep and profound subtleties of Satan; for he will not cease to range about you, seeking by all means possible whom he may devour: but play ye the men, and be of good comfort in the Lord. And albeit your enemies and the adversaries of the truth, armed with all worldly force and power that may be, do set upon you; yet be not ye faint-hearted, nor shrink not therefore: but trust unto your captain Christ, trust unto the Spirit of truth, and trust to the truth of your cause; which, as it may by the malice of Satan be darkened, so can it never be clean put out. For we have, (high praise be given to God therefore!) most plainly, evidently, and clearly on our side, all the prophets, all the apostles, and undoubtedly all the ancient ecclesiastical writers which have written until of late years past. Let us be hearty and of good courage therefore, and thoroughly comfort ourselves in the Lord. Be in no ways afraid of your adversaries; for that which is to them an occasion of perdition, is to you a sure token of salvation, and that of God. <sup>Phil. 1.</sup> For unto you it is given, that not only ye should believe on him, but also suffer for his sake. And when ye are railed upon for the name of Christ, remember that by the voice of Peter, yea, and of Christ our Saviour also, ye are counted, <sup>1 Pet. 4.</sup> with the prophets, with the apostles, and with the holy martyrs of Christ; happy and blessed therefore; for the glory and Spirit of God resteth upon you. On their part our Saviour Christ is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. For what can they else do unto you by persecuting you, and working all cruelty and villainy against you, but make your crowns more glorious, yea, beautify and multiply the same, and heap upon themselves the horrible plagues and heavy wrath of God? And therefore, good brethren, though they rage never so fiercely against us, yet let us not wish evil unto them again; knowing that, while for Christ's cause they vex and persecute us, they are like madmen, most outrageous and cruel against themselves, heaping hot burning coals upon

their own heads: but rather let us wish well unto them, knowing that we are thereunto called in Christ Jesu, that we should be heirs of the blessing. Let us pray therefore unto God, that he would drive out of their hearts this darkness of errors, and make the light of his truth to shine unto them; that they, acknowledging their blindness, may with all humble repentance be converted unto the Lord, and together with us confess him to be the only true God, which is the Father of light, and his only Son Jesus Christ, worshipping him in spirit and verity. Amen.

The Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ comfort your hearts, in the love of God and patience of Christ. Amen.

Your brother in the Lord, (whose name this bearer shall signify unto you,) ready always, by the grace of God, to live and die with you.

THE SAME IN LATIN.

Ad fratres in captivitate carnis, et per varios carceres dispersos, sed in unitate Spiritus atque sacrosanctæ religionis in visceribus Jesu Christi conglutinatos.

Gratia vobis et pax ac misericordia multiplicetur. Quam gratiarum actionem pro vobis, fratres, reddere possumus Domino, super omni consolatione quam de vobis concepimus in Domino? qui (Sathana sæviante, et per omnia fallaciarum genera mundo imponere studente, et regnum suum, jampridem collabascere ruinamque minitari incipiens, erigere atque denuo instaurare sedulo satagente,) tanquam in petra firmissime fundati, permanetis immobiles. Jamque licet Sathan per suos satellites ac ministros, multos (ut audivimus) quotidie pertrahat ad sese, ut stellas etiam e cælo prosternere dicatur, aliis nimirum metum mortis, aut amissionis commodorum hujus mundi, incutiendo; aliis pollicendo, aut ostentando illecebras hujus mundi, opes videlicet, atque omnis generis lautitias, ædes amplas, lata prædia, opima sacerdotia, ac quid non? uti prostrati adorent (non in Domino, sed in dracone, serpente antiquo qui est diabolus,) magnam illam bestiam et imaginem ejus, utque cum regibus terræ, et minore bestia, et pseudo-prophetis, scortari velint cum Babylonica meretrice, et cum illa lætari atque luxuriari, et de vino prostitutionis ejus inebriari: benedictus tamen Deus, et pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui vobis dedit pectus masculinum, quique fortitudine spiritus ita vos in interno homine corroboravit, ut isthæc omnia sive terri culamenta, sive hujus mundi illecebras pro vanitatibus ac meris nugis nihilicquid tris contemnere possitis; quique ita cordibus vestris tantam constantiam, fiduciam ac amorem Domini nostri Jesu Christi persuasit, in sevit, alteque impressit, ut nullis Antichristi machinis, quantumvis alioqui aut terribilibus aut plausibilibus, sinatis vobis alium Jesum aut alium Christum, præter eum quem prophetæ prædixerunt, apostoli annuñciaverunt, et sancti Dei martyres suo sanguine confessi sunt. In hac fide, fratres, state, et ne rursus jugo servitutis aut superstitionis implicemini. Nostis enim, fratres, quemadmodum Servator noster præmonuit suos, futurum ut venirent qui alium Christum mundo ostentarent, eumque tot miraculorum et fallaciarum dolis atque fraudibus commendarent, ut electi quoque, si fieri posset, seducerentur: tam fortem futuram esse prædixit illusionem Salvator. Sed durate, fratres, atque confidite, et meminertis mundum a nostro Agonotheta devictum esse. Major enim est qui in nobis est, quam qui est in mundo: et pollicetur nobis Dominus, ut, propter electos, dies malitiæ abbrevientur. Interea vos, quod facitis, fratres, durate; durate, inquam, et vosmet rebus, ut quidam gentilium poetarum dixit, servate secundis: pergite præbere vos strenuos athletas Domini, et adjuvate decertantem evangelii fidem. Patientia

1 Pet. 3.

Apo. 12.

Apo. 18.

Matt. 24.

1 John 4.

Virgil's  
Æneid 1.

vobis opus est, ut cum voluntatem Domini peregeritis, reportetis promissionem. Heb. 1. Adhuc enim pusillum temporis, et qui venturus est veniet, et non tardabit. Justus enim ex fide victurus est; et si se subduxerit non probabitur animo meo, dicit Dominus. At nos non sumus qui subducamus nos in perditionem, sed ad fidem pertinemus in acquisitionem animæ. Non sinamus, fratres, ullis mundi tonitruis verba illa Christi nostris cordibus excidere: Ne terreamini ab illis qui occidunt corpus—reliqua nôstis. Non enim scribo vobis ut ignorantibus veritatem, sed ut eam cognoscentibus, tantum ut per mutuam fidem consolationem communem capiamus confirmemusque. Nulla unquam melior aut major causa vel contemnendæ vitæ, vel profundendi sanguinis. Nulla esse potest causa aut certioris veritatis, evidentiæ, aut claritatis. Non enim agitur controversia de ceremoniâ aliqua, sed de substantia universæ religionis nostræ, adeoque de Christo ipso. Num alium Christum, pro eo qui solus est æterni Patris æternus filius, qui est splendor gloriæ et expressa imago substantiæ Patris, in quo uno plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter inhabitat, qui est solus via, veritas et vita, admittere agnoscereque volumus aut possumus? Absit fratres, absit tanta procul impietas a nobis. Nam quanquam etiam sint qui dicantur Matt. 10. dîi, sive in cælo sive in terra, quemadmodum sunt dîi multi et domini multi, nobis tamen unus est Deus, qui est Pater, ille ex quo omnia, et nos in illum, et unus Dominus Christus, per quem omnia, et nos per illum: sed non in omnibus ut scientia. Hæc est (inquit Johannes) vita æterna; ut cognoscant te solum 1 Cor. 8. verum Deum, et quem misisti Jesum Christum. Si quis igitur nobis alium Deum obtrudere velit, præter eum quem Paulus et Apostoli docuerunt, non audiamus, sed ut anathema procul fugiamus. Profunditates Satanæ non ignoratis, fratres; non enim cessabit ille circumire vos, vt quærat quovis modo quem devoret. Sed viriliter agite, et confortemini in Domino: et licet hostes vestri et adversarii veritatis omnibus mundi præsiidiis muniti fuerint, et vos adorianur, nolite tamen propterea animum despondere, sed confidite duci vestro Christo, confidite Spiritui veritatis et veritati causæ vestræ, quæ, ut tenebris per nequitiam Satanæ obduci, ita extingui non potest. Stant enim a nobis (ingentes deo gratiæ!) certissime, evidentissimeque, clarissimeque, omnes prophetæ, apostoli, et omnes proculdubio veteres ecclesiastici scriptores usque ad tempora neotericorum. Confidamus ergo, et plenam in Domino capiamus consolationem: nec terreamini ab adversariis; quæ enim illis causa est perditionis, vobis autem salutis, et hoc a Deo; quia vobis donatum est non solum ut in eum credatis, verum etiam ut pro illo patiamini. Et dum probris afficiamini nomine Christi, cogitate vos voce Petri, imo et Christi salvatoris, beatos esse, cum prophetis, Phil. 1. cum apostolis, cum martyribus Christi, quoniam gloria et Spiritus Domini super vos requiescit. Juxta illos Servator noster maledictis afficitur, juxta vos glorificatur: quid enim aliud, vos persequendo aut etiam crudeliora designando, vobis facere possunt, quam vestras vobis coronas insignire, ornare, et multiplicare, sibi vero plagas suas et iras Dei graves accumulare et aggravare? Ergo, ne tum quidem cum maxime in nos debacchantur, male precemur illis, fratres; scientes quoniam dum nos ob Christum insectantur, in seipsos maxime sæviunt, ardentesque in capita propria carbones congerunt: sed bene precemur potius; scientes nos in Christo vocatos esse ut benedictionem hæreditate possideamus. Precemur ergo, ut Dominus in cordibus eorum errorum tenebras dispellat, et veritatis lucem illis faciat illucescere; ut, agnitis erroribus, supplices, pœnitundine ad Dominum convertantur, et nobiscum solum illum verum Deum qui est pater luminum, et ejus unicum filium Dominum Jesum Christum agnoscant, atque in Spiritu et veritate adorent. Amen.

Vester in Domino frater, (quem et tabellarius vobis denuntiabit,) per Dei gratiam ad convivendum et commoriendum.

To the brethren which constantly cleave unto Christ, in suffering affliction with him, and for his sake.

Grace and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied unto you, Amen.—Although, brethren,

we have of late heard nothing from you, neither have at this present any news to send you: yet we thought good, something to write unto you, whereby ye might understand that we have good remembrance of you continually, as we doubt not but ye have of us also. When this messenger, coming unto us from you of late, had brought us good tidings of your great constancy, fortitude and patience in the Lord, we were filled with much joy and gladness; giving thanks to God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath caused his face so to shine upon you, and with the light of spiritual understanding hath so lightened your hearts, that now being in captivity and bands for Christ's cause, ye have not ceased, as much as in you lieth, by words, but much more by deed and by your example, to stablish and confirm that thing which, when ye were at liberty in the world, ye laboured to publish and set abroad, by the word and doctrine.

Phil 2.

That is to say, holding fast the word of life, ye shine as lights in the world, in the midst of a wicked and crooked nation: and that with so much the greater glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and profit of your brethren, by how much Satan more cruelly now rageth, and busily laboureth to darken the light of the Gospel. And as for the darkness that Satan now bringeth upon the Church of England, who needeth to doubt thereof? Of late time, our Saviour Christ, his apostles, prophets, and teachers, spake in the temple to the people of England in the English tongue, so that they might be understood, plainly and without any hardness, of the godly, and such as sought for heavenly knowledge in matters which, of necessity of salvation, pertained to the obtaining of eternal life. But now those things which once were written of them, for the edifying of the congregation, are read in a strange tongue without interpretation: manifestly against St. Paul's commandment; so that there is no man able to understand them, which hath not learned that strange and unknown tongue. Of late days, those heavenly mysteries, whereby Christ hath engrafted us into his body, and hath united us one to another, whereby being also regenerate and born anew unto God, he hath nourished, increased, and strengthened us, whereby moreover either he hath taught and set forth an order amongst them which are whole, or else to the sick in soul or body hath given, as it were, wholesome medicines and remedies—those, I say, were all plainly set forth to the people in their own language; so that, what great and exceeding good things every man had received of God, what duty every one owed to another by God's ordinance, what every one had professed in his vocation and was bound to observe, where remedy was to be had for the weak and feeble,—he, to whom God had given a desire and willing heart to understand those things, might soon perceive

and understand: but now all these things are taught and set forth in such sort, that the people redeemed with Christ's blood, and for whose sakes they were by Christ himself ordained, can have no manner of understanding thereof at all. Of late (forasmuch as we know not how to pray as we ought), our Lord Jesus Christ in his prayer, whereof he would have no man ignorant, and also the Holy Ghost in the Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, which are set forth in the Bible, did teach and instruct all the people of England, in the English tongue, that they might ask such things as are according to the will of the Father, and might join their hearts and lips in prayer together: but now all these things are commanded to be hid and shut up from them in a strange tongue, whereby it must needs follow, that the people neither can tell how to pray, nor what to pray for; and how can they join their hearts and voices together, when they understand no more what the voice signifieth, than a brute beast? Finally, I hear say, that the catechism which was lately set forth in the English tongue, is now in every pulpit condemned. Oh devilish malice, and most spitefully injurious to the salvation of mankind purchased by Jesus Christ! Indeed Satan could not long suffer that so great light should be spread abroad in the world; he saw well enough that nothing was able to overthrow his kingdom so much as if children, being godly instructed in religion, should learn to know Christ while they are yet young; whereby not only children, but the elder sort also, and aged folks, that before were not taught to know Christ in their childhood, should now, even with children and babes, be forced to learn to know him. Now therefore he roareth, now he rageth. But what else do they brethren, which serve Satan, and become his ministers and slaves in maintaining of this impiety, but even the same which they did, to whom Christ our Saviour threateneth this curse in the Gospel? Woe unto you which shut up the kingdom of heaven before men, and take away the key of knowledge from them; ye yourselves have not entered in, neither have ye suffered them that would enter to come in. And from whence shall we say, brethren, that this horrible and mischievous darkness proceedeth, which is now brought into the world? from whence I pray you, but even from the smoke of the great furnace, the bottomless pit, so that the sun and the air are now darked by the smoke of the pit? Now, even now, out of doubt, brethren, the pit is opened amongst us, and the locusts begin to swarm, and Abaddon now reigneth. Ye therefore, my brethren, which pertain unto Christ, and have the seal of God marked on your foreheads, that is to wit, are sealed up with the earnest of the Spirit to be a peculiar people unto God, quit yourselves like men, and be strong, for he that is in us, is stronger than he which is in the world: and ye know that all that is born of God overcometh the world, and this

Matt. 23

Apoc. 9

Apoc. 7.

1 John 4.

Rom. 8.

is our victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Let the world fret, let it rage never so much, be it never so cruel and bloody, yet be ye sure that no man can take us out of the Father's hands, for he is greater than all: who hath not spared his own Son, but hath given him to death for us all; and therefore how shall he not with him give us all things also? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who shall then condemn? It is Christ that is dead, yea, rather which is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God, and maketh request also for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—the rest ye know, brethren. We are certainly persuaded with St. Paul by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that no kind of thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Which thing, that it may come to pass, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the comfort both of you and of us all, as we for our parts will continually, God willing, pray for you; so, dear brethren in the Lord, with all earnest and hearty request, we beseech you, even in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye will not cease to pray for us. Fare ye well, dear brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all evermore, Amen.

Yours in the Lord, Nicholas Ridley.

THE SAME IN LATIN.

Ad fratres qui Christum cum cruce amplectuntur.

Gratia vobis et pax a Deo et Domino nostro Jesu Christo multiplicetur, Amen. Licet a vobis, fratres, nihil nuper accepimus, neque vobis aliquid novi nunc nuntiandum habemus, tamen ideo visum est nobis aliquid vobis scribere, ut intelligatis nos memoriam vestri bonam habere perpetuam, sicut vos de nobis habere minime dubitamus. Veniente nuper ad nos harum latore, et annuntiante nobis vestram omnium in Domino constantiam, fortitudinem et patientiam multam, repleti sumus consolatione et gaudio, gratias agentes Deo et Patri per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, qui ita illuminavit vultum suum super vos et lumine intelligentiæ spiritualis ita illustravit corda vestra, ut quod nuper (dum essetis in mundo liberi,) verbo et doctrina passim præstare satagistis, nunc propter Christum captivi, quantum licet, verbo, sed multo magis opere atque vestro exemplo, præstare non cessastis; hoc est, sermonem vitæ sustinentes, lucetis tanquam luminaria in mundo, in medio nationis prævæ et tortuosæ; idque, tanto cum majore Domini nostri Jesu Christi gloria, fratrumque vestrorum emolumento et utilitate, quanto nunc Satan magis sævit, majoresque luci evangelicæ conatur inducere tenebras. De tenebris autem quas nunc ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Satan offundit, quis potest dubitare? Nuper Christus salvator, apostoli, prophetæ, et doctores ipsius, in templo loquebantur populo Anglicano anglice, ita ut ab eis qui pii erant et rerum cœlestium studiosi, in iis quæ ad vitæ eternæ redemptionem de necessitate salutis pertinebant, clare et absque ænigmate facile intelligi poterant: nunc vero quæ ab illis olim in ædificationem ecclesiæ scripta sunt, leguntur in lingua peregrina, citra interpretationem, manifeste contra præceptum Pauli apostoli; ita ut a nemine prorsus qui alienam et peregrinam illam linguam non didicerit, intelligi possint. Nuper sacrosancta illa mysteria cœlestia, quibus nos sibi Christus

insevit et suo corpori complantavit, atque nos inter nos mutuo colligavit, quibus natos Dei aluit, auxit, atque corroboravit; denique quibus aut ordinem inter sanos docuit, aut ægrotis vel anima vel corpore veluti salubria pharmaca tradidit, quæ populo clare in sua lingua tradebantur, ita ut quisque, quanta et quæ immensa adeo accepisset, quid cuique ex Dei præscripto deberet, quid in sua quisque vocatione professus esset et observare teneretur, unde languenti remedium esset petendum, facile is cui Deus mentem et animum hoc intelligendi avidum dedit, quam facillime intelligere poterat: nunc vero omnia hæc ita traduntur, ut eorum omnium populus Christi sanguine redemptus, et cui hæc maxime a Christo instituta sunt, ne tantillum quidem intelligere possit. Nuper, (quum quid orare debemus ut oportet, nescimus,) Dominus noster Jesu Christus in sua, quam omnibus tradi voluit, oratione, atque etiam Spiritus sanctus in psalmis, hymnis et cantionibus spiritualibus, quæ in sacris bibliis reperiuntur, universum populum Anglicanum anglice docuit, ut et quæ petenda essent juxta voluntatem Patris peterent, et corda cum labiis in oratione conjungerent: nunc vero hæc sub involuero linguæ peregrinæ jubentur claudi, unde necessario sequi oportet, populum, neque quid oret neque quid orare debeat, posse intelligere: et quomodo potest cor voci conjungere, quum, quid vox valeat, magis quam brutum intelligere nequeat? Postremo, audio passim in pulpitis nunc damnari catechesim illam editam nuper in sermone vulgari. O malitiam dæmoniacam, et humani generis per Christum salutem partem plane invidam! Omnino Satan tantam lucem vulgari per orbem diu sustinere non potuit: nihil æque in suo regno subvertendo efficere posse intellexit, quam si a teneris annis sacris imbuti pueri Christum didicissent; unde non tantum pueros, sed et senes atque ætate proveciores, qui ab infantia Christum prius non didicissent, una cum pueris Christum discere necesse erat. Ergo nunc exclamat et vociferatur. Sed quid faciunt alii, fratres, qui Satanæ in hac impietate operam impendunt atque ministrant, quam illi quibus Christus servator noster in evangelio dirum illud interminatur et intonat? dicens. Væ vobis qui clauditis regnum ante homines, qui tulistis clavem scientiæ: ipsi non introiistis, et introire volentes prohibuistis. Et unde, fratres, dixerimus has tetras et exitiosas tenebras in mundum invectas exhalasse? Unde quæso, quam ex fumo fornacis magni putei abyssi, ut jam obscuratus sit sol et aer ex fumo putei? Jam jam proculdubio, fratres, apud nos puteus apertus est, locustæ luxuriant et Abaddon regnat. Ergo, fratres, qui estis Christi, qui signum Dei habetis in frontibus vestris, hoc est arra Spiritus obsignati estis in populum peculiarem Deo, viriliter agite et confortamini; major enim est qui est in nobis quam qui est in mundo. Scitis autem quod omne quod natum est ex Deo vincit mundum, et hæc est victoria quæ vincit mundum, fides nostra. Fremat, frendat, et insæviant quantumlibet mundus, scitote quod nemo potest nos tollere de manu Patris, quia major est omnibus: qui proprio filio suo non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum; et proinde qui fieri potest ut non cum illo omnia nobis donet? Quis intentabit crimina adversus electos Dei? Deus est qui justificat, quis ille qui condemnet? Christus est qui mortuus, immo et qui suscitatus est, qui et intercedit pro nobis. Quis nos separabit a dilectione Dei? Num afflictio? Num angustia? Num persecutio? Num fames? Num nuditas? Num periculum? Num gladius?—reliqua nostis, fratres. Speramus plane cum Paulo, per gratiam Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quod nihil prorsus nos poterit separare a dilectione Dei, quæ est in Christo Jesu Domino nostro. Quod ut et vobis sit, et nobis omnibus contingat gratia et misericordia servatoris nostri Jesu Christi, et nos pro vobis (Deo volente) indesinenter orabimus, et vos pro nobis ne aliquando orare desinatis, etiam atque etiam in visceribus Jesu Christi (fratres in Domino charissimi) quantum possumus obnixè precamur. Bene valete, fratres charissimi. Gratia Domini nostri Jesu Christi sit semper cum omnibus vobis. Amen.

Vester in Domino, N. R.

### To the Queen's Majesty.

It may please your majesty, for Christ our Saviour's sake, in a matter of conscience, (and now not for myself, but for other

poor men,) to vouchsafe to hear and understand this mine humble supplication. It is so, (honourable princess,) that in the time while I was in the ministry of the see of London, divers poor men, tenants thereof, have taken new leases of their tenancies and holdings, and some have renewed and changed their hold, and therefore have paid fines and sums of money, both to me, and also to the Chapter of Paul's, for the confirmation of the same. Now I hear say, that the Bishop which occupieth the same room now will not allow the aforesaid leases, which must redound to many poor men's utter ruin and decay; wherefore, this is mine humble supplication unto your honourable grace, that it may please the same, for Christ's sake, to be unto the aforesaid poor men their gracious patron and defender, either that they may enjoy their aforesaid leases, and years renewed, (as when their matter shall be heard with conscience, I suppose, both justice, conscience, and equity shall require; for that their leases shall be found, (I trust,) made without fraud or coven, either of their part or of mine; and also the old rents always reserved to the see, without any kind of damage thereof;) or if this will not be granted, then that it may please your gracious highness to command that the poor men may be restored to their former leases and years, and may have rendered to them again such sums of money, as they paid to me and to the chapter for their leases and years so now taken from them; which thing, concerning the fines paid to me, may be easily done, if it shall please your majesty to command some portion of those goods which I left in my house, to be given unto them. I suppose that half of the value of my plate which I left in mine offices, and especially in an iron chest in my bed-chamber, will go nigh to restore all such fines received; the true sums and parcels whereof are not set in their leases; and therefore (if that way shall please your highness,) they must be known by such ways and means as your majesty by the advice of men of wisdom and conscience shall appoint. But yet for Christ's sake I crave and most humbly beseech your majesty, of your most gracious pity and mercy, that the former way may take place. I have also a poor sister, that came to me out of the North with three fatherless children for her relief, whom I married after to a servant of mine own house: she is put out of that which I did provide for them. I beseech your honourable grace, that her case may be mercifully considered: and that the rather, in contemplation that I never had of him which suffered indurance at my entrance to the see of London, one penny of his moveable goods, for it was almost half-a-year after his deposition, afore I did enter in that place; yea, and also if any were left known to be his, he had licence to carry it away, or there for his use it did lie safe; and his officers do know, that I paid for the lead which I found there when I occupied any

Behold the  
cruel and  
unjust  
dealing of  
Bonner.  
He cannot  
deal justly  
and truly  
with men,  
which is  
untrue to  
God and a  
hater of  
all truth.

If to suc-  
cour the  
widows  
and father-  
less is pure  
and unde-  
filed reli-  
gion as St.  
James  
saith is  
Bonner  
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ligion  
filthy and  
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ble which  
doth such  
wrong to  
the widow  
and father-  
less.



of it to the behoof of the church or of the house. And moreover, I had not only no part of his moveable goods, but also as his old receiver and then mine, called Master Staunton, can testify, I paid for him, towards his servants, common liveries and wages, after his deposition, fifty-three li. or fifty-five pounds, I cannot tell whether. In all these matters, I beseech your honourable majesty to hear the advice of men of conscience, and especially the archbishop now of York; which, for that he was continually in my house a year and more before mine imprisonment, I suppose he is not altogether ignorant of some part of these things; and also his grace doth know my sister, for whose succour and some relief, now unto your highness I make most humble suit.

The 16th day of October, 1555.

N. R.

**An answer to a Letter written unto him by West, sometime his Chaplain.**

I wish you grace in God, and love of the truth; without the which truly stablished in men's hearts by the mighty hand of Almighty God, it is no more possible to stand by the truth in Christ in time of trouble, than it is for the wax to abide the heat of the fire. Sir, know you this, that I am (blessed be God!) persuaded that this world is but transitory, and (as St. John saith) the world passeth away and the lust thereof. I am persuaded Christ's words to be true—Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; and I believe that no earthly creature shall be saved, whom the Redeemer and Saviour of the world shall before his Father deny. This the Lord grant, that it may be so grafted, established, and fixed in my heart, that neither things present nor to come, high nor low, life nor death, be able to remove me thence. It is a goodly wish that you wish me, deeply to consider things pertaining unto God's glory: but if you had wished also that neither fear of death, nor hope of worldly prosperity, should let me to maintain God's word and his truth, which is his glory and true honour, it would have liked me well. You desire me, for God's sake, to remember myself. Indeed, Sir, now it is time so to do, for so far as I can perceive, it standeth me upon no less danger than of the loss both of body and soul; and I trow then it is time for a man to awake, if any thing will awake him. He that will not fear him that threateneth to cast both body and soul into everlasting fire, whom will he fear? With this fear, O Lord, fasten thou together our frail flesh, that we never swerve from thy laws. You say you have made much suit for me. Sir, God grant that you have not in suing for my worldly deliverance, impaired and hindered the furtherance of God's word and his truth. You have

Notwithstanding these godly and just requests no justice could be had until that now of late some of these shameful injuries by order of law have been redressed.

1 John 2.

Matt. 10.

1 hinder

Luke 12.

known me long indeed, in the which time it hath chanced me (as you say) to mislike some things. It is true, I grant : for sudden changes without substantial and necessary cause, and the heady setting forth of extremities, I did never love. Confession unto the minister which is able to instruct, correct, comfort, and inform the weak, wounded, and ignorant conscience, indeed I ever thought might do much good in Christ's congregation, and so I assure you I think even at this day. My doctrine and my preaching, you say, you have heard often, and after your judgment have thought it godly, saving only for the sacrament ; which thing although it was of me reverently handled, and a great deal better than of the rest (as you say), yet in the margin you write warily, and in this world wisely—'and yet methought all sounded not well.' Sir, but that I see so many changes in this world, and so much alteration, else at this your saying I would not a little marvel. I have taken you for my friend, and a man whom I fancied for plainness and faithfulness, as much (I assure you) as for your learning : and have you kept this so close in your heart from me unto this day? Sir, I consider more things than one, and will not say all that I think. But what need you to care what I think, for anything that I shall be able to do unto you, either good or harm? You give me good lessons, to stand in nothing against my learning, and to beware of vain-glory. Truly, Sir, I herein like your counsel very well, and by God's grace I intend to follow it unto my life's end.

To write unto those whom you name, I cannot see what it will avail me. For this I would have you know, that I esteem nothing available for me, which also will not further the glory of God. And now, because I perceive you have an entire zeal and desire of my deliverance out of this captivity and worldly misery, if I should not bear you a good heart in God again, methink I were to blame. Sir, how nigh the day of my dissolution and departure out of this world is at hand, I cannot tell : the Lord's will be fulfilled, how soon soever it shall come. I know the Lord's words must be verified on me, that I shall appear before the incorrupt judge, and be accountable to him of all my former life. And although the hope of his mercy is my sheet-anchor of eternal salvation, yet am I persuaded, that whosoever wittingly neglecteth and regardeth not to clear his conscience, he cannot have peace with God nor a lively faith in his mercy. Conscience therefore moveth me (considering you were one of my family and one of my household, of whom then I think I had a special cure, and of all them which were within my house ; which indeed ought to have been an example of godliness to all the rest of my cure, not only of good life, but also in promoting of God's word to the uttermost of their power : but alas ! now when the trial doth separate the chaff from the

corn, how small a deal it is, God knoweth, which the wind doth not blow away. This conscience,<sup>1</sup> I say, doth move me) to fear lest the lightness of my family shall be laid to my charge, for lack of more earnest and diligent instruction which should have been done. But blessed be God, which hath given me grace to see this my default, and to lament it from the bottom of my heart, before my departing hence. This conscience doth move me also now to require both you and my friend Doctor Harvy, to remember your promises made to me in times past, of the pure setting forth and preaching of God's word and his truth. These promises, although you shall not need to fear to be charged with them of me hereafter before the world, yet look for none other (I exhort you as my friends), but to be charged with them at God's hand. This conscience and the love that I bear unto you, biddeth me now say unto you both in God's name, Fear God and love not the world; for God is able to cast both body and soul into hell fire. When his wrath shall suddenly be kindled, blessed are all they that put their trust in him. And the saying of St. John is true; All that is in the world, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world; and the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever. If this gift of grace, which undoubtedly is necessarily required unto eternal salvation, were truly and unfeignedly grafted and firmly established in men's hearts; they would not be so light, so suddenly to shrink from the maintenance and confession of the truth, as is now (alas) seen so manifestly of so many in these days. But here, peradventure, you would know of me what is the truth. Sir, God's word is the truth, as St. John saith, and that even the same that was heretofore. For albeit man doth vary and change as the moon, yet God's word is stable and abideth one for evermore: and of Christ it is truly said, Christ yesterday and to-day, the same is also for ever.

<sup>1</sup> Knowledge, the knowing this.

<sup>Psa. 2</sup>  
<sup>1 John 2.</sup>

<sup>John 17.</sup>

<sup>Heb. 13.</sup>

When I was in office, all that were esteemed learned in God's word, agreed this to be a truth in God's word written; that the common prayer of the Church should be had in the common tongue. You know I have conferred with many, and I ensure<sup>2</sup> you I never found man (so far as I do remember), neither old nor new, gospeller nor papist, of what judgment soever he was, in this thing to be of a contrary opinion. If then it were a truth of God's word, think you that the alteration of the world can make it an untruth? If it cannot, why then do so many men shrink from the confession and maintenance of this truth, received once of us all? For what is it I pray you else, to confess or deny Christ in this world, but to maintain the truth taught in God's word, or for any worldly respect to shrink from the same? This one thing have I brought for an ensample:

<sup>2</sup> assure.

other things be in like case, which now particularly I need not to rehearse. For he that will forsake wittingly, either for fear or gain of the world, any one open truth of God's word; if he be constrained, he will assuredly forsake God and all his truth, rather than he will endanger himself to lose or to leave that he loveth better in deed<sup>1</sup> than he doth God and the truth of his word. I like very well your plain speaking, wherein you say, I must either agree or die: and I think that you mean of the bodily death which is common both to good and bad. Sir, I know I must die, whether I agree or no. But what folly were it then to make such an agreement, by the which I could never escape this death, which is so common to all, and also incur the guilt of death and eternal damnation. Lord, grant that I may utterly abhor and detest this damnable agreement so long as I live. And because (I dare say) you wrote of friendship unto me this short earnest advertisement, and, I think, verily wishing me to live and not to die; therefore, bearing you in my heart no less love in God, than you do me in the world, I say unto you in the word of the Lord (and that I say to you I say to all my friends and lovers in God), that if you do not confess and maintain, to your power and knowledge, that which is grounded upon God's word, but will, either for fear or gain of the world, shrink and play the *Apostata*, indeed you shall die the death: you know what I mean. And I beseech you all, my true friends and lovers in God, remember what I say; for this may be the last time peradventure that ever I shall write unto you.

From Bocardo in Oxford, the 8th day of April, 1554.

N. R.

To my most dear Brother, and reverend fellow Elder in Christ,  
John Hooper, grace and peace.

My dearly beloved brother and fellow elder, whom I reverence in the Lord, pardon me, I beseech you, that hitherto since your captivity and mine, I have not saluted you by my letters: whereas, I do indeed confess, I have received from you (such was your gentleness,) two letters at sundry times, but yet at such times as I could not be suffered to write unto you again; or if I might have written, yet was I greatly in doubt, lest my letters should not safely come unto your hands. But now, my dear brother, forasmuch as I understand by your works, which I have yet but superficially seen, that we thoroughly agree and wholly consent together in those things which are the grounds and substantial points of our religion, against the which the world so furiously rageth in these our days, howsoever in time past in smaller matters and circumstances of religion, your wisdom and my simplicity (I

<sup>1</sup> in reality

Apostata was he which fled from his captain to the enemy. He was also so called that departed from the Christians to the Jews and Gentiles.

confess) have in some points varied: now (I say) be you assured, that even with my whole heart, (God is my witness,) in the bowels of Christ, I love you, and in truth, for the truth's sake which abideth in us, and (as I am persuaded) shall by the grace of God, abide with us for evermore. And because the world, as I perceive, brother, ceaseth not to play his pageant, and busily conspireth against Christ our Saviour, with all possible force and power, exalting high things against the knowledge of God, let us join hands together in Christ; and if we cannot overthrow, yet, to our power, and as much as in us lieth, let us shake those high things; not with carnal, but with spiritual weapons; and withal, brother, let us prepare ourselves to the day of our dissolution; whereby after the short time of this bodily affliction, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall triumph together with him in eternal glory. 2 Cor 13

I pray you, brother, salute in my name that reverend father, your fellow prisoner, Dr. Crome; by whom, since the first day that I heard of his most godly and fatherly constancy in confessing the truth of the Gospel, I have conceived great consolation and joy in the Lord. For the integrity and uprightness, the gravity and innocency of that man, all England, I think, hath known long ago. Blessed be God therefore, which in such abundance of iniquity, and decay of all godliness, hath given unto us, in this reverend old age, such a witness for the truth of his Gospel. Miserable and hard hearted is he, whom the godliness and constant confession of so worthy, so grave, and innocent a man, will not move to acknowledge and confess the truth of God. I do not now, brother, require you to write any thing to me again, for I stand much in fear lest your letters should be intercepted before they can come to my hands. Nevertheless, know you, that it shall be to me great joy to hear of your constancy and fortitude in the Lord's quarrel. And albeit I have not hitherto written unto you, yet have I twice, as I could, sent unto you my mind touching the matter which in your letters you required to know, neither can I yet, brother, be otherwise persuaded. I see, methinks, so many perils whereby I am earnestly moved to counsel you not to hasten the publishing of your works, especially under the title of your own name. For I fear greatly, lest by this occasion, both your mouth should be stopped hereafter, and all things taken away from the rest of the prisoners, whereby otherwise, if it so please God, they may be able to do good to many. Farewell in the Lord, my most dear brother; and if there be any more in prison with you for Christ's cause, I beseech you, as you may, salute them in my name; to whose prayers, I do most humbly and heartily commend myself and my fellow-prisoners, concaptives in the Lord: and yet once again and for ever in Christ, my most dear brother, farewell.

Of this good father's godly and constant confession of the truth, you shall read in the next edition of the book of martyrs.

THE SAME IN LATIN.

Charissimo fratri et venerabili in Christo compresbytero Ioanni  
Hopeno gratiam et pacem.

Dilecte frater et venerabilis in Christo compresbyter, condonet mihi precor tua dilectio, quod hactenus a tua captivitate, tua simul et mea, tuam dilectionem meis literis non salutaverim, quando (ingenue fateor) mihi abs te (quæ tua eras humanitas) binæ literæ datæ fuerunt, diversis quidem temporibus, sed eis semper profecto in quibus aut mihi per iniquitatem temporis rescribere bene non licuit, aut si rescripsissem de literis ad te tuto perferendis multum dubitavi. Jam vero, charissime frater, quum ex illis tuis lucubrationibus, quas mihi non nisi obiter videre contigit, facile intelligo nos in iis quæ sunt nostræ religionis fundamenta et bases omnium (adversus quas mundus hodie tantopere insanit) probe convenire, et in unum conspirare, utcumque in rebus minoribus, et religionis appendicibus olim tua prudentia et mea simplicitas in aliquibus (fateor) uterque suum sensum habebat: jam inquam cognoscat tua dilectio, quod ex animo (Deus mihi testis est) in visceribus Christi te diligam, frater in veritate, propter veritatem quæ permanet in nobis, et, ut mihi persuasum habeo, per gratiam Dei permanebit nobiscum in æternum. Quoniam autem (uti video frater) mundus causam suam agere non cessat, et contra Christum Servatorem quantum potest maximis munitioibus conspirat, et summas conatur erigere altitudines adversus cognitionem Dei; jungamus, frater, dextras in Christo, et pro nostra virili quantumque in nobis situm erit, non carnalibus sed spiritualibus, si non possumus demoliri, saltem pulsemus illas altitudines: et simul nos jam frater, præparemus ad diem dissolutionis nostræ, per quam cum Christo post momentaneam carnis istius nostræ afflictionem, in æternum, gratia Domini Jesu Christi, simul cum illo triumphabimus in gloria sempiterna. Obsecro, frater, saluta meo nomine venerandum illum tuum conceptivum et mihi vere venerabilem patrem D. Cromerum; de quo (mihi crede) ex primo die quo de ejus sanctissima et gravissima, constantia in confessione veritatis evangelicæ audivi, semper maximam consolationem maximumque gaudium concepi in Domino: integritatem enim ejus viri, gravitatem et innocentiam jam pridem universa pene (credo) novit Anglia. Benedictus igitur Deus, qui nobis in tanta abundantia iniquitatis, et in tanta ruina pietatis, talem nobis dedit in isthac veneranda canitie testem sui Evangelii veritati. Infelix quem tanti viri, tam gravis et innocentis, pietas et constans confessio nihil permovere possunt ad cognoscendam veritatem Dei. Non peto jam, frater, ut mihi quicquam rescribas, multum enim vereor ne literæ intercipientur: quanquam scias mihi de tua constantia et fortitudine in Domini causa audire semper fore gratissimum. Et ut tuæ fraternitati hactenus non rescriperim, bis tamen ut potui tibi significandum curavi quod a me in tuis literis cognoscere voluisti. Nec adhuc profecto, frater, possum animum meum mutare: tot enim mihi videre videor pericula, quæ me impellunt ut consulam, ne tuarum lucubrationum editionem festinare velis, saltem sub titulo nominis tui. Multum enim vereor ne hac occasione et tibi os obstruatur in posterum, et alijs quoque captivis omnia auferantur, quibus alioqui multis (Deo ita volente) poterunt prodesse. Bene vale in Domino, chariss frater, et siqui alii in vestris ædibus sunt vobiscum in causa Christi conceptivi, precor illis meo nomine salutem. uti possis, velis impartiri; et omnium vestrum precibus apud Dominum me, atque meos conceptivos in Domino, etiam atque, etiam umillime commendo; et rursus atque in æternum in Christo bene vale frater chariss.

### A Letter of Master Edmund Grindal,

Then being in exile for the testimony of the truth, and now Bishop of London, to Dr. Ridley, prisoner in Oxford, which we thought good here to place; for that the letter following is an answer thereof.

*Gratiam et consolationem a Domino et servatore nostro Jesu Christo.*—Sir, I have often been desirous to have written to you,

and to have heard from you, but the iniquity of the times have hitherto always put me forth of all hope and comfort. Now at this present, God seemeth to offer some likelihood that these might come to your hands, which I thought to use, referring the rest to God's disposition. Your present state, not I only (who of all other am most bound,) but also all other our brethren here, do most heartily lament, as joined with the most miserable captivity that ever any church of Christ hath suffered. Notwithstanding, we give God most humble thanks, for that he hath so strengthened you, and others your concaptives, to profess a good profession before so many witnesses. And I doubt nothing, but he that hath called you and them, not only to believe upon him but also to suffer for him, doth not leave you destitute of that unspeakable comfort, which he useth to minister abundantly to his in the school of the cross. He grant that his name may be glorified in you, whether it be by life or death; as may be most to his honour, and your everlasting consolation.

Sir, I thought it good to advertise you partly of our state in these parts. We be here dispersed in divers and several places. Certain be at Tigury, good students of either university a number, very well entreated of Master Bullinger, of the other ministers, and of the whole city. Another number of us remain at Argentine, and take the commodity of Master Martyr's lessons, who is a very notable father. Master Scory and certain other with him be in Friesland, and have an English church there, but not very frequent.<sup>1</sup> The greatest number is at Frankfort, where I was <sup>crowded</sup> at this present by occasion, a very fair city, the magistrates favourable to our people, with so many other commodities as exiles can well look for. Here is also a church, and now (God be thanked) well quieted by the prudence of Master Coxe and other which met here for that purpose. So that now, we trust, God hath provided for such as will flee forth of Babylon, a resting place, where they may truly serve him and hear the voice of their true pastor. I suppose in one place and other dispersed, there be well nigh an hundred students and ministers on this side the seas. Such a Lord is God, to work diversely in his, according to his unsearchable wisdom, who knoweth best what is in man. *Primus est victoriae titulus, gentiliū manibus apprehensum Dominum confiteri. Secundus ad gloriam gradus est, cauta secessionē subtractum Domino reservari. Illa publica, hæc privata confessio est. Ille iudicem seculi vincit; hic contentus Deo suo iudice, conscientiam puram cordis integritate custodit. Isthic fortitudo promptior, hic sollicitudo securior. Ille appropinquante hora sua jam maturus inventus est; hic fortasse dilatus est, qui patrimonio derelicto idcirco secessit, quia non erat negaturus, confiteretur utique si fuisset et ipse detentus.* We have also here certain copies of your answers in the disputation; Item Antoniana objecta cum responsione. The treatise

Cyprianus  
de lapsis.

in English against transubstantiation, which in time shall be translated into Latin. It hath been thought best not to print them till we see what God will do with you; both for<sup>1</sup> incensing of their malicious fury, and also for, restraining you, and others from writing hereafter, which should be a greater loss to the church of Christ, than forbearing of these for a time. If I shall know your will to be otherwise in it, the same shall be followed. Thus much I thought good to let you understand concerning these matters, and concerning the poor state of men here; who most earnestly and incessantly do cry unto God for the delivery of his church, to behold the causes of the afflicted, and to hear the groans of his imprisoned, knowing that you, who in this state have more familiar access unto God, do not forget us. God comfort you, aid you, and assist you with his Spirit and grace, to continue his unto the end, to the glory of his name, the edification of his church, and the subversion of Antichrist's kingdom. Amen.

From Frankfort, the 6th of May, 1555.

E. G.

### The answer of Dr. Ridley to the former Letter.

Blessed be God, our heavenly Father, which inclined your heart to have such a desire to write unto me; and blessed be he again, which hath heard your request, and hath brought your letters safe unto my hands: and over all this, I bless him through our Lord Jesus Christ, for the great comfort I have received by the same, of the knowledge of your state, and of other our dearly beloved brethren and countrymen in those parts beyond the sea.

Dearly beloved brother, Grindall, I say to you, and all the rest of our brethren in Christ with you, Rejoice in the Lord; and as ye love me and the other my reverend fathers and concaptives, (which undoubtedly are gloria Christi<sup>2</sup>) lament not our state; but I beseech you and them all to give unto our heavenly Father, for his endless mercies and unspeakable benefits even in the midst of all our troubles given unto us, most hearty thanks. For know ye, that as the weight of his cross hath increased upon us, so he hath not, nor doth not cease to multiply his mercies to strengthen us; and I trust, yea, by his grace, I doubt nothing, but he will so do for Christ our Master's sake, even to the end. To hear that you and our other brethren do find in your exile, favour and grace with the magistrates, ministers, and citizens at Tigury, at Frankfort, and otherwhere, it doth greatly comfort (I dare say) all here that do indeed love Christ and his true Word. I ensure<sup>3</sup> you it warmed my heart to hear you by chance to name some, as Scory and Coxe, &c. Oh that it had come in your mind to have said somewhat also of Cheeke, of Turner, of Leaver, of Sampson, of Chambers; but I trust to God, they be

<sup>2</sup> the glory of Christ.



all well. And, Sir, seeing you say that there be in those parts with you of students and ministers so good a number, now, therefore, care you not for us, otherwise than to wish that God's glory may be set forth by us. For whensoever God shall call us home, (as we look daily for none other but when it shall please God to say, "Come,") ye, blessed be God, are enough through his aid, to light and set up again the lantern of his Word in England. As concerning the copies ye say ye have with you, I wonder how ever they did wander and could find the way to come to you. My disputation, except you have that which I gathered myself after the disputation done, I cannot think ye have it truly. If ye have that, then ye have there withall the whole manner after the which I was used in the disputation.

This disputation of his own penning is in the book of martyrs.

As for the treatise in English, *contra transubstantionem*, vix possum adduci, ut credam operæ pretium fore ut in Latinum transferatur. Cæterum quicquid sit, nullo modo velim ut quicquam quocunque modo meo nomine ederetur, donec quid de nobis Dominus constituerit fieri, vobis prius certo constiterit: and thus much unto your letters. Now, although I suppose ye know a good part of our state here, (for we are forthcoming even as when ye departed, &c.) you shall understand that I was in the tower about the space of two months, close prisoner; and after that had granted to me without my labour, the liberty of the tower, and so continued about half-a-year; then, because I refused to allow the mass with my presence, I was shut up in close prison again.

The last Lent save one, it chanced by reason of the tumult stirred up in Kent, there was so many prisoners in the tower, that my Lord of Canterbury, Mr. Latimer, Mr. Bradford, and I, were put altogether in one prison, where we remained still almost to the next Easter; and then we three, Canterbury, Latimer and I, were suddenly sent a little before Easter, to Oxford, and were suffered to have nothing with us, but that we carried upon us. About the Whitsuntide following, was our disputations at Oxford; after the which was all taken from us, as pen and ink, &c.; our own servants were taken from us before, and every one had put to him a strange man; and we each one appointed to be kept in several places, as we are unto this day.

Blessed be God, we three, at the writing hereof, were in good health, and (in God) of good cheer. We have looked long ago to have been despatched; for we were all three, on one day, within a day or two of our disputations, of Doctor Weston, being the head commissioner, condemned for heretics; and since that time we remain as we were of him left. The Lord's will be fulfilled in us; as I do not doubt, but by his grace, it shall be to his glory, and our endless salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Likewise the Lord hitherto hath preserved, above all our expectation, our dear brother, and in Christ's cause a strong

champion, John Bradford. He is likewise condemned, and is already delivered unto the secular power, and writs (as we have heard say) given out for his execution, and called in again. Thus the Lord, so long as his blessed pleasure is, preserveth whom he listeth, notwithstanding the wonderful raving of the world. Many (as we hear say) have suffered valiantly, confessing Christ's truth, and nothing yielding to the adversary, yea not for the fear or pains of death.

The names of them which I knew, and have now suffered, are these:—Farrer, the Bishop of St. David's; Hooper, the Bishop of Worcester; Rogers, *tuus olim comprehendarius*; Doctor Taylor, of Hadley; Mr. Saunders; and one Tomkins, a weaver: and now, this last day, Mr. Cardmaker, with another, were burnt in Smithfield at London, and many others in Essex and Kent, whose names are written in the book of life, whom yet I do not know.

This West when he had relented and said mass against his conscience shortly after pined away and died for sorrow.

West, your old companion, and sometime mine officer, alas; hath relented, (as I have heard); but the Lord hath shortened his days, for anon he died and is gone. Grimbold was caught by the heel and cast into the marshalsea, but now is at liberty again; but I fear me he escaped not without some becking and bowing (alas) of his knee unto Baal.

My dear friend Thomas Ridley, of the Bull Head in Cheape, which was to me the most faithful friend that I had in my trouble, is departed also unto God. My brother Shipyde, that hath married my sister, hath been almost half a year in prison, for delivering (as he was accused) of certain things, I ween, from me; but now, thanks be to God, he is at liberty again, but so that the bishop hath taken from him his park.

Of all us three concaptives at Oxford, I am kept most strait, and with least liberty; *vel quia viro in cujus ædibus ego custodior, uxor dominatur (licet modo sit præfectus civitatis) mulier vetula, morosa, et superstitiosissima; quæ etiam hoc sibi laudi ducit, quod me dicatur arctissime et cautissime custodire; vir autem ipse, Irischius nomine, mitis satis est omnibus, uxori vero plusquam obsequentissimus. Licet uxorem (uti nosti) nunquam habuerim, tamen ex hac quotidiana consuetudine quam cum istis conjugibus habeo, videor mihi nonnihilo posse intelligere, quam grave malum et intolerabile jugum sit cum mala muliere in conjugio colligari. Recte ergo sapiens dixit, Uxor bona donum Dei; et iterum, Mulieris bonæ beatus vir. Vel hæc inquam causa est, vel quia a magnis magistratibus (nescio quas ob causas) illud est ut ita fieret ipsis mandatum; id quod illi, siquando de mea nimia servitute apud eos conqueror, sedulo sæpe rursus mihi inculcant.*

At Cambridge, (as I hear say,) omnes studiorum et statutorum reformationes nuper factæ, nunc sunt denuo deformatæ et deletæ, et omnia sunt in pristinum chaos et in antiquum

papismum reducta: omnes collegiorum præfecti qui sinceritati evangelii favebant, vel qui conjugati erant, loco moti sunt, et alii papisticæ factionis in eorum loca surrogati; quod et de sociis collegiorum qui noluerunt flectere genu Baali, factum esse audio. Nec mirum; nam et istud passim factum est in universo regno Angliæ in omnibus Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, Decanis, prebendariis, sacerdotibus ecclesiarum, et in toto clero; and to tell you much naughty matter in a few words, Papismus apud nos ubique in pleno suo antiquo robore regnat.

The Lord be merciful, and for Christ's sake pardon us our old unkindness and unthankfulness; for when he poured upon us the gifts of his manifold graces and favour, (alas) we did not serve him, nor rendered unto him thanks according to the same. We pastors, many of us, were too cold, and bare too much (alas) with the wicked world; our magistrates did abuse, to their own worldly gain, both God's Gospel, and the ministers of the same; the people in many places was wayward and unkind. Thus of every side, and of every sort, we have provoked God's anger and wrath to fall upon us. But blessed might he be that hath not suffered his to continue in those ways, which so wholly have displeased his sacred majesty; but hath awaked them by the fatherly correction of his own Son's cross, unto his glory and our endless salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. My daily prayer is (as God doth know), and by God's grace shall be so long as I live in this world, for you my dear brethren that are fled out of your own country, because ye will rather forsake all worldly things, than the truth of God's word. It is even the same that I used to make to God for all those churches abroad through the world, which have forsaken the kingdom of Antichrist, and professed openly the purity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: that is, that God our eternal Father, for our Saviour Christ's sake, will daily increase in you the gracious gift of his heavenly Spirit, to the true setting forth of his glory and of his Gospel, and make you to agree brotherly in the truth of the same, that there rise no root of bitterness among you, that may infect that good seed that God hath sown in your hearts already; and finally, that your life may be so pure and so honest, according to the rule of God's word, and according to that vocation whereunto we are called by the Gospel of Christ our Saviour, that the honesty and purity of the same may provoke all that shall see or know it, to the love of your doctrine, and to love you for your honesty and virtue's sake, and so both in the brotherly unity of your true doctrine, and also in the godly virtue of your honest life, to glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Ex nostratibus magni aliquot magistratus, Cancellarius Wint. Comes Arundellus, et dominus Pachetus jam legatione funguntur una cum Cardinali Polo, in partibus transmarinis, ad componendam

(ut aiunt) pacem inter imperatorem, regem nostrum, et Francorum regem. Post illorum magistratum nostrorum reditum, et partum reginæ, quem jam quotidie expectamus, etiam aliquandiu expectavimus, quemque Deus pro sui nominis gloria dignetur bene illi fortunare, nos tunc statim nihil aliud quam nostræ confessionis, de hoste nostro antiquo, triumphales in Domino coronas expectamus.

Omniū vestrum precibus me humillime, et ex toto corde, commendo. In primis, tuis o charissime in Christo frater et dilectissime Grindalle, et charissimorum fratrum et unice mihi in Domino dilectorum Checi, Coxi, Turneri, Leveri, Sampsonis, Chamberi, et omnium fratrum nostrorum et conterraneorum qui apud vos degunt, et diligunt Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum in veritate. Commendo etiam vobis reverendissimos patres et concaptivos meos in Domino, Thomam Cranmerum, jam vere magni pastoris et Archipresulis nomine dignissimum; et veteranum illum nostræ gentis Anglicanæ verum apostolum et Christi, H. Latimerum. Condona mihi, frater, harum prolixitatem; non enim posthac, credo, charissime frater, meis literis jam amplius aliquando turbaberis. Oxonii.

### To Archbishop Cranmer, and Bishop Latimer,

Being separated from him, and prisoners in several<sup>1</sup> places.

<sup>1</sup> separate.

THE cause of my brother's imprisonment is this, so far as I can perceive. There is a young man called Mr. Grimbold, which was my chaplain, a preacher, and a man of much eloquence both in the English and also in the Latin. To this man, being desirous of all things which I had written and done since the beginning of mine imprisonment, my brother (as is said) hath sent copies, no more but<sup>2</sup> of all things that I have done. First, a little treatise which Mr. Latimer and I wrote in the Tower; where there is before my sayings, N. R. and before Mr. Latimer, H. L. Also another draught, which I drew out of the Evangelists and of St. Paul, that the words of the Lord's Supper, are figuratively to be understood: alleging out of the doctors only six, three of the Greek church, which are Origen, Chrysost. ad Cesa. monachum, and Theodoret; and three of the Latin church, Tertullian, Augustine, and Gelasius. He had of my brother also a copy of my Three Positions to the Three Questions here propounded to us at Oxford. Then also a copy of my disputation in the Schools, as I wrote it myself after the disputation. Item the letter, *Ad fratres in diversis carceribus*. All these things they have gotten of Grimbold (as my brother doth suppose); not that Grimbold hath betrayed him, but (as is supposed) one which my brother trusted to carry his letters unto Grimbold: for it will not sink into my head to think that Grimbold<sup>1</sup> would ever play me such a Judas's part. Although these things are chanced far otherwise than I had thought they

should, (for my mind was that they should not have come abroad until my body had been laid to rest in peace,) yet truly I suppose this is not thus chanced without God's gracious providence, which he hath over all his, and I trust that God of his goodness shall turn it to his own glory. For it shall evidently appear to the reader of these things which they have, that the cause why I do dissent from the Romish religion, is not any study of vain glory, or of singularity, but of conscience, of my bound duty towards God and towards Christ's church, and the salvation of mine own soul; for the which, by God's grace, I will willingly jeopard here to lose life, land, and goods, name and fame, and what else is or can be unto me pleasant in this world. My brother, as yet, because they neither shewed any commission or authority whereby they did examine him, nor also anything of his letters (although they said they had them), as yet I say my brother hath confessed nothing. But I look for none other but he shall be forced to tell where he had the copies, and where they be, and I will be content that he shall say the truth, that he had them all of me; let them come and take them, and cast them into the fire, if God know they will promote his glory; they can do no more than he will suffer them. Because in the book of N. R. and H. L. it is said in the end, that H. L. hath caused his servant to write it; I would Austin should have word, if any further search be, to keep him<sup>1</sup> out of the way. God shall reward you both for my brother; you my lord of Canterbury, for your meat and daily comfort, and you father L. for your money and comfortable messages. I trust in God my brother, though he be young, yet will study to learn to bear Christ's cross patiently, as a young scholar in Christ's school. God increase his grace in us all. Amen.

### To Master Bradford,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

Well beloved in Christ our Saviour, we all with one heart wish you, with all those that love God in deed and truth, grace and health; and specially to our dearly beloved companions, which are in Christ's cause, and the cause both of their brethren and of their own salvation, ready and willing to put their neck under the yoke of Christ's cross. How joyful it was to us to hear the report of Doctor Taylor, and of his godly confession, &c., I ensure<sup>2</sup> you it is hard for me to express. Blessed be God which was, and is, the giver of that and all godly strength and stomach in the time of adversity. As for the rumours that have or do go abroad, either of our relenting or massing, we trust that they which know God and their duty towards their brethren in Christ, will not be too light of credit to believe them. It is not the slanderer's evil tongue, but a man's own evil deed, that can with God defile a

man; and therefore, by God's grace, you shall never have cause to do otherwise than you say you do, that is, not to doubt but that we will continue, &c. Like rumour as you have heard of our coming to London, hath been here spread of the coming of certain learned men prisoners hither from London; but as yet we know no certainty whether of these rumours is or shall be more true. Know you, that we have you in our daily remembrance, and wish you and all the rest of our aforesaid companions, well in Christ. It should do us much comfort if we might have knowledge of the state of the rest of our most dearly beloved, which in this troublesome time do stand in Christ's cause, and in the defence of the truth thereof. We are in good health, thanks be to God, and yet the manner of our treatment doth change as sour ale doth in summer. It is reported to us of our keepers, that the University beareth us heavily.<sup>1</sup> A coal chanced to fall in the night out of the chimney, and burnt a hole in the floor, and no more harm was done, the bailiffs' servants sitting by the fire. Another night there chanced a drunken fellow to multiply words, and for the same he was set in Bocardo. Upon these things, as is reported, there is risen a rumour in the town and country about, that we would have broken the prison with such violence, as, if the bailiffs had not played the pretty men, we should have made an escape. We had, out of our prison, a wall that we might have walked upon, and our servants had liberty to go abroad in the town or fields; but now both they and we are restrained of both. The Bishop of Worcester passed by us through Oxford, but he did not visit us. The same day began our restraint to be more, and the Book of the Communion was taken from us by the bailiffs, at the mayor's commandment. No man is licenced to come unto us; afore they might, that would, see us upon the wall, but that is so grudged at, and so evil reported, that we are now restrained, &c. Sir, blessed be God, with all our evil reports, grudgings, and restraints, we are merry in God; and all our care is, and shall be by God's grace, to please and serve him, of whom we look and hope, after this temporal and momentary miseries, to have eternal joy and perpetual felicity, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Peter, and Paul, and all the blessed company of the angels in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. As yet there was never learned man, or any scholar or other that visited us since we came into Bocardo, which now in Oxford may be called a college of quondams; for as you know, we be no fewer here than three, and I dare say, every one well contented with his portion, which I do reckon to be our heavenly Father's gracious and fatherly good gift. Thus fare you well. We shall, with God's grace, one day meet together and be merry: the day assuredly approacheth apace. The Lord grant that it may shortly come; for before the day come, I fear me the world will wax worse and worse. But

<sup>1</sup> *hath ill will to us.*

Bocardo is a stinking and filthy prison for drunkards, whores and harlots, and the vilest sort of people.

then all our enemies shall be overthrown and trodden under foot, righteousness and truth then shall have the victory, and bear the bell away; whereof the Lord grant us to be partners, and all that sincerely love the truth. We all pray you, as you can, to cause all our commendations to be made to all such, as you know did visit us and you when we were in the Tower, with their friendly remembrances and benefits. Mistress Wilkinson, and Mistress Warcup, hath not forgotten us; but even since we came into Bocardo, with their charitable and friendly benevolence, have comforted us: not that else we lack, (for God be blessed, which ever hitherto hath provided sufficiently for us,) but it is a great comfort, and an occasion for us to bless God, when we see that he maketh them so friendly to tender us, whom some of us were never familiarly acquainted withal.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

### To Master Bradford.

Dearly beloved, I wish you grace, mercy, and peace. According to your mind I have run over all your papers, and what I have done, (which is but small,) therein may appear. Sir, what shall best be done with these things, now you must consider: for if they come in sight at this time, undoubtedly they must to the fire with their father, and as for any safeguard that your custody can be unto them, I am sure you look not for it: for as you have been partner of the works, so I am sure, you look for none other, but to have and receive like wages, and to drink of the same cup. Blessed be God, that hath given you liberty in the mean season, that you may use your pen to his glory, and to the comfort (as I hear say) of many. I bless God daily in you and all your whole company, to whom I beseech you to commend me heartily. Now I love my countryman in deed and in truth, I mean, Doctor Taylor, not now for my earthly country's sake, but for our heavenly Father's sake, whom (I heard say,) he did so stoutly in time of peril confess; and yet also now for our country's sake, and for all our mothers' sake, but I mean of the kingdom of heaven and of heavenly Jerusalem, and because of the Spirit which bringeth in him, in you, and in your company, such blessed fruits of holiness in the Lord's cause, of patience, and constancy. The Lord which hath begun this work in you all, perform and perfect this deed, until his own day come. Amen.

As yet, I perceive you have not been baited; and the cause thereof God knoweth; which will let them do no more to his, than is his pleased will and good pleasure to suffer them to do for his own glory, and to the profit of them which be truly his. For the Father which doth guide them that be Christ's to

This was a treatise of the communion, with other things, which Mr. Bradford sent to him to peruse and to give his judgment thereof.

Christ, is more mighty than all they, and no man is able to pull them out of the Father's hands. Except, (I say,) it please our Father, it please our Master Christ to suffer them, they shall not be able to stir one hair of our heads. My brother P., the bearer hereof, would<sup>1</sup> that we should say what we think good concerning your mind:<sup>2</sup> that, is, not for to answer, except ye might have somewhat indifferent<sup>3</sup> judges. We are (as ye know) separated, and one of us cannot in any thing consult with another, and much straight watching of the bailiffs is about us, that there be no privy conference amongst us. And yet (as we hear,) the scholars bear us more heavily<sup>4</sup> than the townsmen. A wonderful thing! among so many, never yet scholar offered to any of us (so far as I know) any manner of favour, either for or in Christ's cause. Now, as concerning your demand of our counsel; for my part, I do not mislike that which I perceive ye are minded to do: for I look for none other, but, if ye answer before the same commissioners that we did, ye shall be served and handled as we were, though ye were as well learned as ever was either Peter or Paul. And yet further, I think that occasion afterwards may be given you, and the consideration of the profit of your auditory may perchance move you to do otherwise. Finally, determinately to say what shall be best, I am not able: but I trust he, whose cause ye have in hand, shall put you in mind to do that which shall be most for his glory, the profit of his flock, and your own salvation. This letter must be common to you and Mr. Hooper, in whom and in his prison-fellow, good father Crome, I bless God even from the bottom of my heart; for I doubt not but they both do to our Master Christ, true, acceptable and honourable service, and profitable to his flock, the one with his pen, and the other with his fatherly example of patience and constancy, and all manner of true godliness. But what<sup>5</sup> shall I need to say to you, Let this be common among your brethren? among whom, I dare say, it is with you, as it is with us, to whom all things here are common: meat, money, and whatsoever one of us hath that can or may do another good. Although I said the bailiffs and our hosts straightly watch us, that we have no conference or intelligence of anything abroad, yet hath God provided for every one of us in the stead of our servants, faithful fellows which will be content to hear and see, and to do for us whatsoever they can; it is God's work surely, blessed be God for his unspeakable goodness. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen, Amen. As far as London is from Oxford, yet thence we have received of late both meat, money, and shirts; not only from such as are of our acquaintance, but of some whom this bearer can tell, with whom I had never to my knowledge any acquaintance. I know for whose sake they do it: to him therefore be all

<sup>1</sup> wishes.<sup>2</sup> purpose.<sup>3</sup> impartial<sup>4</sup> have more  
ill will.<sup>5</sup> why.



honour, glory, and due thanks. And yet, I pray you do so much as to shew them that we have received their benevolence, and (God be blessed) have plenty of all such things. This I desire you to do, for I know they be of Mr. Hooper's and your familiar acquaintance. Mr. Latimer was crazed,<sup>1</sup> but I hear now, thanks be to God, that he amendeth again. <sup>1</sup> shaken in health, ill

Yours in Christ,  
N. R.

### To Master Bradford.

Brother Bradford, I wish you and your company in Christ, yea, and all the holy brotherhood, that now with you in divers prisons suffereth and beareth patiently Christ's cross for the maintenance of his gospel, grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Sir, considering the state of this chivalry and warfare, wherein I doubt not but we be set to fight under Christ's banner and his cross against our ghostly enemy the devil, and the old serpent Satan, methink I perceive two things to be his most perilous and most dangerous engines which he hath to impugn Christ's verity, his Gospel, his faith; and the same two also to be the most massy posts and most mighty pillars, whereby he maintaineth and upholdeth his Satanical synagogue. These two, Sir, are they in my judgment: the one his false doctrine and idolatrical use of the Lord's supper; and the other, the wicked and abominable usurpation of the primacy of the see of Rome. By these two Satan seemeth to me principally to maintain and uphold his kingdom: by these two, he driveth down mightily (alas!) I fear me, the third part of the stars in heaven. Apoc. 8. These two poisonous rotten posts he hath so painted over, with such a pretence and colour of religion, of unity in Christ's church, of the catholic faith, and such like, that the wily serpent is able to deceive, if it were possible, even the elect of God. Wherefore John said not without great cause, If any Apoc. 2. know not Satan's subtilities and the dungeons thereof, I will wish him no other burden to be laden withal. Sir, because these be his principal and main posts whereupon standeth all his falsehood, craft, and treachery; therefore, according to the poor power that God hath given me, I have bended mine artillery to shoot at the same. I know it to be little (God knoweth) that I can do; and of my shot I know they pass<sup>2</sup> not. Yet will I not (God willing) 2 regard. cease to do the best that I can, to shake those cankered and rotten posts. The Lord grant me good success, to the glory of his name, and the furtherance of Christ's Gospel. I have now already (I thank God) for this present time spent a good part of my powder, in these scribblings, whereof this bearer shall give you knowledge. Good brother Bradford, let the wicked surmise and

say what they list; know you for a certainty by God's grace, without all doubt, that in Christ's Gospel's cause, against and upon the foresaid God's enemies I am fully determined to live and die. Farewell, dear brother; and I beseech you and all the rest of our brethren, to have good remembrance of the condemned heretics (as they call them) of Oxford in your prayers. The bearer shall certify you of our state. Farewell in the Lord.

From Bocardo.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

### To Master Bradford.

Dearly beloved brother, blessed be God our heavenly Father for his manifold and innumerable mercies towards us; and blessed might he be that hath spared us thus long together, that each one of us may bless his mercy and clemency in other, unto this day, above the expectation and hope of any worldly appearance.

Whereas you write of the outrageous rule that Satan, our ghostly enemy, beareth abroad in the world, whereby he stirreth and raiseth so pestilent and heinous heresies, as some to deny the blessed Trinity, some the divinity of our Saviour Christ, some the divinity of the Holy Ghost, some the baptism of infants, some original sin, and to be infected with the errors of the Pelagians, and to re-baptize those that have been baptized with Christ's baptism already: alas, Sir, this doth declare this time and these days to be wicked indeed! But what can we look for else of Satan, here, and of his ministers, but to do the worst that they can, so far forth as God shall or will suffer them? And now, methink, he is less to be marvelled at at this time, if he bestir him by all manner of means, that the truth indeed do take no place. For he seeth now (blessed be God) that some go about in deed and in truth, not trifling, but with the loss of all that they are able to lose in this world, goods, lands, name, fame, and life also, to set forth God's Word and his truth; and by God's grace shall do, and abide in the same unto the end: now therefore it is time to bestir him, I trow. And as for the diversity of errors, what careth he though one be never so contrary to another? He reckoneth all (and so he may) to be his, whosoever prevail, so that truth prevail not. Nevertheless, good brother, I suppose that the universal plague is most dangerous, which at this day is (alas!) fostered and masterly holden up by wit, worldly policy, multitude of people, power, and all worldly means. As for other the devil's galtropes<sup>1</sup> that he casteth in our ways by some of his busy-headed youngers, I trust they shall never be able to do the multitude so great harm. For blessed be God, these heresies before time, when Satan by his servants hath been about to broach them, have by God's servants already been so sharply and truly confounded, that

<sup>1</sup> a military engine for maiming cavalry.

the multitude was never infected with them, or else where they have been infected, they are healed again, that now the peril is not so great. And where you say, that if your request had been heard, things (you think) had been in better case than they be: know you that concerning the matter you mean, I have in Latin drawn out the places of the Scriptures, and upon the same have noted what I can for the time. Sir, in those matters I am so fearful, that I dare not speak farther, yea, almost none otherwise, than the very text doth as it were lead me by the hand. And where you exhort us to help, &c. ; O Lord what is else in this world that we now should list to do? I bless my Lord God, I never (as methinketh), had more, nor better leisure to be occupied with my pen in such things as I can do, to set forth (when they may come to light,) God's glory. And I bless my Lord God through Jesus Christ, my heart and my work are therein occupied, not so fully and perfectly as I would, but yet so as I bless God for the same. Farewell, dear brother; the messenger tarrieth, and I may not now be longer with you. The Lord, I trust verily, shall bring us thither, where we shall each one with other in Christ our Saviour rejoice and be merry everlastingly.

He meaneth here the matter of God's election, whereof he afterward wrote a godly and comfortable treatise remaining yet in the hands of some, and hereafter shall come to light, if God so willed.

Your brother in Christ, N. R.

### To Master Bradford.

Dearly beloved brother Bradford, I had thought of late that I had written unto you your last farewell, (until we should have met in the kingdom of heaven,) by our dear brother Austin: and I sent it to meet you in Lancashire; whither, it was said here, you were appointed to be sent to suffer. But now, since they have changed their purpose, and prolonged<sup>1</sup> your death, I understand it is no other thing than that once happened to Peter and Paul. The which, although they were of the first which were cast in prison, and as little shunned peril as any other did, yet God would not have them put to death with the first, because he had more service to be done by their ministry, which his gracious pleasure was they should do. So, without doubt, dear brother, I am persuaded that the same is the cause of the delay of your martyrdom. Blessed be the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for your threefold confession. I have read all three with great comfort and joy, and thanksgiving unto God for his manifold gifts of grace, wherewith it is manifest to the godly reader that GOD did assist you mightily. And blessed be God, again and again, which gave you so good a mind and remembrance of your oath once made against the bishop of Rome, lest you should be partaker of the common perjury which all men almost are now fallen into, in bringing in again that wicked

<sup>1</sup> deferred.

usurped power of his. Which oath was made according to the prophet, in judgment, in righteousness, and in truth; and therefore cannot without perjury be revoked, let Satan roar and rage, and practise all the cruelty he can. Oh, good Lord, that they are so busy with you about the church! It is no new thing, brother, that is happened unto you; for that was always the clamour of the wicked bishops and priests against God's true prophets: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord: and they said, The law shall not depart from the priest nor wisdom from the elder: and yet in them whom they only<sup>1</sup> esteemed for their priests and sages, there was neither God's law nor godly wisdom. It is a marvellous thing to hear what vain communication is spread abroad of you. It is said here, that you be pardoned your life; and when you were appointed to be banished and to go, (I cannot tell whither) you should say that you had rather here suffer, than go where you could not live after your conscience; and that this pardon should be begged for you by Borne, the bishop of Bath, for that you saved his life. Again, some say, and among other mine host reported, that you are highly promoted, and are a great man with my lord chancellor. This I could not believe, but did deny it as a false lie: so surely was I always persuaded of your constancy. What God will do with us he knoweth. In the meantime, wonderful it is to behold how the wisdom of GOD hath infatuated the policy of the world, and scattered the crafty devices of the worldly wise. For when the state of religion was once altered, and persecution began to wax hot, no man doubted but Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, should have been the first to have been called to the stake. But the subtle policy of the world, setting us apart, first assaulted them by whose infirmity they thought to have more advantage; but God dissappointed their subtle purpose. For whom the world esteemed weakest (praised be God), they have found most strong, sound and valiant, in Christ's cause, unto the death; to give such an onset as, I dare say, all the angels in heaven do no less rejoice to behold in them, than they did in the victorious constancy of Peter, Paul, Esay, Elias, or Jeremy. For greater love no man hath, than to bestow his life, &c. Good brother, have me and us all continually in your remembrance to God in your prayers, as, God willing, we shall not be in our prayers forgetful of you.

Your own in Christ, N. R.

### To Master Bradford.

Brother Bradford, I wish you, in Christ our Saviour, grace, mercy and peace, and to all them which are with you or any where else captives in Christ; and to hear that ye be all in

good health, and stand constantly in the confession of Christ's gospel, it doth heartily rejoice us. Know you likewise that we all here be (thanks be to God!) in good health and comfort, watching with our lamps light (I trust in God), when it shall please our master, the bridegroom, to call us to wait upon him unto the marriage. Now, we suppose, the day doth approach apace, for we hear that the parliament is dissolved. The burgesses of Oxford are come home, and other news we hear not, but that the king is made protector to the prince to be born, and that the bishops have full authority, *ex officio*, to inquire of heresies. Before the parliament began, it was a rumour here, that certain from the convocation house was appointed, yea, ready to have come to Oxford, and then there was spied out one thing to lack, for want of a law to perform their intent. Now, seeing they can want no law, we cannot but look for them shortly, I trust to God's glory, let them come when they will; &c.

Brother Bradford, I marvel greatly of good Austin, where he is, for that I heard say he promised his master to have been here before this time, and he had from me that I would be loth to lose, yea, to want when time shall be that it might do (nay, help me to do) my lord and my master Christ service. I mean my scribblings, de abominationibus sedis Romanæ et pontificum Romanorum. I have no copy of the same, and I look daily to be called in certamen cum antiquo serpente; and so I told him and I ween you also, by whose means I was more moved to let him have them. I doubt not of his fidelity. I pray God he be in health and at liberty, for I have been and am careful for him. I have heard that Master Grimbald hath gotten his liberty: if without any blemish of Christ's glory, I am right glad thereof. My brother-in-law is where he was, that is in Bocardo, the common gaol of the town. I have written here a letter to Master Hooper; I pray you cause it to be written to him again. Commend me to all your prison fellows and our brethren in Christ. If Austin were here I would have had more to say. The Lord grant that all be with him well; who ever preserve you, and all that love our Saviour Christ in sincerity and truth. Amen.

Yours, by God's grace, in our master Christ's cause, unto the stake; and thenceforth without all danger and peril for ever and ever. I am sure you have heard of our new apparel, and I doubt not but London will have their talk of it. Sir, know you that although this seemeth to us in our case much thanks-worthy, yet have we not that apparel that we look for: for this in time will wear; and that which we look for, rightly done on, will endure, and is called *stola immortalitatis*.

N. R.

**To Master Bradford.**

Oh, dear brother, seeing the time is now come when it pleaseth the heavenly Father, for Christ our Saviour his sake, to call upon you, and to bid you to come, happy are you that ever you were born, thus to be awake at the Lord's calling. "Euge, serve bone and fidelis, quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituet, and intrabis in gaudium Domini." O dear brother, what meaneth this, that you are sent into your own native country? The wisdom and policy of the world may mean what they will, but I trust God will so order the matter, finally, by his fatherly providence, that some great occasion of God's gracious goodness shall be plenteously poured abroad amongst his, our dear brethren in that country, by this your martyrdom. Where the martyrs for Christ's sake shed their blood and lost their lives, O what wondrous things hath Christ afterward wrought to his glory, and confirmation of their doctrine! If it be not the place that sanctifieth the man, but the holy man doth by Christ sanctify the place; brother Bradford, then happy and holy shall be that place wherein thou shalt suffer, and [which] shall be with thy ashes in Christ's cause sprinkled over withal. All thy country may rejoice of thee, that ever it brought forth such a one, which would render his life again in His cause of whom he had received it.

Brother Bradford, so long as I shall understand that thou art in thy journey, by God's grace I shall call upon our heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, to set thee safely home: and then, good brother, speak you and pray for the remnant that are for to suffer for Christ's sake, according to that thou then shalt know more clearly.

We do look now every day when we shall be called on, blessed be God. I ween, I am the weakest many ways of our company, and yet I thank our Lord God and heavenly Father by Christ, that since I heard of our dear brother Rogers, departing and stout confession of Christ and his truth even unto the death, my heart (blessed be God!) so rejoiced of it, that, since that time I say, I never felt any lumpish heaviness in my heart, as I grant I have felt sometimes before. O good brother, blessed be God in thee, and blessed be the time that I ever knew thee. Farewell, farewell.

Your brother in Christ, N. R.  
Brother, farewell.

**To Master Bradford.**

*Gratiam et pacem, &c.* Although I ween it is not yet three days ago since you heard from me, yet having such a messenger

and so diversely enforced, I cannot but say something to you. What shall I thank you for your golden token? What mean you, man? Do you not know that we have victum et amictum e penario regio? I was so moved with your token, that I commanded it straightway to be had to Bocardo, which is our common gaol. I am right glad of Austin's return, for I was (as I told you) careful<sup>1</sup> for him. Blessed be God that all is well. I have seen what he brought from you, and shortly surveyed the whole, but in such celerity, that others also might see the same before Austin's return: so that I noted nothing but a confused sum of the matter, and as yet what the rest have done, I can tell nothing at all, and it was at the writing hereof in their hands. To your request and Austin's earnest demand of the same, I have answered him in a brief letter, and yet he hath replied again: but he must go without any further answer of me for this time. I have told Austin that I, for my part, as I can and may for my tardity and dulness, will think of the matter. We are so now ordered and straitly watched, that scantly our servants dare do anything for us: so much talk and so many tales (as is said) are told of us abroad. One of us cannot easily nor shortly be of the knowledge of another's mind, and you know I am youngest many ways. Austin's persuasions may do more (in that I may do conveniently in this matter,) armed with your earnest and zealous letters, than any rhetoric either of Tully or Demosthenes, I ensure you thereof. With us it is said that Master Grimbold was adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; of whom we hear now, that he is at liberty. So we heard of late, that Master Hooper was hanged, drawn, and quartered indeed, not for heresy but for treason; but blessed be God, we hear now that all is true in like. False tongues will not cease to lie, and mischievous hearts to imagine the worst. Farewell in Christ: and token for token now I send you not; but know this, that (as it is told me) I have two scarlet gowns that escaped, I cannot tell how, in the spoil, whereof you shall have your part. Commend me to all our brethren, and your fellow-prisoners in the Lord.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

### To Augustine Berncher,

Then servant to Master Latimer, and now a faithful minister in Christ's church; to whom, because he might not come to the prison to speak with him, he wrote as followeth.

Brother Austin, you are heartily welcome to Oxford again; you have made good speed indeed; and blessed be God for his gracious goodness, that all is well with you. That our dearly

This token was a piece of gold, which he sent to relieve his brother Shipside, prisoner in Bocardo.

<sup>1</sup> anxious

He meaneth here Harry Hart a froward free will man, who had written a treatise against God's free election, which Bradford sent to M. Ridley, Cranmer, and Latimer to peruse, destring M. Ridley to answer the same.

Note the lying spirits of the papists, whereby you may see whose children they are.

1 assure

beloved brethren in Christ are all in good comfort, hearty in in Christ's cause, and stand stedfast in the confession of his true doctrine; it rejoiceth (I ensure<sup>1</sup> you) my heart in God to hear of it. This day was Doctor Croke with me, and both he and Mistress Irish, mine hostess, told me that Master Hooper is hanged, drawn, and quartered for treason, but I did not believe them, for it is not the first tale that mine hostess hath told me of M. Hooper. And I trust the tidings that were here spread abroad since your departure, that Master Grimbold also should have been arraigned and condemned, for treason, to be hanged and quartered, was not true: let me hear if there be any such thing. Not three days ago, there was a privy warning given me from a man of God, one Lifley, a glover, that we prisoners here all three should be shortly and suddenly conveyed into three several colleges; for what purpose, and how to be ordered, God knoweth. At the which time, and at the earnest request of that fore-named man of God, I did deliver unto him some of the things I had in hand, to write out: what they be, you shall know of him. Beside the things which he hath, I have some things else which (if it please God) I would wish might come to light, if perchance any thereby might receive the light to love the truth the better, and to abhor the falsehood of Antichrist. I have written annotations in priorem librum Tonstalli plenius, in secundum vero parcius: optarem ut transcriberentur, ne fortassis una mecum fiant subito Vulcani cibus. I have also many things, but as yet confusedly set together, of the abominable usurpation, pride, arrogancy, and wickedness of the see and bishop of Rome; and altogether in Latin. If those things were written out, I would wish that Master Bradford would take them, and translate and order them as he should think might best help to open the eyes of the simple, for to see the wickedness of the synagogue of Satan. But that at your last being here you cast cold water upon mine affection towards Grimbold, else methink I could appoint where he might occupy himself to his own profit in learning which he liketh, and to no small profit which might ensue to the church of Christ in England: as, if he would take in hand to interpret Laurentius Valla, which (as he knoweth) is a man of singular eloquence; his book I mean, which he made and wrote against that false feigned fable, forged of Constantinus Magnus, and his dotation and glorious exaltation of the see of Rome: and when he hath done that, let him translate a work of Eneas Silvius de gestis Basiliensis Concilii. In the which although there be many things that savoureth of the pan, and also he himself was afterward a bishop of Rome, yet, I dare say, the papists would glory but a little to see such books go forth in English. If you will know where to have these books or treatises, you may have them both together, and many like



treatises, which painteth out the wickedness of the see of Rome, in a book set forth by a papist called Ortwinus Gratius, entitled "Fasciculus rerum expetendarum and fugiendarum." In that book you shall have confessionem fratrum Waldensium, men of much more learning, godliness, soberness, and understanding in God's word, than I would have thought them to have been in that time, before I did read their works. If such things had been set forth in our English tongue heretofore, I suppose surely great good might have come to Christ's church thereby. To my good lady's grace, and to my lady Vane, what thanks can I give, but desire Almighty God to enlighten, comfort, and strengthen them evermore in his ways? The other two whom you mention I know not: but the Lord knoweth them; to whom in them all and for all their kindness I give most hearty thanks. Master Bradford desireth that thanks should be rendered unto you for your comfortable aid wherewith you comfort him: but you must tell him that he must bid you thank them for him, which are not bound to thank you for themselves; and if he do so, then I ween, all we prisoners of Oxford shall so stop his mouth.

Brother Austin, you for our comfort do run up and down, and who beareth your charges God knoweth. I know you must needs in so doing take much pains. I pray you take this poor token of my good will towards your charges.

### To Augustine Berncher.

Brother Augustine, I bless God with all my heart, in his manifold merciful gifts given unto our dear brethren in Christ; especially to our brother Rogers, whom it pleased to set forth first, no doubt but of his gracious goodness and fatherly favour towards him. And likewise, blessed be God in the rest—as Hooper, Saunders, and Taylor, whom it hath pleased the Lord likewise to set in the fore-front of the battle against his adversaries, and hath endued them all, so far as I can hear, to stand in the confession of his truth, and to be content in his cause, and for his Gospel's sake, to lose their life. And evermore, and without end, blessed be even the same our heavenly Father, for our dear and entirely beloved brother, Bradford, whom now the Lord, I perceive, calleth for: for I ween he will no longer vouchsafe him to abide among the adulterous and wicked generation of this world. I do not doubt but that he, for those gifts of grace which the Lord hath bestowed on him plenteously, hath holpen those who are gone before him in their journey, that is, hath animated and encouraged them to keep the high way, et sic currere uti tandem acciperent premium. The Lord be his comfort, whereof I do not doubt,

and thank God heartily that ever I was acquainted with him, and that I had ever such a one in my house. And yet again I bless God in our dear brother, and of this time protomartyr Rogers, that he was also one of my calling to be a prebendary preacher of London. And now because Grindall is gone, (the Lord I doubt not hath and knoweth wherein he will bestow him,) I trust to God it shall please him of his goodness to strengthen me to make up the trinity out of Paul's church to suffer for Christ, whom God the Father hath anointed, the Holy Spirit doth bear witness unto, Paul and all the apostles preached. Thus fare you well. I had no paper; I was constrained thus to write.

Protomartyr is the first martyr; whom he so called, because he was the first that suffered here in those bloody days.

### To Augustine Berncher.

Brother Augustine, I thank you for your manifold kindness. I have received my lady's grace's alms, six royals, six shillings and eight pence. I have written a letter here unto her grace, but I have made no mention thereof, wherefore I desire you to render her grace hearty thanks. Blessed be God, as for myself I want nothing, but my lady's alms cometh happily to relieve my poor brother's necessity, whom you know they have cast and keep in prison; as I suppose, you know the cause why. Farewell, brother Austin, and take good heed I pray you, and let my brother's case make you the more wary. Read my letter to my lady's grace. I would Mistress Wilkinson and Mrs. Warcup had a copy of it: for although the letter is directed to my lady's grace alone, yet the matter thereof pertaineth indifferently to her grace and to all good women, which love God and his Word in deed and truth.

This alms was sent him by the Lady Catherine Duchess of Suffolk, to whom he wrote again a worthy letter, which is lost and many other written both to her and others.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

### To Mistress Glover,

A woman zealous and hearty in the cause and furtherance of God's Gospel.

Mistress Glover, I wish you grace and peace; and although I am not acquainted with you, yet nevertheless, hearing that your husband, Master Glover, is in prison for God's Word's sake, and also that you are a woman hearty in God's cause, and, thirdly, that old father Latimer is your uncle or near cousin, whom I do think the Lord hath placed to be his standard-bearer in our age and country, against his mortal foe Antichrist, I was thus bold to write unto you in God's behalf, to do according to the report which I hear of you; that is, that you be hearty in God's cause, and hearty to your Master Christ, in furthering of his cause and setting forth his soldiers to his wars to the uttermost of your power. Let no carnality nor worldly regard of

any thing let' you to declare your true heart, which you are said to <sup>1 hinder</sup> bear to your Master Christ above all other things. Be hearty now also to your husband, and declare yourself to love him in God, as the true faithful Christian woman unto her husband is bound to do. Now, seeing your husband, which is set by God's ordinance to be your head, is ready to suffer and abide in adversity by his Master's cause, and to cleave to his head Christ, see likewise that you do your duty accordingly, and cleave unto him your head : suffer with him that you may further his cause. His cause now I understand to be Christ's cause; and therefore beware, good sister in Christ, that in no wise ye hinder it. Love so his body, and the ease and wealth thereof, as your love may further him to the winning both of body and soul unto everlasting life. And this love shall both God allow, your husband shall have just cause to rejoice thereof, and all the godly to commend you therefore, and to number you, for the same, among the godly and holy women of God. To your husband I have written more. And thus fare you well now, good dear sister in our Saviour Christ. I was the bolder to write unto you, for that I understood my dearly beloved brother, Austin, whom I call Faustus, should<sup>2</sup> be <sup>2 would</sup> the carrier; a man whom I think God hath appointed to do much pleasure for his prest servants to his wars.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

**To a Friend that came to visit him in prison, but could not speak with him.**

Well beloved, I thank you heartily for your manifold kindness, but the Lord shall (I trust) acquit you your meed.<sup>3</sup> Though <sup>3 render you your reward</sup> Satan rage, the Lord is strong enough to bridle him, and to put an iron chain over his nose when it shall please him. In the mean time they that are the Lord's will flee unto him, and assuredly he will not forsake them that seek unto him, in very deed and in truth. This bearer, my man, is trusty, you may send your token by him. Let Nicholas keep still the shirts. The Lord reward that lady Wyatt, which for his sake hath thus remembered me: I do not know her person. What can I render to Mistress Wilkinson for all her benefits? Nothing surely, but to desire the Lord to acquit<sup>4</sup> her with his heavenly grace. If <sup>4 requite</sup> you tarry I shall have more to say to you, peradventure, hereafter. Now, Vale in Domino charissime.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

**The Manner of Dr. Ridley's handling in the schools at Oxford,**  
 And of the impudent, spiteful, and cruel dealing of the papists: which he set before his disputation by way of a preface, and is not unfit here to be placed among the letters; translated out of his Latin copy into English.

I never yet in all my life saw or heard any thing done or handled more vainly or tumultuously, than the disputation which was had with me of late in the schools at Oxford. And surely I could never have thought, that it had been possible to have found any within this realm, being of any knowledge, learning, and ancient degree of school, so brazen-faced and so shameless, as to behave themselves so vainly and so like stage-players, as they did in that disputation.

The Sorbonical clamours which at Paris (when popery most reigned,) I in times past have seen, might be worthily thought, in comparison of this thrasonical and glorious ostentation, to have had much modesty. Howbeit, it was not to be wondered at, for that they which should there have been moderators, and rulers of others, and which should have given a good example in word, gravity, &c. as Paul teacheth, gave worst example of all; and did, as it were, blow the trumpet to other, to rail, rage, roar, and cry out. By reason whereof, good Christian reader, it is manifest that they never sought for any truth, but only for the glory of the world, and a bragging victory. But, besides the innumerable railings, rebukes, and taunts, wherewith I was baited on every side, lest our cause, which indeed is God's cause, and his church's, should also by the false examples of our disputations be evil spoken of, and slandered to the world, and so the verity sustain hurt and hindrance thereby; I have thought good to write my answers myself, that whosoever is desirous to know them and the truth withal, may thereby perceive those things which were chiefly objected against me, and also in effect, what was answered of me to every of them. Howbeit, good reader, I confess this to be most true, that it is impossible to set forth either all that was (God knoweth) tumultuously spoken, and like as of mad men objected of so many, which spake oftentimes huddle,<sup>1</sup> so that one could not well hear another; either<sup>2</sup> all that was answered of me briefly, to such and so diverse opponents. Moreover, a great part of the time appointed for the disputations, was vainly spent in most contumelious taunts, hissings, clapping of hands, and triumphs, more than tolerable even in stage-plays, and that in the English tongue, to get the people's favour withal. All which things when I with godly grief did suffer, and therewithal did openly bewail and witness, that that company of learned men, and schools which were appointed to grave men and to grave matters, were contaminate and defiled by such foolish and Robinhood pastimes, and that they which were the doers of such things, did but thereby openly shew their

<sup>1</sup> Tim. 4.

<sup>1</sup> confusedly  
<sup>2</sup> or

vanity; I was so far by my such humble complaint from doing good, or helping any thing at all, that I was enforced<sup>1</sup> what with hissing and shouting, and what with authority, to hear such great reproaches and slanders uttered against me, as no grave man without blushing, could abide the hearing of the same spoken of<sup>2</sup> a most vile knave against a most wretched<sup>2 by</sup> ruffian. At the beginning of the disputation, when I should have confirmed mine answer to the first proposition in few words, and that after the manner of disputations; before I could make an end of my probation, which was not very long, even the doctors themselves cried out, "He speaketh blasphemies, blasphemies, blasphemies." And when I on my knees most humbly and heartily besought them, that they would vouchsafe to hear me to the end, whereat the prolocutor (something moved, as it seemed) cried out, "Let him read it, let him read it;" yet when I again began to read it, there was by and by such a cry and noise, "Blasphemies, blasphemies," as I (to my remembrance) never heard or read the like, except it be one which was in the acts of the apostles stirred up of Demetrius the silversmith, and others of his occupation, crying out against Paul, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians, great is Diana of the Ephesians;" and except it were a certain disputation which the Arians had against the Orthodox, and such as were of godly judgment in Africa, where it is said, that such as the presidents and rulers of the disputation were, such was also the end of the disputation—all was done in hurlyburly, and the slanders of the Arians were so outrageous that nothing could quietly be heard. So writeth Victor in the second book of his history. And thus the cries and tumults of these men against me now so prevailed, that whether I would or no, I was enforced to leave off the reading of my probations, although they were but short. And of the truth hereof, I have all those that were present, being of any discretion or honesty, to be my witnesses. But hereof will I cease to complain any further; &c.

### To Doctor Weston;

Requiring performance of certain promises made unto him, but never fulfilled, according to the accustomed wily and unfaithful dealings of the Papists.

Master Prolocutor, ye remember, I am sure, how you promised me openly in the Schools, after my protestation, that I should see how my answers were there taken and written of the notaries, whom you appointed, (me fateor neminem recusante,) to write what should be said; and to have had licence for us to have added unto them, or for to have altered them, as upon more deliberation should have seemed me best. Ye granted<sup>3</sup> me also, at the delivery of mine answer unto your first proposition, a copy of<sup>3 promis-</sup>

What promises he made openly in the schools that were never performed, read in the Book of Martyrs, folio 958.

the same. These promises be not performed. If your sudden departure be any part of the cause thereof, yet I pray you remember that they may be performed, for performance of promises is to be looked for at a righteous judge's hands.

Now I send you here mine answers in writing to your second and third propositions, and do desire and require earnestly a copy of the same: and I shall, by God's grace, procure the pains of the writer to be paid for and satisfied accordingly. When I would have confirmed my sayings with authorities or reasons, you said there openly, that I should have had time and place to say and bring whatsoever I could another time. And the same your saying was then there confirmed of other of the commissioners. Yea, and I dare say the audience also thought then that I should have had another day to have brought and said what I could say, for the declaration and confirmation of mine assertions. Now that this was not done, but so suddenly sentence given before the cause was perfectly heard, I cannot but marvel at all; and the due reformation of all things which are amiss, I commit unto Almighty God, my heavenly Father, which, by his dear son our Saviour Christ, (whom he hath made the universal judge of all flesh,) shall truly and righteously judge both you and me.

Master Prolocutor, I desire you, and in God's name require you, that you truly bring forth and shew all my three answers, written and subscribed with mine own hand, unto the higher house of the convocation, and specially unto my Lord Chancellor, my Lords of Durham, Ely, Norwich, Worcester, and Chichester, and also to shew and exhibit this my writing unto them, which in these few lines I write here unto you. And that I do make this request unto you by this my writing, know you that I did take witness of them by whom I did send you this writing, and of those which were then with them present, that is, of the bailiffs of Oxford, and of Master Irish, Alderman, then there called to be a witness.

By me, N. Ridley, April 23, 1554.

### To a Cousin of his.

God's Holy Spirit be with you now and ever, Amen. When I call to remembrance, beloved cousin, the state of those that for fear of trouble, either for loss of goods, will do in the sight of the world, those things that they know and be assured are contrary to the will of God, I can do no less but lament their case; being assured that the end thereof will be so pitiful, without speedy repentance, that I tremble and fear to have it in remembrance. I would to God it lay upon some earthly burden, so that freedom of conscience might be given unto them. I write, as God knoweth, not of presumption, but only lamenting their state, who I thought, now in this dangerous time should have given

both you and me comfortable instructions. But alas, instead thereof, we have persuasions to follow (I lament me to rehearse it) superstitious idolatry; yea, and that worst of all is, they will seek to prove it by the Scripture. The Lord for his mercy turn their hearts. Amen.

Yours, N. R.

*A Letter which he wrote as his last Farewell,*

To all his true and faithful friends in God, a little before he suffered: with a sharp admonition, by the way, to the papists, the enemies of the truth.

At the name of Jesus let every knee bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and let every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, unto the glory of God the Father. Amen.

As a man minding to take a far journey, and to depart from his familiar friends, commonly and naturally hath a desire to bid his friends farewell before his departure, so likewise now, I, looking daily when I should be called for to depart hence from you, (O all ye my dearly beloved brethren and sisters in our Saviour Christ, that dwell here in this world!) having a like mind towards you all, and also (blessed be God) of this such time and leisure, whereof I right heartily thank his heavenly goodness, do bid you all, my dear brethren and sisters (I say) in Christ, that dwell upon the earth, after such manner as I can, farewell.

Farewell, my dear brother, George Shipline, whom I have ever found faithful, trusty, and loving in all state and conditions, and now in the time of my cross, over all other to me most friendly and stedfast, and (that which liked me best,) over all other things, in God's cause ever hearty.

Farewell, my dear sister Alice, his wife: I am glad to hear of thee that thou dost take Christ's cross, which is laid now (blessed be God) both on thy back and mine, in good part. Thank thou GOD that hath given thee a godly and a loving husband: see thou honour him and obey him, according to God's law. Honour thy mother-in-law, his mother, and love all those that pertain unto him, being ready to do them good, as it shall lie in thy power. As for thy children, I doubt not of thy husband, but that he which hath given him a heart to love and fear God, and in God them that pertain unto him, shall also make him friendly and beneficial unto thy children, even as if they had been gotten of his own body.

Farewell, my well-beloved brother, John Ridley, of the Walthowne, and you my gentle and loving sister, Elizabeth; whom, beside the natural league of amity, your tender love which you

were said ever to bear towards me above the rest of your brethren, doth bind me to love. My mind was to have acknowledged this your loving affection, and to have acquitted<sup>1</sup> it with deeds, and not with words alone. Your daughter Elizabeth I bid farewell, whom I love for the meek and gentle spirit that God hath given her, which is a precious thing in the sight of God.

Farewell, my beloved sister of Unthank, with all your children, my nephews and nieces. Since the departure of my brother Hugh, my mind was to have been unto them in the stead of their father; but the Lord God must and will be their father, if they will love him and fear him, and live in the trade<sup>2</sup> of his law.

Farewell, my well-beloved and worshipful cousins, Master Nicholas Ridley of Willimountswick, and your wife; and I thank you for all your kindness, shewed both to me, and also to all your own kinsfolk and mine. Good cousin, as GOD hath set you in that our stock and kindred, not for any respect of your person, but of his abundant grace and goodness, to be as it were the belwether to order and conduct the rest, and hath also endued you with his manifold gifts of grace, both heavenly and worldly above others; so I pray you, good cousin, (as my trust and hope is in you,) continue and increase in the maintenance of truth, honesty, righteousness, and all true godliness, and to the uttermost of your power, to withstand falsehood, untruth, unrighteousness, and all ungodliness, which is forbid and condemned by the word and laws of God.

Farewell, my young cousin, Ralph Whitfield. Oh your time was very short with me: my mind was to have done you good, and yet you caught<sup>3</sup> in that little time a loss; but I trust it shall be recompensed, as it shall please Almighty God.

Farewell, all my whole kindred and countrymen, farewell in Christ, altogether. The Lord which is the searcher of secrets knoweth, that according to my heart's desire, my hope was of late that I should have come among you, and to have brought with me abundance of Christ's blessed Gospel; according to the duty of that office and ministry, whereunto among you I was chosen, named, and appointed by the mouth of that our late peerless prince, King Edward, and so also denounced<sup>4</sup> openly in his court by his privy council.

I warn you, all my well-beloved kinsfolk and countrymen, that ye be not amazed or astonied at the kind of my departure or dissolution: for I ensure<sup>5</sup> you I think it the most honour that ever I was called unto in all my life; and therefore I thank my Lord GOD heartily for it, that it hath pleased him to call me of his great mercy unto this high honour, to suffer death willingly for his sake, and in his cause; unto the which honour he called the

<sup>1</sup> requited<sup>2</sup> practise<sup>3</sup> sustained<sup>4</sup> announced<sup>5</sup> assure



holy prophets, and his dearly beloved apostles, and his blessed, chosen martyrs. For know ye that I doubt no more, but that the causes wherefore I am put to death are God's causes, and the causes of the truth, than I doubt that the Gospel which John wrote is the Gospel of Christ, or that Paul's Epistles are the very word of GOD. And to have a heart willing to abide and stand in God's cause and in Christ's quarrel even unto death, I ensure<sup>1</sup> *assure* thee (O man) it is an inestimable and an honourable gift of GOD, given only to the true elect and dearly beloved children of GOD, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. For the holy apostle and also martyr in Christ's cause, St. Peter, saith; If ye suffer rebuke in the name of Christ, that is, in Christ's cause, and for his truth's sake, then are ye happy and blessed, for the glory of the Spirit of God resteth upon you. If for rebuke's sake, suffered in Christ's name, a man is pronounced by the mouth of that holy apostle blessed and happy, how much more happy and blessed is he that hath the grace to suffer death also. Wherefore all ye that be my true lovers and friends, rejoice and rejoice with me again, and render with me hearty thanks to God our heavenly Father, that for his Son's sake, my Saviour and Redeemer Christ, he hath vouchsafed to call me, being else without his gracious goodness in myself but a sinful and a vile wretch, to call me (I say) unto this high dignity of his true prophets, of his faithful apostles, and of his holy, elect, and chosen martyrs; that is, to die, and to spend this temporal life in the defence and maintenance of his eternal and everlasting truth.

Ye know, that be my countrymen dwelling upon the borders, where (alas) the true<sup>2</sup> man suffereth oftentimes much wrong at the thief's hand, if it chance a man to be slain of a thief, (as it oft chanceth there,) which went out with his neighbour to help him to rescue his goods again; that, the more cruelly he be slain, and the more stedfastly he stuck by his neighbour in the fight against the face of the thief, the more favour and friendship shall all his posterity have for the slain man's sake of all them that be true, as long as the memory of his face, and his posterity, doth endure. Even so, ye that be my kinsfolk and countrymen, know ye, (howsoever the blind, ignorant, and wicked world hereafter shall rail upon my death, which thing they cannot do worse than their fathers did of the death of Christ our Saviour, of his holy prophets, apostles, and martyrs;) know ye, I say, that both before God and all them that be godly, and that truly know and follow the laws of God, ye have and shall have, by God's grace, ever cause to rejoice, and to thank God highly, and to think good of it, and in God to rejoice of me your flesh and blood, whom God of his gracious goodness hath vouchsafed to associate unto the blessed company of his holy martyrs in heaven. And I doubt not in the infinite goodness of my Lord God, nor in the faithful

fellowship of his elect and chosen people, but at both their hands, in my cause, ye shall rather find the more favour and grace : for the Lord saith that he will be both to them and theirs that love him, the more loving again in a thousand generations; the Lord is so full of mercy to them (I say) and theirs, which do love him in deed. And Christ saith again, that no man can shew more love than to give his life for his friend.

Deut. 7.

John 15.

*I nearly,  
closely*

Now also know ye, all my true lovers in God, my kinsfolk and countrymen, that the cause wherefore I am put to death is even after the same sort and condition, but touching more near<sup>1</sup> God's cause, and in more weighty matters, but in the general kind all one, for both is God's cause, both is in the maintenance of right, and both for the commonwealth, and both for the weal also of the Christian brother; although yet there is in these two no small difference, both concerning the enemies, the goods stolen, and the manner of the fight. For know ye all, that like as there when the poor true man is robbed by the thief of his own goods truly gotten, whereupon he and his household should live, he is greatly wronged, and the thief in stealing and robbing with violence the poor man's goods, doth offend God, doth transgress his law, and is injurious both to the poor man and to the commonwealth: so I say know ye all, that even here (in the cause of my death) it is with the Church of England, I mean the congregation of the true chosen children of God in this realm of England, which I acknowledge not only to be my neighbours, but rather the congregation of my spiritual brethren and sisters in Christ, yea, members of one body, wherein by God's grace I am and have been grafted in Christ. This Church of England had of late, of the infinite goodness and abundant grace of Almighty God, great substance, great riches of heavenly treasure, great plenty of God's true and sincere word, the true and wholesome administration of Christ's holy sacraments, the whole profession of Christ's religion truly and plainly set forth in baptism, the plain declaration and understanding of the same taught in the holy Catechism, to have been learned of all true Christians. This church had also a true and sincere form and manner of the Lord's Supper, wherein, according to Jesus Christ's own ordinance and holy institution, Christ's commandments were executed and done. For upon the bread and wine set upon the Lord's table, thanks were given, the commemoration of the Lord's death was had, the bread in the remembrance of Christ's body torn upon the cross was broken, and the cup, in the remembrance of Christ's blood shed, was distributed, and both communicated unto all that were present and would receive them, and also they were exhorted of the minister so to do. All was done openly in the vulgar tongue, so that every thing might be both easily heard, and plainly understood of all the people, to God's high glory, and the

edification of the whole church. This church had of late the whole Divine service, all common and public prayers ordained to be said and heard in the common congregation, not only framed and fashioned to the true vein of Holy Scripture, but also all things so set forth according to the commandment of the Lord, and St. Paul's doctrine, for the people's edification, in their vulgar tongue. It had also holy and wholesome Homilies, in commendation of the principal virtues which are commended in Scripture; and likewise other homilies against the most pernicious and capital vices that useth (alas) to reign in this realm of England. This church had, in matters of controversy, Articles so penned and framed after the Holy Scripture, and grounded upon the true understanding of God's word, that in short time, if they had been universally received, they should have been able to have set in Christ's church much concord and unity in Christ's true religion, and to have expelled many false errors and heresies, wherewith this church (alas) was almost overgone. But (alas) of late, into this spiritual possession of the heavenly treasure of these godly riches are entered in thieves, that have robbed and spoiled all this heavenly treasure away. I may well complain on these thieves, and cry out upon them with the prophet, saying, "Deus, venerunt gentes in hæreditatem tuam, &c." Psalm lxxix. O Lord GOD, the Gentiles, heathen nations are come into thy heritage, they have defiled thy holy temple, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones; that is, they have broken and beat down to the ground thy holy city. This heathenish generation, these thieves of Samaria, these Sabæi and Chaldæi, these robbers have rushed out of their dens, and have robbed the Church of England of all the aforesaid holy treasure of God; they have carried it away and overthrown it; and in the stead of God's holy word, the true and right administration of Christ's holy sacraments, as of baptism and others, they mixed their ministry with men's foolish phantasies, and many wicked and ungodly traditions withal. In the stead of the Lord's holy table, they give the people, with much solemn disguising, a thing which they call their mass; but in deed and in truth, it is a very masking and mockery of the true Supper of the Lord, or rather I may call it a crafty juggling, whereby these false thieves and jugglers have bewitched the minds of the simple people, that they have brought them from the true worship of GOD unto pernicious idolatry; and make them to believe that to be Christ our Lord and Saviour, which indeed is neither God nor man, nor hath any life in itself, but in substance is the creature of bread and wine, and, in use of the Lord's table, is the sacrament of Christ's body and blood; and for<sup>1</sup> this holy use, for the which the Lord hath ordained them in his table to represent unto us his blessed body torn upon the cross for us, and his blood there shed, it pleased him to call them

his body and blood; which understanding, Christ declareth to be his true meaning, when he saith, Do this in the remembrance of me. And again, St. Paul likewise doth set out the same more plainly, speaking of the same sacrament after the words of the consecration, saying, As often as ye shall eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye shall set forth (he meaneth, with the same) the Lord's death until his coming again. And here again these thieves have robbed also the people of the Lord's cup, contrary to the plain words of Christ, written in his Gospel.

Now, for the common public prayers which were in the vulgar tongue, these thieves have brought in again a strange tongue, whereof the people understand not one word. Wherein what do they else, but rob the people of their Divine service, wherein they ought to pray together with the minister? And to pray in a strange tongue, what is it but, as St. Paul calleth it, barbarousness, childishness, unprofitable folly, yea, and plain madness? For the godly articles of unity in religion, and for the wholesome homilies, what do these thieves place in the stead of them, but the pope's laws and decrees, lying legends, and feigned fables and miracles, to delude and abuse the simplicity of the rude people? Thus this robbery and theft is not only committed, nay sacrilege and wicked spoil of heavenly things, but also in the stead of the same, is brought in and placed the abominable desolation of the tyrant Antiochus, of proud Sennacherib, of the shameless-faced king of the Babylonical beast. Unto this robbery, this theft and sacrilege, for that<sup>1</sup> I cannot consent, nor, God willing, never shall so long as the breath is in my body, (because it is blasphemy against God, high treason unto Christ our heavenly King, Lord, Master, and our only Saviour and Redeemer, it is plain contrary to God's word and to Christ's Gospel, it is the subversion of all true godliness, and against the everlasting salvation of mine own soul, and of all my brethren and sisters whom Christ my Saviour hath so dearly bought, with no less price than with the effusion and shedding forth of his most precious blood;) therefore, all ye my true lovers in GOD, my kinsfolk and countrymen, for this cause, I say, know ye that I am put to death; which, by God's grace, I shall willingly take, with hearty thanks to GOD therefore,<sup>2</sup> in certain hope without any doubting, to receive at God's hand again, of his free mercy and grace, everlasting life.

Although the cause<sup>3</sup> of the true<sup>4</sup> man, slain of the thief helping his neighbour to recover his goods again, and the cause wherefore I am to be put to death, in a generality is both one, (as I said before,) yet know ye that there is no small difference. These thieves against whom I do stand, are much worse than the robbers and thieves of the borders. The goods which they steal, are much more precious, and their kinds of fight are far diverse. These thieves are worse, I say, for they are more cruel, more

<sup>1</sup> because

<sup>2</sup> for it

<sup>3</sup> case  
<sup>4</sup> honest

wicked, more false, more deceitful and crafty; for those will but kill the body, but these will not stick to kill both body and soul. Those, for the general theft and robbery, be called, and are indeed, thieves and robbers: but these, for their spiritual kind of robbery, are called "sacrilegi;" as ye would say, church-robbers. They are more wicked: for those go about but to spoil men of worldly things, worldly riches, gold and silver, and worldly substance; these go about in the ways of the Devil, their ghostly father, to steal from the universal church, and particularly from every man, all heavenly treasure, true faith, true charity, and hope of salvation in the blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, yea, to spoil us of our Saviour Christ, of his Gospel, of his heavenly Spirit, and of the heavenly heritage of the kingdom of heaven so dearly purchased unto us with the death of our Master and Saviour Christ. These be the goods and godly substance whereupon the Christian before God must live, and without the which he cannot live; these goods (I say) these thieves, these church-robbers go about to spoil us of. The which goods, as to the man of God, they excel and far pass<sup>1</sup> all worldly treasure: so, to withstand, even unto the death, such thieves as go about to spoil both us and the whole church of such goods, is most high and honourable service done unto God. These church-robbers be also much more false, crafty, and deceitful than the thieves upon the borders: for these have not the craft so to commend their theft that they dare avouch it; and therefore, as acknowledging themselves to be evil, they steal commonly upon the night, they dare not appear at judgments and sessions, where justice is executed; and when they are taken and brought thither, they never hang any man, but they be oftentimes hanged for their faults. But these church-robbers can so cloke and colour their spiritual robbery, that they can make the people to believe falsehood to be truth, and truth falsehood; good to be evil, and evil good; light to be darkness, and darkness light; superstition to be true religion, and idolatry to be the true worship of God; and that which is in substance the creature of bread and wine, to be none other substance but only the substance of Christ, the living Lord, both God and man. And with this their falsehood and craft, they can so juggle and bewitch the understanding of the simple, that they dare avouch it openly in court and in town, and fear neither hanging nor heading, as the poor thieves of the borders do, but stout and strong like Nimrod, dare condemn to be burned in flaming fire, quick and alive, whosoever will go about to betray their falsehood.

The kind of fight against these church-robbers is also of another sort and kind, than is that which is against thieves of the borders. For there the true<sup>2</sup> men go forth against them with spear and lance, with bow and bill, and all such kind of bodily weapons as the true<sup>2</sup> men have; but here, as the enemies be of another

nature, so the watchmen of Christ's flock, the warriors that fight in the Lord's war, must be armed and fight with another kind of weapon and armour. For here the enemies of God, the soldiers of Antichrist, although the battle is set forth against the church by mortal men being flesh and blood, and nevertheless members of their father the devil; yet for that their grand master is the power of darkness, their members are spiritual wickedness, wicked spirits, spirits of errors, of heresies, of all deceit and ungodliness, spirits of idolatry, superstition and hypocrisy, which are called of St. Paul principates and powers, lords of the world, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual subtillies concerning heavenly things: and therefore our weapons must be fit and meet to fight against such; not carnal nor bodily weapons, as spear and lance, but spiritual and heavenly; we must fight against such with the armour of God, not intending to kill their bodies, but their errors, their false craft and heresies, their idolatry, superstition, and hypocrisy, and to save (as much as lieth in us) both their bodies and souls. And therefore, as St. Paul teacheth us, we fight not against flesh and blood, that is, we fight not with bodily weapons to kill the man, but with the weapons of God, to put to flight his wicked errors and vice, and to save both body and soul. Our weapons therefore are faith, hope, charity, righteousness, truth, patience, prayer unto God; and our sword wherewith we smite our enemies, we beat and batter and bear down all falsehood, is the Word of God. With these weapons, under the banner of the cross of Christ, we do fight, ever having our eye upon our grand Master, Duke and Captain, Christ: and then we reckon ourselves to triumph and to win the crown of everlasting bliss, when, enduring in this battle without any shrinking or yielding to the enemies, after the example of our grand captain, Christ our Master, after the example of his holy prophets, apostles, and martyrs, when (I say) we are slain in our mortal bodies of our enemies, and are most cruelly and without all mercy murdered down like a many<sup>1</sup> of sheep. And the more cruel, the more painful, the more vile and spiteful is the kind of the death whereunto we be put, the more glorious in God, the more blessed and happy we reckon, without all doubts, our martyrdom to be.

And thus much, dear lovers and friends in God, my countrymen and kinsfolk, I have spoken for your comfort, lest of my death (of whose life you looked peradventure sometimes to have had honesty, pleasures, and commodities,) ye might be abashed or think any evil: whereas ye have rather cause to rejoice, (if ye love me indeed,) for that it hath pleased God to call me to a greater honour and dignity, than ever I did enjoy before, either in Rochester or in the see of London, or ever should have had in the see of Durham, whereunto I was last of all elected and named.

Ephes. 6.

Ephes. 6.

<sup>1</sup> multitude

Yea, I count it greater honour before God indeed to die in his cause, (whereof I nothing doubt,) than is any earthly or temporal promotion or honour that can be given to a man in this world. And who is he that knoweth the cause to be God's, to be Christ's quarrel and of his Gospel, to be the common weal of all the elect and chosen children of God, of all the inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, who is he, I say, that knoweth this assuredly by God's Word, and the testimony of his own conscience, (as I through the infinite goodness of God, not of myself, but by his grace, acknowledge myself to do,) who is he, I say, that knoweth this, and both loveth and feareth God in deed and in truth, loveth and believeth his Master Christ and his blessed Gospel, loveth his brotherhood the chosen children of God, and also lusteth and longeth for everlasting life—who is he (I say again) that would not or cannot find in his heart, in this cause to be content to die? The Lord forbid that any such should be, that should forsake this grace of God. I trust in my Lord God, the God of mercies and the Father of all comfort, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that he which hath put this mind, will, and affection by his Holy Spirit in my heart, to stand against the face of the enemy in his cause, and to choose rather the loss of all my worldly substance, yea, and of my life too than to deny his known truth, that he will comfort me, aid me, and strengthen me evermore even unto the end, and to the yielding up of my spirit and soul into his holy hands: whereof I most heartily beseech his most holy sacred Majesty, of his infinite goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Now, that I have taken my leave of my countrymen and kinsfolks, and the Lord doth lend me life and giveth me leisure, I will bid my other good friends in God, of other places also, farewell. And whom first or before other, than the University of Cambridge? whereas<sup>1</sup> I have dwelt longer, found more faithful and hearty friends, received more benefits, (the benefits of my natural parents only excepted,) than ever I did even in mine own native country wherein I was born.

Farewell, therefore, Cambridge, my loving mother and tender nurse! If I should not acknowledge thy manifold benefits, yea, if I should not for thy benefits, at the least, love thee again, truly I were to be accounted ungrate and unkind. What benefits hadst thou ever, that thou usest to give and bestow upon thy best beloved children, that thou thoughtest too good for me? Thou didst bestow on me all thy school degrees: of thy common offices, the chaplainship of the University, the office of the proctorship, and of a common reader; and of thy private commodities, and emoluments in colleges, what was it that thou madest me not partner of? First, to be scholar, then fellow, and after my departure from thee thou calledst me again to a Master-

ship of a right worshipful college. I thank thee, my loving mother, for all this thy kindness; and I pray God that his laws, and the sincere Gospel of Christ, may ever be truly taught and faithfully learned in thee.

Farewell, Pembroke Hall, of late mine own college, my cure and my charge! what case thou art in now, God knoweth, I know not well. Thou wast ever named since I knew thee (which is now a thirty years ago,) to be studious, well learned, and a great setter forth of Christ's Gospel, and of God's true Word: so I found thee, and, blessed be God, so I left thee indeed. Woe is me for thee, mine own dear college, if ever thou suffer thyself by any means to be brought from that trade. In thy orchard (the walls, butts, and trees, if they could speak, would bear me witness,) I learned without book almost all Paul's epistles, yea and, I ween, all the canonical epistles, save only the apocalypse. Of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweet smell thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me into heaven: for the profit thereof I think I have felt in all my lifetime ever after; and I ween, of late (whether they abide there now or no I cannot tell,) there was that did the like. The Lord grant, that this zeal and love toward that part of God's Word, which is a key and a true commentary to all holy Scripture, may ever abide in that college, so long as the world shall endure.

From Cambridge I was called into Kent by the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, that most reverend father and man of God, and of him by and by sent to be vicar of Herne in East Kent. Wherefore, farewell Herne, thou worshipful and wealthy parish! the first cure whereunto I was called, to minister God's Word. Thou hast heard of my mouth oftentimes the Word of God preached, not after the popish trade, but after the Christ's Gospel: oh that the fruit had answered to the seed! And yet I must acknowledge me to be thy debtor for the doctrine of the Lord's supper; which at that time, I acknowledge, God had not revealed unto me: but I bless God in<sup>1</sup> all that godly virtue and zeal of God's Word, which the Lord by preaching of his Word did kindle, manifestly both in the heart and in the life and works of that godly woman there, my lady Phines. The Lord grant that his Word took like effect there in many other more.

<sup>1</sup> on account of

Farewell, thou cathedral church of Canterbury, the metropolitick see, whereof once I was a member! To speak things pleasant unto thee I dare not, for danger of conscience and displeasure of my Lord God; and to say what lieth in my heart, were now too much, and I fear were able to do thee now but little good. Nevertheless, for the friendship I have found in some there, and for charity sake, I wish thee to be washed clean of all worldliness



and ungodliness, that thou mayest be found of God (after thy name) Christ's Church in deed and in truth.

Farewell, Rochester, sometime my cathedral see! in whom (to say the truth) I did find much gentleness and obedience; and I trust thou wilt not say the contrary, but I did use it to God's glory, and thine own profit in God. Oh that thou hadst and mightest have continued and gone forward in the trade<sup>1</sup> of God's law, wherein I did leave thee! then thy charge and burden should not have been so terrible and dangerous, as I suppose verily it is like to be (alas!) on the latter day. 1 practice

To Westminster, other advertisement<sup>2</sup> in God I have not now to say, than I have said before to the cathedral church of Canterbury; and so God give thee of his grace that thou mayest learn in deed and in truth to please him, after his own laws. And thus fare you well. 2 admonition,

Oh London, London! to whom now may I speak in thee, or whom shall I bid farewell? Shall I speak to the prebendaries of Paul's? Alas! all that loved God's Word, and were true setters forth thereof, are now (as I hear say) some burnt and slain, some exiled and banished, and some holden in hard prisons, and appointed daily to be put to most cruel death, for Christ's Gospel sake. As for the rest of them, I know they could never brook me well, nor I could never delight in them. Shall I speak to the see thereof, wherein of late I was placed, almost, and not fully, by the space of three years? But what may I say to it, being (as I hear say I am) deposed and expelled by judgment, as an unjust usurper of that room.<sup>3</sup> Oh judgment, judgment! Can this be just judgment, to condemn the chief minister of God's Word, the pastor and bishop of the diocese, and never bring him into judgment, that he might have heard what crimes were laid to his charge, nor never suffer him to have any place or time to answer for himself? Thinkest thou that hereafter, when true justice shall have place, that this judgment can be allowed either of God or of man? Well, as for the cause and whole matter of my deposition, and the spoil of my goods which thou possessest yet, I refer it unto God, which is a just Judge; and I beseech God, if it be his pleasure, that that which is but my personal wrong, be not laid to thy charge in the latter day—this only can I pray for. 3 place

O thou now wicked and bloody see, why dost thou set up again many altars of idolatry, which by the Word of God were justly taken away? Oh why hast thou overthrown the Lord's table? Why dost thou daily delude the people, masking in thy masses, in the stead of the Lord's holy supper, which ought to be common as well (saith Chrysostom, yea, the Lord himself,) to the people as to the priest? How darest thou deny to the people of Christ, contrary to his express commandment in the

Gospel, his holy cup? Why babblest thou to the people the common prayer in a strange tongue? wherein St. Paul commandeth, in the Lord's name, that no man should speak before the congregation, except it should be by and by declared in their common tongue that all might be edified. Nay, hearken, thou whorish bawd of Babylon, thou wicked limb of Antichrist, thou bloody wolf; why slayest thou down and makest havoc of the prophets of God? Why murderest thou so cruelly Christ's poor seely<sup>1</sup> sheep, which will not hear thy voice because thou art a stranger, and will follow none other but their own pastor Christ his voice? Thinkest thou to escape, or that the Lord will not require the blood of his saints at thy hands? Thy god, which is the work of thy hands, and whom thou sayest thou hast power to make—that thy deaf and dumb god (I say) will not indeed nor cannot (although thou art not ashamed to call him thy Maker,) make thee to escape the revenging hand of the high and almighty God. But be thou assured, that the living Lord our Saviour and Redeemer, which sitteth now on the right hand of his Father in glory—he seeth all thy wicked ways and cruelty done to his dear members, and he will not forget his holy ones; and his hands (O thou whorish drab,) shalt thou never escape. Instead of my farewell to thee, now I say, Fie upon thee, fie upon thee, filthy drab, and all thy false prophets.

Yet, O thou London, I may not leave thee thus. Although thy episcopal see, now being joined in league with the seat of Satan, thus hath now both handled me and the saints of God, yet I do not doubt but in that great city there be many privy mourners which do daily mourn for that mischief; the which never did, nor shall, consent to that wickedness, but do detest and abhor it as the ways of Satan. But these privy mourners here I will pass by, and bid them farewell with their fellows hereafter, when the place and occasion shall more conveniently require. Among the worshipful of the city, and specially which were in office of the mayoralty, (yea, and in other citizens also whom to name now it shall not be necessary,) in the time of my ministry, which was from the latter part of Sir Rowland Hill's year unto Sir George Barnes's year and a great part thereof, I do acknowledge that I found no small humanity and gentleness, as methought: but (to say the truth) that I do esteem above all other for true Christian kindness, which is shewed in God's cause, and done for his sake. Wherefore O Dobbes, Dobbes, alderman and knight, thou in thy year didst win my heart for evermore, for that honourable act, that most blessed work of God, of the erection and setting up of Christ's holy hospitals and truly religious houses, which by thee, and through thee, were begun. For thou, like a man of God, when the matter was moved for the relief of Christ's poor<sup>1</sup> seely

<sup>1</sup> simple

His farewell to these mourners is in the letter next following.

<sup>2</sup> simple

members, to be holpen from extreme misery, hunger, and famine, thy heart (I say) was moved with pity: and as Christ's high honourable officer in that cause, thou calledst together thy brethren, the aldermen of the city, before whom thou brakest the matter for the poor, thou didst plead their cause, yea, and not only in thine own person thou didst set forth Christ's cause, but to further the matter, thou broughtest me into the council chamber of the city, before the aldermen alone, whom thou hadst assembled there together to hear me speak what I could say, as an advocate by office and duty in the poor men's cause. The Lord wrought with thee, and gave thee the consent of thy brethren, whereby the matter was brought to the common council, and so to the whole body of the city, by whom, with an uniform consent, it was committed to be drawn, ordered, and devised by a certain number of the most witty<sup>1</sup> citizens and politic, endued also with godliness, and with ready hearts to set forward such a noble act, as could be chosen in all the whole city: and they, like true and faithful ministers both to their city and their master Christ, so ordered, devised, and brought forth the matter, that thousands of seely<sup>2</sup> poor members of Christ, which else from extreme hunger and misery should have famished and perished, shall be relieved, holpen and brought up, and shall have cause to bless the aldermen of that time, the common council, and the whole body of the city, but specially thee, O Dobbes, and those chosen men by whom this honourable work of God was begun and wrought; and that, so long through all ages as that godly work shall endure, which I pray Almighty God may be ever unto the world's end. Amen.

And thou, O Sir George Barnes, (the truth it is to be confessed to God's glory and to the good example of other,) thou wast in thy year not only a furtherer and continuer of that which, before thee, by thy predecessor was well begun, but also didst labour so to have perfected the work, that it should have been an absolute<sup>3</sup> thing, and a perfect spectacle of true charity and godliness unto all Christendom. Thine endeavour was to have set up an house of occupations: both that all kind of poverty, being able to work, should not have lacked whereupon profitably they might have been occupied to their own relief, and to the profit and commodity of the commonwealth of the city; and also to have retired<sup>4</sup> thither the poor babes brought up in the hospitals, when they had come to a certain age and strength, and also all those which in the hospitals aforesaid had been cured of their diseases. And to have brought this to pass, thou obtainedst (not without great diligence and labour both of thee and thy brethren,) of that godly king Edward, that Christian and peerless prince's hand, his princely place of Bridewell; and what other things, to the performance of the same, and under what con-

dition, is not unknown. That this thine endeavour hath not had like success, the fault is not in thee, but in the condition and state of the time; which the Lord of his infinite mercy vouchsafe to amend, when it shall be his gracious will and pleasure.

Farewell now, all ye citizens that be of God, of what state and condition soever you be! Undoubtedly in London you have heard God's word truly preached. My heart's desire and daily prayer shall be for you, (as for whom, for my time, I know to my Lord God I am accountable) that ye never swerve, neither for loss of life nor worldly goods, from God's holy word, and yield unto Antichrist; whereupon must needs follow the extreme displeasure of God, and the loss both of your bodies and souls into perpetual damnation for evermore.

Now that I have gone through the places, where I have dwelt any space in the time of my pilgrimage here upon earth, remembering that for the space of king Edward's reign, which was for the time of mine office in the sees of London and Rochester, I was a member of the higher house of the parliament; therefore, (seeing my God hath given me leisure and the remembrance thereof,) I will bid my lords of the temporalty farewell. They shall have no just cause (by God's grace) to take it, that I intend to say, in ill part. As for the spiritual prelacy that now is, I have nothing to say to them, except I should repeat again a great part of that I have said before now already to the see of London. To you therefore, my lords of the temporalty, will I speak: and this would I have you first to understand; that when I wrote this, I looked daily when I should be called to the change of this life, and thought that this my writing should not come to your knowledge, before the time of the dissolution of my body and soul should be expired. And therefore know ye, that I had before mine eyes only the fear of God, and Christian charity towards you, which moved me to write: for of you hereafter I look not, in this world, either for pleasure or displeasure. If my talk shall do you never so much pleasure or profit, you cannot promote me; nor if I displease you, you cannot hurt or harm me, for I shall be out of your reach. Now therefore, if you fear God, and can be content to hear the talk of him that seeketh nothing at your hands, but to serve God and to do you good, hearken to what I say.

I say unto you, as St. Paul saith unto the Galatians, I wonder (my lords) what hath bewitched you, that ye so suddenly are fallen from Christ unto Antichrist, from Christ's Gospel unto men's traditions, from the Lord that bought you unto the bishop now of Rome.

I warn you, of your peril, be not deceived; except you will be found willingly consenters to your own death. For if ye

think thus—We are laymen ; this is a matter of religion ; we follow as we are taught and led ; if our teachers and governors teach us and lead us amiss, the fault is in them, they shall bear the blame : my lords, this is true (I grant you) that both the false teacher, and the corrupt governor, shall be punished for the death of their subject, whom they have falsely taught and corruptly led, yea and his blood shall be required at their hands : but yet nevertheless shall that subject die the death himself also, that is, he shall also be damned for his own sin ; for if the blind lead the blind, Christ saith, not the leader only, but (he saith) both shall fall in the ditch. Shall the synagogue and the senate of the Jews, trow ye, which forsook Christ and consented to his death, therefore be excused, because Annas and Caiaphas, with the Scribes and Pharisees and their clergy, did teach them amiss ? yea and also Pilate, their governor and the emperor's lieutenant, by his tyranny did without cause put him to death ? Forsooth no, my lords, no : for notwithstanding that corrupt doctrine, or Pilate's washing of his hands, neither of both shall excuse either that synagogue and seigniory, or Pilate ; but at the Lord's hand, for the effusion of that innocent's blood, on the latter day all shall drink of the deadly whip—ye are witty, and understand what I mean. Therefore I will pass over this, and return to tell you how ye are fallen from Christ, to his adversary the bishop of Rome.

Ezek. 3.

Luke 6.

And lest, my lords, ye may peradventure think, thus barely to call the bishop of Rome, Christ's adversary, or (to speak it in plain terms) to call him Antichrist, that it is done in mine anguish, and that I do but rage, and as a desperate man do not care what I say, or upon whom I do rail : therefore, that your lordships may perceive my mind, and thereby understand that I speak the words of truth and of sobriety (as St. Paul said unto Festus), be it known unto your lordships all, that as concerning the bishop of Rome, I neither hate the person nor the place.

Acts 26.

For I ensure<sup>1</sup> your lordships (the living Lord beareth me witness, before whom I speak), I do think many a good holy man, many martyrs and saints of God, have sat and taught in that place Christ's Gospel truly ; which therefore justly may be called Apostolici, that is, true disciples of the apostles, and also of that church and congregation of Christians, apostolic church, yea and that certain hundred years after the same was first erected and builded upon Christ, by the true apostolical doctrine taught by the mouths of the apostles themselves.

1 assure

If ye will know how long that was, and how many hundred of years, to be curious in pointing the precise number of years I will not be too bold : but thus I say ; so long and so many hundred years as that See did truly teach and preach that Gospel, that religion, exercised that power, and ordered every thing by those laws and rules, which that see received of the apostles, and (as Tertullian

saith) the apostles of Christ, and Christ of God ; so long (I say) that see might well have been called Peter and Paul's chair and see, or rather Christ's chair, and the bishop thereof Apostolicus, or a true disciple and successor of the apostles, and a minister of Christ. But since the time that that see hath degenerated from the trade<sup>1</sup> of truth and true religion, the which it received of the apostles at the beginning ; and hath preached another Gospel, hath set up another religion, hath exercised another power, and hath taken upon it to order and rule the church of Christ by other strange laws, canons and rules, than ever it received of the apostles, or the apostles of Christ, which things it doth at this day and hath continued so doing (alas, alas) of too too long a time—since the time (I say) that the state and condition of that see hath thus been changed ; in truth it ought, of duty and of right, to have the names changed, both of the see and of the siter therein. For understand, my lords : it was neither for the privilege of the place or person thereof, that that see and bishop thereof were called apostolic ; but for the true trade of Christ's religion, which was taught and maintained in that see at the first, and of those godly men. And therefore as truly and justly as that see then, for that true trade of religion and consanguinity of doctrine with the religion and doctrine of Christ's apostles, was called apostolic : so as truly and as justly, for the contrariety of religion and diversity of doctrine from Christ and his apostles, that see and the bishop thereof at this day both ought to be called, and are indeed, Antichristian.

The see is the seat of Satan ; and the bishop of the same, that maintaineth the abominations thereof, is Antichrist himself indeed. And for the same causes this see at this day is the same which St. John calleth in his Revelation, Babylon, or the whore of Babylon, and spiritually Sodoma and Egyptus, the mother of fornications, and of the abominations upon the earth. And with this whore doth spiritually mell,<sup>2</sup> and lieth with her and committeth most stinking and abominable adultery before God, all those kings and princes, yea and all nations of the earth, which do consent to her abominations, and use or practice the same : that is, (of the innumerable multitude of them to rehearse some for example sake) her dispensations, her pardons and pilgrimages, her invocation of saints, her worshipping of images, her false counterfeit religion in her monkery and friarage, and her traditions, whereby God's laws are defiled ; as her massing, and false ministering of God's word and the sacraments of Christ, clean contrary to Christ's word and the apostles' doctrine, whereof in particularity I have touched something before in my talk had with the see of London, and in other treatises more at large : wherein (if it shall please God to bring the same to light,) it shall appear I trust by God's grace plainly to the man of God, and to him whose rule in judgment of religion is God's word, that that religion, that rule and

Apo. 17.

Apo. 11.

2 meddle

order, that doctrine and faith, which this whore of Babylon and the beast whereupon she doth sit maintaineth at this day with all violence of fire and sword, with spoil and banishment (according to Daniel's prophecy), and finally with all falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy, and all kind of ungodliness—are as clean contrary to God's word as darkness is unto light, or light to darkness, white to black, or black to white, or as Belial unto Christ, or Christ unto Antichrist himself.

I know, my lords, and foresaw when I wrote this, that so many of you as should see this my writing, not being before endued with the Spirit of grace and the light of God's word, so many (I say) would at these my words lordlike stamp and spurn, and spit thereat. But sober yourselves with patience, and be still; and know ye that in my writing of this, my mind was none other but in God (as the living God doth bear me witness,) both to do you profit and pleasure. And otherwise, as for your displeasure, by that time this shall come to your knowledge, I trust by God's grace to be in the hands and protection of the Almighty, my heavenly Father and the living Lord, which is (as St. John saith) the greatest of all; and then I shall not need (I trow) to fear what any lord, no nor what king or prince, can do unto me.

My lords, if in times past ye have been contented to hear me sometimes in matters of religion before the prince in the pulpit, and in the parliament house, and have not seemed to have despised what I have said: when as<sup>1</sup> else if ye had perceived just occasion, ye might then have suspected in my talk, though it had been reasonable, either desire of worldly gain or fear of displeasure: how hath then your lordships more cause to hearken to my word, and to hear me patiently, seeing now ye cannot justly think of me (being in this case, appointed to die, and looking daily when I shall be called to come before the eternal Judge,) otherwise, but that I only study to serve my Lord God, and to say that thing which I am persuaded assuredly by God's word shall and doth please him, and profit all them to whom God shall give grace to hear and believe what I do say! And I do say even that I have said heretofore, both of the see of Rome, and of the bishop thereof—I mean after this their present state at this day. Wherein if ye will not believe the ministers of God, and true preachers of his word, verily I denounce unto you *in verbo Domini*, Except ye do repent betime, it shall turn to your confusion and to your smart on the latter day. Forget not what I say, my lords, for God's sake forget not, but remember it upon your bed. For I tell you moreover, as I know I must be countable of this my talk, and of my speaking thus, to the Eternal Judge (who will judge nothing amiss), so shall you be countable of your duty in hearing; and you shall be charged, if ye will hearken to God's word, for not obeying to the truth.

Alas, my lords, how chanceth this, that this matter is now anew again to be persuaded unto you? Who would have thought of late, but your lordships had been persuaded indeed sufficiently, or else that ye could ever have agreed so uniformly with one consent to the abolishment of the usurpation of the bishop of Rome? If that matter were then but a matter of policy, wherein the prince must be obeyed, how is it now made a matter wherein (as your clergy saith now, and so say the pope's laws indeed) standeth the unity of the Catholic church, and a matter of necessity of our salvation? Hath the time, being so short since the death of the two last kings, Henry VIII. and Edward his son, altered the nature of the matter? If it have not, but was of the same nature and danger before God then as it is now, and be now (as it is said by the Pope's laws, and the instructions set forth in English to the curates of the diocese of York,) indeed a matter of necessity to salvation, how then chanced it that ye were all, O my lords, so light and so little passed upon<sup>1</sup> the Catholic faith and the unity thereof (without the which no man can be saved), as for your princes' pleasures, which were but mortal men, to forsake the unity of your Catholic faith, that is, to forsake Christ and his holy Gospel? And furthermore, if it were both then and now so necessary to salvation, how chanced it also, that ye, all the whole body of the parliament agreeing with you, did not only abolish and expel the bishop of Rome, but also did abjure him in your own persons, and did decree in your acts great oaths to be taken of both the spirituality and temporalty, whosoever should enter into any weighty and chargable office in the commonwealth? But on the other side, if that law and decree, which maketh the supremacy of the see and bishop of Rome over the universal church of Christ a thing of necessity required unto salvation, be an Anti-christian law (as it is indeed), and such instructions as are given to the diocese of York be indeed a setting forth of the power of that beast of Babylon, by the craft and falsehood of his false prophets (as of truth, compared unto God's word, and truly judged by the same, it shall plainly appear that they be), then, my lords, never think other, but the day shall come, when ye shall be charged with this your undoing of that, that once ye had well done, and with this your perjury and breach of your oath, which oath was done in judgment, justice and truth, agreeable to God's law.

<sup>1</sup> con-  
cerned for

Jer. 4.

The whore of Babylon may well for a time dally with you, and make you so drunk with the wine of her filthy stews and whoredom (as with her dispensations and promises of pardon *a pœna et culpa*), that for drunkenness and blindness ye may think yourselves safe. But be ye assured, when the living Lord shall try the matter by the fire, and judge it according to his word, when all her abominations shall appear what they be, then ye my lords, (I



give your lordships warning in time, repent if ye be happy, and love your own souls' health, repent I say, or else without all doubt ye shall never escape the hands of the living Lord for the guilt of your perjury and the breach of your oath :) as ye have banqueted and lain by the whore in the fornication of her whorish dispensations, pardons, idolatry, and such like abominations; so shall ye drink with her (except ye repent betime) of the cup of the Lord's indignation and everlasting wrath, which is prepared for the beast, his false prophets, and all their partakers. For he that is partner with them in their whoredom and abominations, must also be partner with them of their plagues, and on the latter day shall be thrown with them into the lake burning with brimstone and unquenchable fire. Thus fare ye well, my lords all. I pray God give you understanding of his blessed will and pleasure, and make you to believe and embrace the truth. Amen.

### Another Farewell, to the Prisoners in Christ's Gospel's Cause,

And to all them which for the same cause are exiled and banished out from their own country, choosing rather to leave all worldly commodity, than their master Christ.

Farewell, my dearly beloved brethren in Christ; both ye my fellow prisoners, and ye also that be exiled and banished out of your countries, because ye will rather forsake all worldly commodity than the Gospel of Christ.

Farewell, all ye together in Christ, farewell and be merry: for ye know that the trial of your faith bringeth forth patience, and patience shall make us perfect, whole and sound on every side; and such after trial, ye know, shall receive the crown of life, according to the promise of the Lord made to his dearly beloved: let us therefore be patient unto the coming of the Lord. As the husbandman abideth patiently the former and latter rain for the increase of his crop; so let us be patient and pluck up our hearts, for the coming of the Lord approacheth apace. Let us, my dear brethren, take example of patience in tribulation of the prophets, which spake likewise God's word truly in his name. Let Job be to us an example of patience, and the end which the Lord suffered, which is full of mercy and pity. We know, my brethren, by God's word, that our faith is much more precious than any corruptible gold, and yet that is tried by the fire: even so our faith is therefore tried likewise in tribulations, that it may be found when the Lord shall appear, laudable, glorious and honourable. For if we for Christ's cause do suffer, that is grateful before God; for hereunto are we called, that is our state and vocation, where-with let us be content. Christ, we know, suffered for us afflictions, leaving us an example that we should follow his footsteps: for he

James 5.

1 Pet. 1.

1 Pet. 2.

committed no sin, nor was there any guile found in his mouth; when he was railed upon, and also reviled, railed not again; when he was evil entreated, he did not threaten, but committed the punishment thereof to him that judgeth aright.

Let us ever have in fresh remembrance those wonderful comfortable sentences spoken by the mouth of our Saviour Christ: Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; blessed are ye when men revile you, persecute you, and speak all evil against you for my sake; rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so did they persecute the prophets, which were before you. Therefore let us alway bear this in our minds, that if any incommo-  
 dity do chance unto us for righteousness sake, happy are we, whatsoever the world doth think of us. Christ our master hath told us beforehand, that the brother should put the brother to death, and the father the son, and the children should rise against their parents and kill them, and that Christ's true apostles should be hated of all men for his name's sake; but he that shall abide patiently unto the end shall be saved. Let us then endure in all troubles patiently, after the example of our master Christ, and be contented therewith; for he suffered being our master and lord, how doth it not then become us to suffer? For the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It may suffice the disciple to be as his master, and the servant to be as his lord.  
 If they have called the father of the family, the master of the household, Beelzebub, how much more shall they call so them of his household? Fear them not then, saith our Saviour, for all privities shall be made plain: there is now nothing secret, but it shall be shewed in light.

Of Christ's words let us neither be ashamed, nor afraid to speak them, for so Christ our master commandeth us, saying, That I tell you privily, speak openly abroad, and that I tell you in your ear, preach it upon the house top. And fear not them which kill the body, for the soul they cannot kill: but fear him which can cast both body and soul into hell-fire. Know ye that the heavenly Father hath ever a gracious eye and respect towards you, and a fatherly providence for you, so that without his knowledge and permission, nothing can do you harm. Let us therefore cast all our care upon him, and he shall provide that which shall be best for us. For if of two small sparrows, which both are sold for a mite, one of them lighteth not on the ground without your father, and all the hairs of our head are numbered, fear not then, saith our master Christ, for ye are more worth than many small sparrows. And let us not stick to confess our master Christ for fear of danger, whatsoever it shall be; remembering the promise that Christ maketh, saying, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall

I confess before my Father which is in heaven : but whosoever shall deny me, him shall I likewise deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Christ came not to give unto us here a carnal amity, and a worldly peace, or to knit his unto the world in ease and peace : but rather to separate and divide them from the world, and to join them unto himself ; in whose cause we must, if we will be his, forsake father and mother, and stick unto him. If we forsake him or shrink from him for trouble or death's sake, which he calleth his cross, he will none of us, we cannot be his. If for his cause we shall lose our temporal lives here, we shall find them again and enjoy them for evermore ; but if in his cause we will not be contented to leave nor lose them here, then shall we lose them so, that we shall never find them again, but in everlasting death.

What though our troubles here be painful for the time, and the sting of death bitter and unpleasant ? yet we know that they shall not last in comparison of eternity, no not the twinkling of an eye ; and that they, patiently taken in Christ's cause, shall procure and get us unmeasurable heaps of heavenly glory, unto the which these <sup>2 Cor. 4.</sup> temporal pains of death and troubles compared, are not to be esteemed, but to be rejoiced upon. Wonder not, saith St. Peter, <sup>1. Pet. 4.</sup> as though it were any strange matter that ye are tried by the fire (he meaneth, of tribulation), which thing, saith he, is done to prove you. Nay rather, in that ye are partners of Christ's afflictions, rejoice, that in his glorious revelation ye may rejoice with merry hearts. If ye suffer rebukes in Christ's name, happy are ye, for the glory and spirit of God resteth upon you. Of them God is reviled and dishonoured, but of you he is glorified. Let no man be ashamed of that he suffereth as a Christian, and in Christ's cause : for now is the time that judgment and correction must begin at the house of God ; and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of those, think ye, which believe not the Gospel ? And if the righteous shall be hardly saved, the wicked and the sinner, where shall he appear ? Wherefore they which are afflicted according to the will of God, let them lay down and commit their souls to him by well-doing, as to a trusty and faithful maker.

This (as I said) may<sup>1</sup> not seem strange to us, for we know that <sup>1 must</sup> all the whole fraternity of Christ's congregation in this world is served with the like, and by the same is made perfect. For the fervent love that the apostles had unto their master Christ, and for the great commodities and increase of all godliness which they felt (by their faith) to ensue of afflictions in Christ's cause, and thirdly, for the heaps of heavenly joys which the same do get unto the godly, which shall endure in heaven for evermore, for these causes (I say) the apostles of their afflictions did joy, and rejoiced in that they were had and accounted worthy to suffer contumelies

and rebukes for Christ's name. And Paul, as he gloried in the grace and favour of God, whereunto he was brought and stood in by faith; so he rejoiced in his afflictions for the heavenly and spiritual profits, which he numbereth to rise upon them: yea, he was so far in love with that, that the carnal man loatheth so much, that is, with Christ's cross, that he judged himself to know nothing else but Christ crucified; he will glory (he saith) in nothing else but in Christ's cross, yea, and he blesseth all those, as the only true Israelites, and elect people of God, with peace and mercy, which walketh after that rule and after none other.

O Lord, what a wonderful spirit was that that made Paul, in setting forth of himself against the vanity of Satan's pseudo-apostles, and in his claim there that he in Christ's cause did excel and pass them all, what a wonderful spirit was that (I say) that made him to reckon up all his troubles, his labours, his beatings, his whippings, his scourgings, his shipwrecks, his dangers and perils by water and by land, his famine, hunger, nakedness, and cold, with many more, and the daily care of all the congregations of Christ, among whom every man's pain did pierce his heart, and every man's grief was grievous unto him! O Lord, is this Paul's primacy, whereof he thought so much good that he did excel other? Is not this Paul's saying unto Timothy, his own scholar, and doth it not pertain to whosoever will be Christ's true soldiers—Bear thou (saith he) the afflictions like a good soldier of Jesus Christ? This is true: if we die with him, (he meaneth Christ,) we shall live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him; if we deny him, he shall deny us; if we be faithless, he remaineth faithful, he cannot deny himself. This Paul would have known to every body; for there is none other way to heaven, but Christ and his way, and all that will live godly in Christ, shall (saith St. Paul) suffer persecution. By this way went to heaven the patriarchs, the prophets, Christ our master, his apostles, his martyrs, and all the godly since the beginning.

And as it hath been of old, that he which was born after the flesh, persecuteth him which was born after the spirit, for so it was in Isaac's time; so, said St. Paul, it was in his time also. And whether it be so or no now, let the spiritual man, the self-same man (I mean) that is endued with the Spirit of Almighty God, let him be judge. Of the cross of the patriarchs, as ye may read in their stories if ye read the book of Genesis, ye shall perceive. Of other, St. Paul in few words comprehendeth much matter, speaking in a generality of the wonderful afflictions, deaths, and torments, which the men of God in God's cause, and for the truth's sake, willingly and gladly did suffer. After much

particular rehearsal of many, he saith, Others were racked, and despised, and would not be delivered, that they might obtain a better resurrection; other again were tried with mockings and scourgings, and moreover with bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, hewn asunder, tempted, fell and were slain upon the edge of the sword, some wandered to and fro in sheeps' pilches,<sup>1</sup> in goats' pilches, forsaken, oppressed, afflicted, (such godly men as the world were unworthy of,) wandering in wildernesses, in mountains, in caves and in dens; and all these were commended for their faith. And yet they abide for us the servants of God, and for those their brethren which are to be slain as they were for the word of God's sake, that none be shut out, but that we may all go together to meet our master Christ in the air at his coming, and so to be in bliss with him in body and in soul for evermore.

Therefore, seeing we have so much occasion to suffer and to take afflictions for Christ's name's sake patiently, so many commodities thereby, so weighty causes, so many good examples, so great necessity, so sure promises of eternal life and heavenly joys of him that cannot lie, let us throw away whatsoever might let<sup>3</sup> us, all burden of sin, and all kind of carnality, and patiently and constantly let us run for the best game in this race that is set before us; ever having our eyes upon Jesus Christ, the ringleader, captain, and perfecter of our faith, which for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, not passing upon<sup>4</sup> the ignominy and shame thereof, and is set now at the right hand of the throne of God, Consider this, that he suffered such strife of sinners against himself, that ye should not give over nor faint in your minds. As yet, brethren, we have not withstood unto death, fighting against sin.

Let us never forget, dear brethren, for Christ's sake, that fatherly exhortation of the wise that speaketh unto us, as unto his children; the godly wisdom of God, saying thus, My son, despise not the correction of the Lord, nor fall not from him when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth, him doth he correct, and scourgeth every child whom he receiveth. What child is he whom the father doth not chasten? If ye be free from chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and no children. Seeing then, whenas<sup>5</sup> we have had carnal parents which chastened us, we revered them, shall not we much more be subject unto our spiritual father, that we might live? And they for a little time taught us after their own mind; but this father teacheth us to our commodity, to give unto us his holiness. All chastisement for the present time appeareth not pleasant, but painful; but afterward it rendereth the fruit of righteousness on them which are exercised in it. Wherefore, let us be of good cheer, good brethren, and let us pluck up our feeble members

that were fallen, or began to faint, heart, hands, knees, and all the rest, and let us walk upright and straight, that no limping nor halting bring us out of the way. Let us look, not upon the things that be present, but with the eyes of our faith let us stedfastly behold the things that be everlasting in heaven, and so choose rather, in respect of that which is to come, with the chosen members of Christ to bear Christ's cross, than for this short lifetime to enjoy all the riches, honours, and pleasures of the broad world.

Why should we Christians fear death? Can death deprive us of Christ, which is all our comfort, our joy, and our life? Nay, forsooth. But contrary, death shall deliver us from this mortal body, which loadeth and beareth down the spirit, that it cannot so well perceive heavenly things; in the which so long as we dwell, we are absent from God.

Wherefore, understanding our state in that we be Christians, that if our mortal body, which is our earthly house, were destroyed, we have a building, a house not made with hands, but everlasting in heaven, &c., therefore we are of good cheer, and know that when we are in the body, we are absent from God, for we walk by faith, and not by clear sight. Nevertheless we are bold, and had rather be absent from the body, and present with God. Wherefore we strive, whether we be present at home or absent abroad, that we may always please him.

And who that hath true faith in our Saviour Christ, whereby he knoweth somewhat truly what Christ our Saviour is, that he is the eternal Son of God, life, light, the wisdom of the Father, all goodness, all righteousness, and whatsoever is good that heart can desire, yea, infinite plenty of all these, above that that man's heart can either conceive or think, (for in him dwelleth the fulness of the godhead corporally,) and also that he is given us of the Father, and made of God to be our wisdom, our righteousness, our holiness, and our redemption; who (I say) is he, that believeth this indeed, that would not gladly be with his master Christ? Paul for this knowledge coveted to have been loosed from the body, and to have been with Christ, for that he counted it much better for himself, and had rather to be loosed than to live. Therefore these words of Christ to the thief on the cross, that asked of him mercy, were full of comfort and solace; This day thou shalt be with me in paradise. To die in the defence of Christ's Gospel, it is our bounden duty to Christ, and also to our neighbour. To Christ, for he died for us, and rose again that he might be Lord over all. And seeing he died for us, we also (saith St. John) should jeopard, yea give, our life for our brethren. And this kind of giving and losing, is getting and winning indeed; for he that giveth or loseth his life thus, getteth and winneth it for evermore. Blessed are they

therefore that die in the Lord; and if they die in the Lord's cause, they are most happy of all. Apoc. 14.

Let us not then fear death, which can do us no harm, otherwise than for a moment to make the flesh to smart; but that our faith, which is surely fastened and fixed unto the word of God, telleth us that we shall be anon after death in peace, in the hands of God, in joy, in solace, and that from death we shall go straight unto life. For St. John saith, He that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. And in another place, He shall depart from death unto life. And therefore this death of the Christian is not to be called death, but rather a gate or entrance into everlasting life. Therefore Paul calleth it but a dissolution and resolution; and both Peter and Paul, a putting off of this tabernacle or dwell-house, meaning thereby the mortal body, as wherein the soul or spirit doth dwell here in this world for a small time. Yea, this death may be called, to the Christian, an end of all miseries. For so long as we live here, we must pass through many tribulations, before we can enter into the kingdom of heaven. And now, after that death hath shot his bolt, all the Christian man's enemies have done what they can, and after that they have no more to do. What could hurt or harm poor Lazarus, that lay at the rich man's gate? his former penury and poverty, his miserable beggary, and horrible sores and sickness? For so soon as death had stricken him with his dart, so soon came the angels, and carried him straight up into Abraham's bosom. What lost he by death, who, from misery and pain, is set by the ministry of angels in a place both of joy and solace? John 11.  
John 5.  
2 Pet. 1.  
2 Cor. 5.  
Act 4  
Luke 16.

Farewell, dear brethren, farewell! and let us comfort our hearts in all troubles, and in death, with the word of God: for heaven and earth shall perish, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

Farewell, Christ's dearly beloved spouse here wandering in this world, as in a strange land, far from thine own country, and compassed about on every hand with deadly enemies, which cease not to assault thee, ever seeking thy destruction!

Farewell, farewell, O ye the whole and universal congregation of the chosen of God, here living upon earth, the true church militant of Christ, the true mystical body of Christ, the very household and family of God, and the sacred temple of the Holy Ghost! Farewell.

Farewell, O thou little flock of the high heavenly pastor Christ! for to thee it hath pleased the heavenly Father to give an everlasting and eternal kingdom. Farewell. Luke 12.

Farewell, thou spiritual house of God, thou holy and royal priesthood, thou chosen generation, thou holy nation, thou won<sup>1</sup> spouse! Farewell, farewell! N. R.

*This that followeth,*

Which he further wrote concerning his cruel handling in the Schools at Oxford, and also of the condemnation of him, Dr. Cranmer, and Master Latimer, &c. we would not here omit, though in order it should before have been placed next after the preface to his disputation, fol. 78, [page 56.]

Know (gentle reader) that master Prolocutor did promise me in the disputations, publicly, that I should see mine answers, how they were collected and gathered of the notaries, and that I should have licence to add or diminish, to alter or change afterwards, as I should think best would make for me to the answering of the propositions. He promised moreover, publicly, that I should have both time and place for me to bring in frankly all that I could for the confirmation of mine answers. Now when he had promised all these things openly, in the hearing of other commissioners, and of the whole University of Oxford, yet (good reader) mark this, that in very deed he performed nothing of all that he promised: what faith then shall a man look to find at such judges' hands in the secret mysteries of God, which in their promises so openly made, and so duly debt,<sup>1</sup> (I will not speak of the witnesses of the matter,) are found to be so faithless both to God and man? Well, I will leave it to the judgment of the wise.

<sup>1</sup> owing,  
obligatory

And now, for that is left for us to do, let us pray that God would have mercy on his Church of England; that yet once, when it shall be his good pleasure, it may clearly see and greedily embrace, in the faith of Jesus Christ, the will of the heavenly Father; and that, of his infinite mercy, he would either turn to him the raging and ravening wolves, and most subtle seducers of his people, which are by them altogether spoiled and bewitched, either<sup>2</sup> that of his most righteous judgment, he would drive these faithless feeders from his flock, that they may no more be able to trouble and scatter abroad Christ's sheep from their shepherd—and that speedily. Amen, amen. And let every one that hath the Spirit (as St. John saith) say, Amen.

<sup>2</sup> or

Yet further know thou, that when master Prolocutor did put forth three propositions, he did command us to answer particularly to them all. After our answers, neither he nor his fellows did ever enter into any disputation of any one of them, saving only of the first. Yea, when that he had asked us, after disputations of the first, (as ye have heard for my part,) whether we would subscribe to the whole in such sort, form, and words as there are set forth, without further disputation, (which thing we denied<sup>3</sup>) by and by he gave sentence against us all; that is, against me, Dr. Cranmer, and Dr. Latimer, my most dear fathers and brethren in Christ; condemning us for heinous heretics concerning every of these propositions; and so separated us one from another, sending us severally into sundry and diverse

<sup>3</sup> refused



houses, to be kept most secretly till the day of our burning ; and as before, so still commanded, that all and every one of our servants should be kept from us ; whereto he added, that at his departure thence, pen, ink and paper, should depart from us also. But thanks be to God that gave me to write this before the use of such things were utterly taken away. Almighty God, which beholdeth the causes of the afflicted, and is wont to loose and look mercifully on the bonds and groanings of the captives, he vouchsafe now to look upon the causes of his poor church in England, and, of his great wisdom and unspeakable mercy, with speed to make an end of our misery ! Amen, amen, amen.

He meaneth here that godly and fruitful report of his disputation in Oxford, which he penned with his own hand.

## LETTERS OF MASTER JOHN HOOPER.

Late Bishop of Gloucester : where, after his long and cruel imprisonment in the Fleet, he was burnt with most terrible kinds of torments, (as you may read in the Book of Martyrs, folio 1062,) for the defence of the sincere truth of the Gospel ; the 9th day of January, in the year of our Lord 1555.

### A Letter which he wrote to certain Godly Persons,

Professors and lovers of the truth, instructing them how they should behave themselves, at the beginning of the change of religion.

The grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you, my dear brethren, and with all those that unfeignedly love and embrace his holy Gospel. Amen. It is told me that the wicked idol, the mass, is established again by law, and passed in the Parliament House. Learn the truth of it, I pray you, and what penalty is appointed in the Act, to such as speak against it ; also whether there be any compulsion to constrain men to be at it. The statute thoroughly known, such as be abroad and at liberty may provide for themselves, and avoid the danger the better. Doubtless there hath not been seen, before our time, such a parliament as this is, that as many as were suspected to be favourers of God's word should be banished out of both houses. But we must give God thanks for that truth he hath opened in the time of his blessed servant, King Edward the Sixth ; and pray unto him that we deny it not, nor dishonour it with idolatry, but that we may have strength and patience rather to die ten times, than to deny him once.

Blessed shall we be, if ever God make us worthy of that honour, to shed our blood for his name's sake. And blessed then shall we think the parents which brought us into this world, that we should from this mortality be carried into immortality. If we follow the commandment of St. Paul, that saith, If ye be

risen again with Christ, seek the things that be above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; we shall neither depart from the vain, transitory goods of this world, nor from this wretched and mortal life, with so great pains<sup>1</sup> as others do. Let us pray to our heavenly Father, that we may know and love his blessed will, and the glorious joy prepared for us in time to come, and that we may know and hate all things contrary to his blessed will, and also the pain prepared for the wicked men in the world to come.

There is no better way to be used in this troublesome time for your consolation, than many times to have assemblies together of such men and women as be of your religion in Christ, and there to talk and review among yourselves the truth of your religion, to see what ye be by the word of God, and to remember what ye were before ye came to the knowledge thereof, to weigh and confer<sup>2</sup> the dreams and false lies of the preachers that now preach, with the word of God that retaineth all truth; and by such talk and familiar resorting together, ye shall the better find out all their lies, that now go about to deceive you, and also both know and love the truth that God hath opened to us. It is much requisite that the members of Christ comfort one another, make prayers together, confer one with another: so shall ye be the stronger, and God's Spirit shall not be absent from you, but in the midst of you to teach you, to comfort you, to make you wise in all godly things, patient in adversity and strong in persecution. Ye see how the congregation of the wicked, by helping one another, make their wicked religion and themselves strong against God's truth and his people. If ye may have some learned man that can, out of the Scriptures, speak unto you of faith and true honouring of God, also that can shew you the descent of Christ's church, from the beginning of it until this day, (that ye may perceive by the life of your forefathers these two things; the one, that Christ's word, which said, that all his must suffer persecution and trouble in the world, be true—the other, that none of all his before our time escaped trouble :) then shall ye perceive that it is but a folly for one that professeth Christ truly, to look for the love of the world. Thus shall ye learn to bear trouble and to exercise your religion, and feel indeed that Christ's words be true, In the world ye shall suffer persecution. And when ye feel your religion indeed, say, ye be no better than your forefathers, but be glad that ye may be counted worthy soldiers for this war. And pray to God when ye come together, that he will use and order you and your doings to these three ends, which ye must take heed of: the first, that ye glorify God; the next, that ye edify the church and congregation; the third, that ye profit your own souls. In all your doings, beware ye

<sup>1</sup>reluct-  
ance

<sup>2</sup>compare

John 16.

be not deceived. For although this time be not yet bloody and tyrannous as the times of our forefathers, that could not bear the name of Christ without danger of life and goods; yet is our time more perilous both for body and soul.

Therefore of us Christ said, Think ye when the Son of man cometh, he shall find any faith upon earth? He said not, Think ye he shall find any man or woman christened and in name a Christian? but he spake of the faith that saveth the Christian man in Christ; and doubtless the scarcity of faith is now more (and will, I fear, increase,) than it was in the time of the greatest tyrants that ever were—and no marvel why. Read ye the sixth chapter of St. John's Revelation, and ye shall perceive among other things, that at the opening of the fourth seal, came out a pale horse, and he that sat upon him was called Death, and hell followed him. This horse is the time wherein hypocrites and dissemblers entered into the church under the pretence of true religion, as monks, friars, nuns, massing priests, with such other, that have killed more souls with heresy and superstition, than all the tyrants that ever were, killed bodies with fire, sword, or banishment; (as it appeareth by his name that sitteth upon the horse, who is called Death;) for all souls that leave Christ and trust to these hypocrites, live to the devil in everlasting pain, as is declared by him that followeth the pale horse, which is Hell. These pretended and pale hypocrites have stirred the earthquakes, that is, to wit, the princes of the world, against Christ's church, and have also darkened the sun, and made the moon bloody, and have caused the stars to fall from heaven, that is to say, have darkened with mists, and daily do darken, as ye hear by their sermons, the clear sun of God's most pure word. The moon, which be God's true preachers, which fetch only light at the sun of God's word, are turned into blood, prisons, and chains, that their light cannot shine unto the world as they would. Whereupon it cometh to pass that the stars, that is to say Christian people, fall from heaven, that is, to wit, from God's most true word to hypocrisy, most devilish superstition and idolatry.

Let some learned man shew you all the articles of your belief, and monuments of Christian faith, from the time of Christ hitherto; and ye shall perceive that there was never mention of such articles as these hypocrites teach. God bless you! and pray for me, as I do for you.

Out of the Fleet, by your brother in Christ,

John Hooper.

To all my dear Brethren, my reliebers and helpers in the city of London.

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I have received from you (dearly beloved in our Saviour Jesus Christ), by the hands of my servant, William Downton, your liberality; for the which I do most heartily thank you; and I praise God highly in you and for you, who hath moved your hearts to shew this kindness towards me, praying him to preserve you from all famine, scarcity, and lack of the truth of his word, which is the lively food of your souls, as you preserve my body from hunger and other necessities, which should<sup>1</sup> happen unto me, were it not cared for by the benevolence and charity of godly people. Such as have taken all worldly goods and lands from me, and spoiled me of all that I had, have imprisoned my body, and appointed not one halfpenny to feed or to relieve me withal. But I do forgive them, and pray for them daily in my poor prayer unto God, and from my heart I wish their salvation, and quietly and patiently bear their injuries, wishing no farther extremity to be used towards us. Yet if it seem contrary best unto our heavenly Father, I have made my reckoning, and fully resolved myself to suffer the uttermost that they are able to do against me, yea, death itself, by the aid of Christ Jesus, who died the most vile death of the cross, for us wretches and miserable sinners. But of this I am assured, that the wicked world, with all his force and power, shall not touch one of the hairs of our heads without leave and licence of our heavenly Father, whose will be done in all things. If he will life, life be it: if he will death, death be it. Only we pray, that our wills may be subject unto his will; and then, although both we and all the world see none other thing but death, yet if he think life best, we shall not die, no, although the sword be drawn out over our heads; as Abraham thought to kill his son Isaac, yet when God perceived that Abraham had surrendered his will to God's will, and was content to kill his son, God then saved his son.

Dearly beloved, if we be contented to obey God's will, and for his commandments' sake to surrender our goods and ourselves to be at his pleasure, it maketh no matter whether we keep goods and life or lose them. Nothing can hurt us, that is taken from us for God's cause; nor nothing can at length do us good, that is preserved contrary unto God's commandment. Let us wholly suffer God to use us and ours after his holy wisdom; and beware we neither use nor govern ourselves contrary to his will by our own wisdom, for if we do, our wisdom will at length prove foolishness. It is kept to no good purpose, that we keep contrary unto his commandments. It can by no

means be taken from us, that he would should tarry with us. He is no good Christian, that ruleth himself and his, as worldly means serveth; for he that so doth shall have as many changes as chanceth in the world. To-day, with the world, he shall like and praise the truth of God; to-morrow, as the world will, so will he like and praise the falsehood of man; to-day with Christ, and to-morrow with Antichrist.

Wherefore, dear brethren, as touching your behaviour towards God, use both your inward spirits and your outward bodies, your inward and your outward man, I say, not after the means of men, but after the infallible word of God. Refrain from evil in both, and glorify your heavenly father in both. For if ye think ye can inwardly in the heart serve him, and yet outwardly serve with the world in external service the thing that is not God, ye deceive yourselves; for both the body and the soul must together concur in the honour of God, as St. Paul plainly teacheth, I Cor. vi. For if an honest wife be bound to give both heart and body to faith<sup>1</sup> and service in marriage, and if an honest wife's faith in the heart cannot stand with<sup>2</sup> an whorish or defiled body outwardly; much less can the true faith of a Christian in the service of Christianity, stand with the bodily service of external idolatry: for the mystery of marriage is not so honourable between man and wife, as it is between Christ and every Christian man, as St. Paul saith. Therefore, dear brethren, pray to the heavenly Father, that as he spared not the soul nor the body of his dearly beloved Son, but applied both of them with extreme pain, to work our salvation both of body and soul, so he will give us all grace to apply our bodies and souls to be servants unto him; for doubtless he requireth as well the one as the other, and cannot be discontented with one, and well pleased with the other. Either he hateth both, or loveth both: he divideth not his love to one, and his hatred to the other. Let not us therefore, good brethren, divide ourselves, and say our souls serve him, whatsoever our bodies do to the contrary for civil order and policy. But (alas) I know by myself what troubleth you; that is, the great danger of the world, that will revenge (ye think) your service to God, with sword and fire, with loss of goods and lands. But, dear brethren, weigh of the other side, that your enemies and God's enemies shall not do as much as they would, but as much as God shall suffer them, who can trap them in their own counsels, and destroy them in the midst of their furies. Remember, ye be the workmen of the Lord, and called into his vineyard, there to labour till evening tide, that ye may receive your penny, which is more worth than all the kings of the earth. But he that calleth us into his vineyard, hath not told us how sore or how fervently the sun shall trouble us in our labour; but hath bid us labour and commit the

<sup>1</sup> fidelity  
<sup>2</sup> consist  
with

Matt. 20.

bitterness thereof unto him, who can and will so moderate all afflictions, that no man shall have more laid upon him, than in Christ he shall be able to bear: unto whose merciful tuition<sup>1</sup> and defence I commend both your souls and your bodies.

<sup>1</sup> protection

September 1, 1554.

Yours, with my poor prayer,

John Hooper.

### An answer of a Letter,

Whereby he was advertised of a godly company, to the number of thirty, taken at prayer in a house in Bow-Church-yard, and carried to prison.

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I perceived by your letter, how that, upon new year's day at night, there were taken a godly company of Christians, whilst they were praying. I do rejoice, in that men can be so well occupied in this perilous time, and fly unto God for remedy by prayer, as well for their own lacks and necessities, as also charitably to pray for them that persecute them. So doth the word of God command all men to pray charitably for those that hate them, and not to revile any magistrate with words, or to mean him evil by force and violence. They also may rejoice, that in well-doing they were taken to the prison. Wherefore I have thought it good to send them this little writing of consolation, praying God to send them patience, charity, and constancy in the truth of his most holy word. Thus fare you well, and pray to God to send his true word into this realm again amongst us, which the ungodly bishops have now banished. January 4, 1554.

### To the Godly and Faithful Company of Prisoners in both the Counters,

Which were taken together at prayer in a house in Bow-Church-yard.

The grace, favour, consolation, and aid of the Holy Ghost be with you now and ever: so be it!

Dearly beloved in the Lord; ever since your imprisonment, I have been marvellously moved with great affections and passions, as well of mirth and gladness, as of heaviness and sorrow. Of gladness in this, that I perceived how ye be bent and given to prayer and invocation of God's help, in these dark and wicked proceedings of men against God's glory. I have been sorry, to perceive the malice and wickedness of men to be so cruel, devilish, and tyrannical, to persecute the people of God, for serving of God, for saying and hearing of the holy psalms, and the word of eternal life. These cruel doings do declare, that the Papists' church is more bloody and tyrannical, than ever was the sword of the

Ethnics and Gentiles. When I heard of your taking,<sup>1</sup> and what ye were doing, wherefore and by whom ye were taken; I remembered how the Christians in the primitive church were used, by the cruelty of unchristened heathens in the time of Trajan the emperor, about seventy-seven years after Christ's ascension into heaven. The Christians were persecuted very sore, as though they had been traitors and movers of sedition. Whereupon the Gentile emperor Trajan required to know the true cause of Christian men's trouble. A great learned man, called Plinius Secundus, wrote unto him and said, it was because the Christians said certain psalms before day unto one called Christ, whom they worshipped for God. When Trajan the emperor understood it was for nothing but for conscience and religion, he caused by his commandments everywhere, that no man should be persecuted for serving of God. Lo! a Gentile and Heathen man would not have such as were of a contrary religion, punished for serving of God. But the pope and his church have cast you into prison, being taken even in doing the work of God, and one of the most excellent works that is required of Christian men, that is, to wit, while ye were in prayer, and not in such wicked and superstitious prayer, as the papists use; but in the same prayer that Christ hath taught you to pray, and in his name only ye gave God thanks for that ye have received, and for his sake ye asked for such things as ye want. Oh, glad may ye be that ever ye were born, to be apprehended whilst ye were so virtuously occupied. Blessed be they that suffer for righteousness' sake. For if God had suffered them that took your bodies, then to have taken your life also, now had ye been following the Lamb in perpetual joys, away from the company and assembly of wicked men. But the Lord would not have you suddenly so to depart, but reserveth you gloriously to speak and maintain his truth to the world. Be ye not careful what ye shall say; for God will go out and in with you, and will be present in your hearts and in your mouths to speak his wisdom, although it seem foolishness to the world. He that hath begun this good work in you, confirm, strengthen, and continue you in the same unto the end. And pray unto him, that ye may fear him only, that hath power to kill both body and soul, and to cast them into hell-fire. Be of good comfort; all the hairs of your heads be numbered, and there is not one of them can perish, except your heavenly Father suffer it to perish. Now ye be even in the field, and placed in the fore-front of Christ's battle. Doubtless it is a singular favour of God, and a special love of him towards you, to give you this fore-ward and pre-eminence, and a sign that he trusteth you before others of his people. Wherefore (dear brethren and sisters,) continually fight this fight of the Lord. Your cause is most just and godly: ye stand for the true Christ, who is after the flesh in heaven, and for

<sup>1</sup> being taken

Matt. 5.

Matt. 10.

his true religion and honour, which is amply, fully, sufficiently and abundantly contained in the Holy Testament sealed with Christ's own blood. How much be ye bound to God, to put you in trust with so holy and just a cause! Remember what lookers-upon ye have, to see and behold you in your fight, even God and all his holy angels, who be ready alway to take you up into heaven, if ye be slain in this fight. Also you have standing at your backs all the multitude of the faithful, who shall take courage, strength and desire, to follow such noble and valiant Christians as ye be. Be not afraid of your adversaries; for he that is in you, is stronger than he that is in them. Shrink not, although it be pain to you. Your pains be not now so great, as hereafter your joys shall be. Read the comfortable chapters to the Rom. viii. x. xv. ; Heb. xi. xii. And upon your knees thank God, that ever ye were accounted worthy to suffer any thing for his name's sake. Read the second chapter of St. Luke's gospel, and there ye shall see, how the shepherds that watched upon their sheep all night, as soon as they heard that Christ was born at Bethlehem, by and by they went to see him. They did not reason nor debate with themselves, who should keep the wolf from the sheep in the meantime, but did as they were commanded, and committed their sheep unto him whose pleasure they obeyed. So let us do now, when we be called, and commit all other things unto him that calleth us. He will take heed that all things shall be well: he will help the husband, he will comfort the wife, he will guide the servants, he will keep the house, he will preserve the goods, yea, rather than it should be undone, he will wash the dishes and rock the cradle. Cast therefore all your care upon God, for he careth for you. Besides this, ye may perceive by your imprisonment, that your adversaries' weapons against you be nothing but flesh, blood, and tyranny. For if they were able, they would maintain their wicked religion by God's word: but for lack of that, they would violently compel such as they cannot by the Holy Scripture persuade, because the holy word of God and all Christ's doings be clean contrary unto them. I pray you, pray for me, and I will pray for you. And although we be asunder after the world, yet we are in Christ (I trust) for ever joining in the spirit, and so shall meet in the palace of the heavenly joys, after this short and transitory life is ended. God's peace be with you. Amen. 4th of January, 1554.

**To certain of his beloved Friends in God,**

Exhorting them to stick constantly to the professed truth of the Gospel in those days of trial, and not to shrink for any trouble.

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I did write unto you of late, and told you what extremity the parliament had concluded



upon concerning religion, suppressing the true, and setting forth the untrue, intending to cause all men by extremity to forswear themselves, and to take again for the head of the church, him that is neither head nor member of it, but a very enemy, as the word of God and all ancient writers do record: and for lack of law and authority, they will use force and extremity, which have been the arguments to defend the pope and popery since his wicked authority began first in the world. But now is the time of trial, to see whether we fear more God or man. It was an easy thing to hold with Christ, while the prince and world held with him: but now the world hateth him, is the true trial who be his. Wherefore in the name and in the virtue, strength, and power of his Holy Spirit, prepare yourselves in any case to adversity and constancy. Let us not run away when it is most time to fight. Remember, that none shall be crowned but such as fight manfully; and he that endureth unto the end, shall be saved.

Ye must now turn all your cogitations from the peril ye see, and mark by faith what followeth the peril: either victory in this world of<sup>1</sup> your enemies, or else a surrender of this life, to inherit<sup>1 over</sup> the everlasting kingdom. Beware of beholding too much the felicity or the misery of this world: for the consideration and earnest love or fear of either of them, draweth from God. Wherefore think with yourselves, as touching the felicity of the world, it is<sup>2</sup> good, but yet none otherwise than it standeth<sup>2 con-</sup> with the favour of God: it is to be kept, but yet so far forth as by keeping of it we lose not God. It is good to abide and tarry still among our friends here; but yet so that we tarry not therewithal in God's displeasure, and hereafter to dwell in hell with the devils in fire everlasting. There is nothing (under God) but may be kept, so that God, being above all things we have, be not lost. Of adversity judge the same. Imprisonment is painful: but yet liberty upon evil conditions is more painful. The prisons stink: but yet not, so much as sweet houses, whereas<sup>3</sup> the fear and true honour of God lacketh.<sup>4</sup> I must be alone and solitary: it is better so to be and have God with me, than to be in company with the wicked.<sup>3 where</sup> Loss of goods is great, but loss of God's grace and favour is greater.<sup>4 is want-</sup> I am a poor simple creature, and cannot tell how to answer before such a great sort of noble, learned, and wise: it is better to make answer before the pomp and pride of wicked men, than to stand naked in the sight of all heaven and earth before the just God, at the latter day. I shall die then by the hands of the cruel man: he is blessed that loseth this life full of mortal miseries, and findeth the life full of eternal joys. It is a grief to depart from goods and friends, but yet not so much as to depart from grace and heaven itself. Wherefore there is neither felicity nor adversity of this world, that can appear to be great, if it be

weighed with the joys or pains in the world to come. I can do no more but pray for you : do the same for me, for God's sake.

For my part, I thank the heavenly Father, I have made mine accounts, and appointed myself unto the will of the heavenly Father : as he will, so I will by his grace.—For God's sake, as soon as ye can, send my poor wife and children some letter from you, and my letter also which I sent of late to Downton. As it is told me, she had never letter from me, since the coming of Master S. unto her : the more to blame the messengers, for I have written divers times. The Lord comfort them and provide for them, for I am able to do nothing in worldly things. She is a godly and wise woman, and if my meanings had been accomplished she should have had necessary things : but that I meant, God can perform ; to whom I commend both her and you all. I am a precious jewel now, and daintily kept, never so daintily ; for neither mine own man nor any of the servants of the house may come at me, but my keeper alone, a simple, rude man, God knoweth. But I am nothing careful thereof. 21st January, 1554.

Yours bounden,

John Hooper.

**Another Letter to certain godly Persons written to the same effect.**

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I do give our heavenly Father thanks, that moveth you to remember your afflicted brethren ; and I do (as I am bound) pray for you, that with your remembrance of me, ye provide help, and succour me with such goods, as God doth endue you withal. Doubtless if ever wretch and vile sinner was bound unto God, I am most specially bound : for these ten months almost, ever since my imprisonment, I have had no living nor goods to sustain myself withal, yet such hath been the favour of our heavenly Father, that I have had sufficient to eat and drink, and the same paid for. Seeing he is so merciful and careful for my sinful body, I doubt not but he hath more care of my wretched soul, so that in both I may serve his majesty, and be a lively and profitable member of his poor afflicted church. I do not care what extremity this world shall work or devise, praying you in the bowels of him that shed his precious blood for you, to remember and follow the knowledge ye have learned of his truth. Be not ashamed nor afraid to follow him. Beware of

Luke 9.

Luke 14.

Remember, that Christ willed him that would build a tower, to sit down first and look whether he were able to perform it ; lest

he should begin and leave off in the midst, and so be mocked of his neighbours, and lose therewithal as much as he bestowed.<sup>1</sup> *1 expended*  
 Christ told such as would build in him eternal life, what the price thereof was, even at the beginning of his doctrine, and said they should be persecuted. Also they should sometime pay and bestow both goods and lands, before the tower of salvation would be builded. Seeing the price of truth in religion hath been always the displeasure and persecution of the world, let us bear it, and Christ will recompence the charges abundantly. It is no loss to lack the love of the world, and to find the love of God; nor no harm to suffer the loss of worldly things, and find eternal life. If man hate and God love, man kill the body and God bring both body and soul to eternal life, the exchange is good and profitable. *Matt. 10.*

For the love of God, use singleness towards him. Beware of this foolish and deceitful collusion, to think a man may serve God in spirit secretly to his conscience, although outwardly with his body and bodily presence he cleave, for civil order, to such rites and ceremonies as now be used contrary to God and his word. Be assured that whatsoever he be that giveth this counsel, shall be before God able to do you no more profit, than the fig-leaves did unto Adam. Glorify GOD both in your bodies and in your spirits, which are God's. Take heed of that commandment, no man is able to dispense with it. Such as be yet clear, and have not been present at the wicked mass and idolatrous service, let them pray to God to stand fast: such as for weakness and fear have been at it, repent, and desire God of<sup>2</sup> forgiveness, and doubtless he will have mercy upon you. *2 pray God for* It is a fearful thing, that many do not alonely<sup>3</sup> thus dissemble with God, but also excuse *3 only* and defend the dissimulation: beware of that, dear brethren, for it is a sore matter to delight in evil things. Let us acknowledge *Prov. 2.* and bewail our evil; then God shall send grace to amend us, and strength better to bear his cross. I doubt not but ye will judge of my writing as I mean towards you in my heart, which is doubtless your eternal salvation in Christ Jesus; to whom I heartily commend you. 14th June, 1554.

### To a Merchant of London,

By whose means he had received much comfort in his great necessity in the Fleet: where how cruelly he was handled, you shall see in the Letter next following.

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I thank God and you, for the great help and consolation I have received in the time of adversity by your charitable means; but most rejoice that you be not altered from truth, although falsehood cruelly seeketh to

distain her. Judge not, my brother, truth by outward appearance; for truth now worse appeareth and more vilely is rejected, than falsehood. Leave the outward shew, and see by the word of God what truth is, and accept truth, and dislike her not though man call her falsehood. As it is now, so hath it been heretofore, the truth rejected and falsehood received. Such as have professed truth, for truth have smarted, and the friends of falsehood laughed them to scorn. The trial of both hath been by contrary success: the one having the commendation of truth by man, but the condemnation of falsehood by God, flourishing for a time, with endless destruction; the other afflicted a little season, with immortal joys. Wherefore, dear brother, ask and demand of your book, the Testament of Jesus Christ, in these woeful and wretched days, what you should think, and what you should stay upon for a certain truth; and whatsoever you hear taught, try it by your book whether it be true or false.

The days be dangerous and full of peril, not only for the world and worldly things, but for heaven and heavenly things. It is a trouble to lose the treasures of this life, but yet a very pain if they be kept with the offence of God. Cry, call, pray, and in Christ daily require help, succour, mercy, wisdom, grace, and defence, that the wickedness of this world prevail not against us. We began well; God preserve us until the end. I would write more often unto you, but I do perceive you be at so much charges with me, that I fear you would think when I write, I crave. Send me nothing till I send to you for it, and so tell the good men your partners; and when I need, I will be bold of you. 3rd December, 1554.

Yours, with my prayer,

John Hooper.

### A Report of his miserable Imprisonment,

And most cruel handling by Babington, that enemy of God and of his truth, then Warden of the Fleet.

The first of September, 1553 I was committed unto the Fleet from Richmond, to have the liberty of the prison; and within six days after, I paid for my liberty five pounds sterling to the warden for fees, who immediately upon the payment thereof, complained unto Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and so was I committed to close prison one quarter of a year, in the Tower chamber of the Fleet, and used very extremely. Then by the means of a good gentlewoman, I had liberty to come down to dinner and supper, and not to speak with any of my friends; but as soon as dinner and supper was done, to repair to my chamber again. Notwithstanding, whilst I came down

thus to dinner and supper, the warden and his wife picked quarrels with me, and complained untruly of me to their great friend, the Bishop of Winchester.

After one quarter of a year, and somewhat more, the warden and his wife fell out with me, for the wicked mass : and thereupon the warden resorted to the Bishop of Winchester, and obtained to put me into the wards ; where I have continued a long time, having nothing appointed to me for my bed, but a little pad of straw, a rotten covering, with a tick and a few feathers therein, the chamber being vile and stinking, until, by God's means, good people sent me bedding to lie in ; of<sup>1</sup> the one 1 on side of which prison is the sink and filth of all the house, and on the other side, the town ditch : so that the stench of the house hath infected me with sundry diseases. During which time, I have been sick ; and the doors, bars, hasps, and chains being all closed and made fast upon me, I have mourned, called, and cried for help : but the warden, when he hath known me many times ready to die, and when the poor men of the wards have called to help me, hath commanded the doors to be kept fast, and charged that none of his men should come at me, saying, Let him alone, it were a good riddance of him.

And among many other times, he did thus the 18th of October, 1553, as many can witness. I paid always like a baron to the said warden, as well in fees, as for my board, which was twenty shillings a week, besides my man's table, until I was wrongfully deprived of my bishoprick. And since that time I have paid him as the best gentleman doth in his house ; yet hath he used me worse and more vile, than the veriest slave that ever came to the hall commons. The same warden hath also imprisoned my man William Downton, and stripped him out of his clothes to search for letters, and could find none, but only a little remembrance of good people's names, that gave me their alms to relieve me in prison. And to undo them also, the warden delivered the same bill unto the said Stephen Gardiner, God's enemy and mine.

I have suffered imprisonment almost eighteen months, my goods, living, friends, and comfort taken from me, the queen owing me by just account fourscore pounds or more. She hath put me in prison, and giveth nothing to find<sup>2</sup> me, neither is 2 support there suffered any to come at me, whereby I might have relief. I am with a wicked man and woman, so that I see no remedy (saving God's help) but I shall be cast away in prison, before I can come to judgment. But I commit my just cause to God ; whose will be done, whether it be by life or death.

John Hooper.

### A Letter concerning the vain and false reports

Which were spread abroad of him, that he had recanted and abjured that doctrine, which he before had preached.

The grace and peace of God be with all them, that unfeignedly look for the coming of our Saviour Christ. Amen.

Dear brethren and sisters in our Lord, and my fellow prisoners for the cause of God's Gospel; I do rejoice and give thanks unto God for your constancy and perseverance in affliction, wishing and praying unto him for your continuance therein to the end. And as I do rejoice in your faithful and constant affliction that be in prison, even so do I mourn and lament to hear of our dear brethren abroad, that yet have not suffered nor felt such dangers for God's truth as we have, and do feel, and are like daily to suffer more, yea the very extreme death of the fire. Yet such is the report abroad (as I am credibly informed), that I John Hooper, a condemned man for the cause of Christ, now after sentence of death, being in Newgate prisoner, looking daily for execution, should recant and abjure that [which] heretofore I have preached. And this talk riseth of this, that the Bishop of London and his chaplains resort unto me. Doubtless, if our brethren were as godly as I could wish them to be, they would think that in case I did refuse to talk with them, they might have a just occasion to say that I were unlearned, and disdained to speak with them. Therefore to avoid just suspicion of both, I have and do daily speak with them when they come, not doubting but they will report that I am neither proud nor unlearned. And I would wish all men to do as I do in this point, for I fear not their arguments, neither is death terrible unto me. Wherefore I pray you to make true report of the same as occasion shall serve, and also that I am more confirmed in the truth that heretofore I have preached, by their communication; and ye that may,<sup>1</sup> send to the weak brethren abroad, praying them that they trouble me not with such reports of recantation as they do. For I have hitherto left all things of this world, and suffered great pains and long imprisonment, and I thank God I am ready, even as gladly to suffer death for the truth I have preached, as a mortal man may be.

1 can.

O Lord, how slippery the love of man, yea man himself is! It were better for them to pray for us, rather than to credit or raise rumours that be untrue, unless they were more certain thereof than ever they shall be able to prove: we have enemies enough of such as know not God. Truly this report of weak brethren is a double trouble, and a triple cross. I do wish your eternal salvation in Christ Jesus, and also require your

continual prayer, that he which hath begun in us, may save us to the end. I have taught this truth with my tongue and pen heretofore, and hereafter shortly will confirm (by God's grace) the same with my blood. Pray for me, gentle brethren, and have no mistrust.

From Newgate, 2nd February. Your brother,  
John Hooper.

**To Mistress Wilkinson,**

A woman hearty in God's cause, and comfortable to his afflicted members.

The grace of God, and the comfort of his Holy Spirit be with you. Amen.

I am very glad to hear of your health, and do thank you for your loving tokens.<sup>1</sup> But I am a great deal more glad to hear <sup>i. e.</sup> how Christianly you avoid idolatry, and prepare yourself to <sup>gl.</sup> suffer the extremity of the world, rather than to endanger yourself to God. You do as you ought to do in this behalf; and in suffering of transitory pains, you shall avoid permanent torments in the world to come. Use your life, and keep it with as much quietness as you can, so that you offend not God. The ease that cometh with his displeasure, turneth at length to unspeakable pains: and the gains of the world, with the loss of his favour, is beggary and wretchedness. Reason is to be amended in this cause of religion; for it will choose and follow an error with the multitude, if it may be allowed, rather than turn to faith and follow the truth with the people of God. Moses found the same fault in himself, and did amend it; choosing rather to be afflicted <sup>Heb. 11</sup> with the people of God, than to use the liberty of the king's daughter that accounted him as her son. Pray for contentation and peace of the spirit, and rejoice in such troubles as shall happen unto you for the truth's sake; for in that part Christ saith you be happy. Pray also for me, and (I pray you) that I may do <sup>Mat. 5.</sup> in all things the will of our heavenly Father; to whose tuition<sup>2</sup> and <sup>2 p<sup>ro</sup>-tection</sup> defence I commend you.

**To my dearly beloved Sister in the Lord, Mistress A. W.**

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I thank you for your loving token. I pray you burden not yourself too much; it were meet for me rather to bear a pain, than to be a hindrance to many. I did rejoice at the coming of this bearer, to understand of your constancy, and how that you be fully resolved, by God's grace, rather to suffer extremity, than to go from that truth in God which you have professed. He that gave you grace to begin in so infallible a truth, will follow you in the same unto the end. But, my loving sister, as you be travelling this perilous

journey, take this lesson with you, practised by wise men; whereof ye may read in the second of St. Matthew's Gospel. Such as travelled to find Christ, followed only the star, and as long as they saw it, they were assured they were in the right way, and had great mirth in their journey. But when they entered into Jerusalem, (whereas the star led them not thither, but unto Bethlehem,) and there asked the citizens the thing that the star shewed before; as long as they tarried in Jerusalem, and would be instructed where Christ was born, they were not only ignorant of Bethlehem, but also lost the sight of the star that led them before. Whereof we learn, in any case<sup>1</sup> whilst we be going in this life, to seek Christ that is above, to beware we lose not the star of God's word; that only is the mark that sheweth us where Christ is, and which way we may come unto him. But as Jerusalem stood in the way, and was an impediment to these wise men, so doth the synagogue of Antichrist, that beareth the name of Jerusalem, (which by interpretation is called the Vision of peace,) and amongst the people now is called the Catholic Church; standeth in the way that pilgrims must go by, through this world, to Bethlehem, the house of futurity and plentifulness, and is an impediment to all Christian travellers; yea, and except the more grace of God be, will keep the pilgrims still in her, that they shall not come where Christ is at all. And to stay them in deed, they take away the star of light, which is God's word, that it cannot be seen; as ye may see how the celestial star was hid from the wise men, when they asked of the Pharisees at Jerusalem where Christ was born. Ye may see what great dangers happened unto these wise men, whilst they were a-learning of liars where Christ was.

<sup>1</sup> by a'l  
means.

First, they were out of their way; and next, they lost their guide and conductor, the heavenly star. Christ is mounted from us into heaven, and there we seek him, as we say; let us therefore go thitherward by the star of his word, and beware we happen not to come into Jerusalem, the church of men, and ask for him. If we do, we go out of the way, and lose also our conductor and guide, that only leadeth us straight thither.

The poets write in fables, that Jason, when he fought with the dragon in the Isle of Colchis, was preserved by the medicines of Medea, and so won the golden fleece. And they write also that Titan, whom they feign to be son and heir of the high god Jupiter, would needs upon a day have the conducting of the sun round about the world; but, as they feign, he missed of the accustomed course, whereupon went he too high, he burned heaven; and when he went too low, he burned the earth and the water. These profane histories do shame us that be Christian men. Jason against the poison of the dragon, used only the medicine of Medea. What a shame is it for a Christian man



against the poison of the devil, heresy, and sin, to use any other remedy than Christ and his word? Titan, for lack of knowledge, was afraid of every sign of the zodiac that the sun passeth by; wherefore he now went too low, and now too high, and at length fell down and drowned himself in the sea. Christian men, for lack of knowledge, and for fear of such dangers as Christian men must needs pass by, go clean out of order, and at length fall into the pit of hell.

Sister, take heed; you shall in your journey towards heaven meet with many a monstrous beast; have salve of God's word therefore ready. Ye shall meet husband, children, lovers and friends, that shall, if God be not with them, (as God be praised he is, I would it were with all other alike,) be very lets and impediments to your purpose. You shall meet with slander and contempt of the world, and be accounted ungracious and ungodly; you shall hear and meet with cruel tyranny, to do you all extremities; you shall now and then see the troubles of your own conscience, and feel your own weakness; you shall hear that you be cursed by the sentence of the Catholic Church, with such like terrors: but pray to God, and follow the star of his word, and you shall arrive at the port of eternal salvation, by the merits only of Jesus Christ, to whom I commend you and all yours most heartily.

Yours, in Christ,

John Hooper.

**To Master Ferrar, Bishop of St. David's, Doctor Taylor,  
Master Bradford, and Master Philpot,**

Prisoners in the King's Bench, in Southwark.

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I am advertised by divers, as well such as love the truth, as also by such as yet be not come unto it, that ye and I shall be carried shortly to Cambridge, there to dispute in the faith, and for the religion of Christ, (which is most true,) that we have and do profess. I am (as I doubt not ye be) in Christ ready, not only to go to Cambridge, but also to suffer, by God's help, death itself in the maintenance thereof.

Weston and his accomplices have obtained forth the commission already, and speedily (most like) he will put it in execution. Wherefore, dear brethren, I do advertise you of the thing before for divers causes. The one, to comfort you in the Lord, that the time draweth nigh and is at hand, that we shall testify, before God's enemies, God's truth. The next, that ye should prepare yourselves the better for it. The third, to show you what ways I think were best to use ourselves in this matter, and also to hear of every one of you your better advice, if mine be not good. Ye know, such as shall be Censors and Judges over us breathe and

thirst our blood : and whether we by God's help overcome after the word of God, or by force and subtlety of our adversaries be overcome, this will be the conclusion ; our adversaries will say they overcome, as you perceive how they report of those great learned men, and godly personages at Oxford. Wherefore I mind<sup>1</sup> never to answer them, except I have the books present ; because they use not only false allegations of the doctors, but also a piece of the doctors against the whole course of the doctors' mind. The next, that we may have sworn notaries to take things spoken, indifferently,<sup>2</sup> which will be very hard to have ; for the adversaries will have the oversight of all things, and then make theirs better than it was, and ours worse than it was. Then if we see that two or three or more will speak together, or with scoffs and taunts illude and mock us, I suppose it were best to appeal to be heard before the queen and the whole council ; and that would much set forth the glory of God. For many of them know already the truth, many of them rather err of zeal than malice, and the others that be indurate should be answered fully, to their shame (I doubt not), although to our smart and bloodshedding. For of this I am assured, that the commissioners appointed to hear us and judge us, mean nothing less than to hear the cause indifferently,<sup>3</sup> for they be enemies unto us, and unto our cause, and be at a point<sup>4</sup> already to give sentence against us ; so that if it were possible, with St. Stephen, to speak so that they could not resist us, or to use such silence and patience as Christ did, they will proceed to revenging. Wherefore, my dear brethren, in the mercy of Jesus Christ, I would be glad to know your advice, this day or to-morrow ; for shortly we shall be gone, and I verily suppose that we shall not company together, but be kept abroad one from the other. They will deny our appeal, yet let us challenge the appeal, and take witness thereof of such as be present ; and require for indifferency<sup>5</sup> of hearing and judgment to be heard either before the queen and the council, or else before all the parliament, as they were used in King Edward's days. Further, for my part, I will require both books and time to answer. We have been prisoners now three quarters of a year, and have lacked our books, and our memories, by close keeping and ingratitude of their parts, be not as present and quick as theirs be. I trust God will be with us, yea, I doubt not but he will, and teach us to do all things in his cause godly and constantly. If our adversaries that shall be our judges may have their purpose, we shall dispute one day, be condemned the next day, and suffer the third day. And yet is there no law to condemn us, (as far as I know,) and so one of the convocation house said this week to Doctor Weston. To whom Weston made this answer : It forceth not (quoth he) for a law, we have commission to proceed with them ; when they be despatched, let their friends

<sup>1</sup> intend<sup>2</sup> impartially<sup>3</sup> impartially  
<sup>4</sup> resolved<sup>5</sup> impartiality

sue the law. Now how soon a man may have such a commission at my Lord Chancellor's hand, you know : it is as hard to be obtained, as an indictment for Christ at Caiaphas' hand. Besides that, the bishops having the queen so upon their sides, may do all things both without the advice, and also the knowledge of the rest of the lords of the temporality; who at this present have found out the mark that the bishops shoot at, and doubtless be not pleased with their doings. I pray you, help that our brother Saunders and the rest in the Marshalsea may understand these things, and send me your answer betime.

Judas non dormit : nec scimus diem neque horam. Dominus Jesus Christus suo sancto numine nos omnes consoletur et adjuvet. Amen. 6 Maii, 1554.

Yours, and with you unto death, in Christ,  
John Hooper.

**To my Dear Friends in God, Master John Hall and his Wife.**

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I thank you for your loving and gentle friendship at all times, praying God to show unto you such favour, that whatsoever trouble and adversity happen, ye go not back from him. These days be dangerous and full of peril : but yet let us comfort ourselves in calling to remembrance the days of our forefathers, upon whom the Lord sent such troubles, that many hundreds, yea, many thousands died for the testimony of Jesus Christ, both men and women, suffering with patience and constancy as much cruelty as tyrants could devise, and so departed out of this miserable world to the bliss everlasting ; (whereas<sup>1</sup> now they remain for ever, looking always for the end of this sinful world, when they shall receive their bodies again in immortality, and see the number of the elect associated with them in full and consummate joys;) and, as virtuous men, suffering martyrdom, and tarrying a little while in this world with pains, by and by rested in joys everlasting ; and as their pains ended their sorrows and began ease, so did their constancy and stedfastness animate and confirm all good people in the truth, and gave them encouragement and lust<sup>2</sup> to suffer the like, rather than to fall<sup>3</sup> with the world to consent unto wickedness and idolatry. Wherefore, my dear friends, seeing God of his part hath illuminated you with the same gift and knowledge of true faith, wherein the apostles, the evangelists, and all martyrs suffered most cruel death, thank him for his grace in knowledge, and pray unto him for strength and perseverance, that through your own fault you be not ashamed nor afraid to confess it. Ye be in the truth, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, nor antichrist with all his imps prove it to be false. They may kill and persecute, but never overcome ; be of good

<sup>1</sup> where

<sup>2</sup> eager  
<sup>3</sup> desire  
<sup>3</sup> agree

comfort, and fear more God than man. This life is short and miserable; happy be they that can spend it to the glory of God. Pray for me, as I do for you, and commend me to all good men and women. 22nd December, 1554.

Your brother in Christ,  
John Hooper.

**To One that was fallen from the known Truth of the Gospel,  
to Antichrist and his damnable Religion,**

Grace, mercy, and peace of conscience, be multiplied in all penitent hearts. Amen. Dear brother in Christ Jesus, it is not long since I was informed what love and fervent zeal ye have heretofore borne to God's true religion; appearing as well by your life and conversation, as by absenting yourself from the idolaters' temple, and congregation of false worshippers. But now (alas), through the devilish persuasions and wicked counsel of worldly men, ye have declined from your former profession, building again that which before ye destroyed, and so are become a trespasser, bearing a stranger's yoke with the unbelievers. Of which thing ever since I was informed, I have been marvellously moved with inward affections, much lamenting so great and sudden a change, as to be turned from him that called you in the grace of Christ, unto the dissimulation of wicked hypocrites; which (as St. Paul saith,) is nothing else, but that there be some which trouble you, intending to make you like as they are, even lovers of themselves, whose hearts are wedded to the perishing treasures of this world, wherein is their whole joy and felicity; contrary to St. John, which saith, See that ye love not the world, neither those things which are in the world. But they, as men without ears, and having hearts without understanding, do neither weigh the terrible threatenings of God against such offenders, and the most woful punishment due for the same, nor yet consider the loving admonition and calling of God, who both teacheth how to avoid his wrath, and also by what means to attain to salvation. Wherefore, dear brother, I humbly beseech you, even by the mercifulness of God, and as you tender your own salvation, to give ear no longer to their pestilent persuasions, but even now forthwith to repent, and have no longer fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: neither fashion you yourself again like unto the world, delight not in the friendship thereof, for all such be made the enemies of God: grieve not any longer the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Acknowledge your offence, and from whence ye are fallen: prostrate yourself before God, asking mercy for Christ's sake. Mourn with Mary Magdalene, lament with David, cry with Jonas, and weep with Peter;

Gal. 2.

2 Cor. 6.

Gal. 1.

1 John 2.

Eph. 5.  
Rom. 12.  
James 4.  
Eph. 4.  
Apoc. 2.

Matt. 20.

and make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, whose pitiful eyes attend always to wipe away the tears from every troubled conscience.

Such is his entire love toward all those that turn unto him, making them this sweet promise, confirmed by a mighty and vehement kind of speaking: Tell them, as truly as I live, (saith he) Exek. 18. I will not the death of a sinner, but much rather that he turn from his evil ways and live. Turn you, turn you from your ungodly ways, O ye of the house of Israel. Oh wherefore will ye die? Behold ye are here forgiven, your sin is blotted out, and the most joyful countenance of God turned again towards you. What now remaineth? Verily this—that you from henceforth keep circum-spect watch, and become a follower of Christ, sustaining for his name's sake all such adversities as shall be measured unto you by the sufferance of God our heavenly Father; who so careth for us, that not one hair of our head shall perish without his will; who also, considering the tender and weak faith of his children, not able as yet to stand against the force of Antichrist's tyranny, giveth them this loving liberty, Matt. 10. When ye be persecuted in one city, fly to another.

Oh most tender compassion of Christ! how careful is he over his people! Who would not now, rather than to offend so merciful a God, fly this wicked realm, as your most Christian brother and many others have done? or else with boldness of heart, and patience of the spirit, bear manfully the cross even unto the death, as divers of our brethren have done before us? as is declared at large in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews—which I pass over, and come to our Saviour Christ, whose example, for our singular comfort, St. Paul encourageth us to follow, saying: Heb. 12. Let us also, seeing that we are compassed with so great a multitude of witnesses, lay away all that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth on, and let us run with patience unto the battle that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joys that was set before him, abode the cross and despised the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God, &c. Apoec. 22. From whence he shall come shortly saith St. John, and his rewards with him, to give every man according as his deeds shall be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that their power may be in the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city, where they (saith Esay) shall have their pleasure in the Lord, who will carry them on high above the earth, and will feed them with the heritage of Jacob their father, for the Lord's own mouth hath so promised. Esay 58.

Thus I have been bold to write unto you, for Christian love's sake that I bear to you, whose salvation I wish as mine

own, beseeching God that your whole spirit, soul, and body may be kept faultless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Your brother in Christ,

John Hooper.

**To the faithful and libely members of our Saviour Jesus Christ,**  
Inhabiting the City of London; grace and peace, from the Heavenly Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your faith and firm hope of eternal life (dearly beloved), which of long time ye have learned, and thoroughly persuaded yourselves in, by the truth and infallible verity of the heavenly word, sealed with Christ's most precious blood, is very sore and dangerously assaulted, and by all means possible attempted to be taken from you; that ye should have no longer credit to God's truth, but believe mass lies; nor have your salvation by Christ that once died and offered himself for sin, once for all, but that ye should believe now your salvation in Christ to be many times offered by wicked men every day in the abominable mass, to the utter conculcation<sup>1</sup> and defacing of Christ's death, as the wicked pope and his adherents would persuade you, and not as Christ your Saviour hath taught you.

<sup>1</sup> tread-  
ing under  
foot

But this sudden and miserable change from the truth unto falsehood, and from God and Christ to the devil and Antichrist, doubtless cometh of God, for our manifold sins towards the heavenly Father, our shepherd, that taught us a long time with his blessed word, and we were neither thankful for it, nor yet put our trust in him, as in one that only could save and defend his own word; but we thought in our foolishness, that the world was so much and so many ways with the word of God, that even by man's strength it might have been defended: whereas the truth of God's word is permanent, and never faileth; saying, Cursed be they that make flesh their defence and shield. For as King David, when God had brought him to possess his kingdom peaceably, said (like a fool as he was), I shall never be more unquieted, but yet the Lord turned his face from him, and he found straightway such an alteration as he never found before, with increase of new dangers, more troublous than ever he had before; even likewise when God had given us a blessed and holy king, and such magistrates, (although they were sinners,) as wished the glory of God only to be preferred by true doctrine, we, like carnal men, thought ourselves so sure and so stablished, that it had not been possible to have seen such a piteous and miserable change, and the truth of God's word so oppressed, as we see at this present day. But we be most worthily punished, and eve.

Jer. 17.

Psalm 30.

the same ways that we have offended. We did put our trust in flesh: and whereas God's Spirit in flesh dwelled, as in our holy and blessed King Edward the VIth. (he is now dead in the flesh, and his holy soul resteth with the heavenly Father in joys for ever;) he is now, I say, taken from us, and cannot help us; and such as in his time seemed much to favour the glory of God, are become God's enemies, and can both hear other to proceed against the glory of God, and also set forth the same themselves, as much as they may: so that such spiritual and godly persons as sought in the flesh God's glory, are taken from us, or else in such case as<sup>1</sup> they can do us no good. And 1 that such flesh as followed and loved God in the sight of the world, and had great vantage by his word, are become his very enemies, and not only his, but also enemies to his members.

But yet as King David knew his foolish folly, and with repentance repented and found grace; so it may please God to give us of his grace and Holy Spirit, to amend our faults in the like offences, and help us as he did him. But doubtless great is our iniquity. For there was never so great abomination read of, and so quickly to prevail, as this abomination of the wicked mass hath prevailed in England. And all Christian men know, that the Turks and Heathen neither have, nor yet had ever, any so sensibly known and manifest an idol.

Wherefore, that Almighty God of his mercy may preserve his people in this noble city of London, I have written upon the 23rd Psalm of King David, to advertise men how they shall beware of heresies and false doctrine, and so to live to his honour and glory. Albeit I know (dearly beloved), that all those which seek God's honour, and the furtherance of his Gospel, be accounted the queen's enemies, although we daily pray for her grace, and never think her harm; but we must be content to suffer slander, and patiently to bear all such injuries. Nevertheless this is out of doubt, that the queen's highness hath no authority to compel any man to believe any thing contrary to God's word, neither may the subject give her grace that obedience; in case he do, his soul is lost for ever. Our bodies, goods, and lives be at her highness' commandment, and she shall have them as of true subjects; but the soul of man for religion is bound to none, but unto God and his holy word.

### To a certain godly Woman,

Instructing her how she should behave herself in the time of her widowhood.

The grace of God, and the comfort of his Holy Spirit, be with you, and with all them that unfeignedly love his holy Gospel. Amen.

Upon this Psalm (as upon divers others) he wrote a godly and most comfortable treatise, whereunto he annexed this letter as a preface.

I thank you, dear sister, for your most loving remembrance ; and although I cannot recompense the same, yet do I wish with all my heart that God would do it, requiring you not to forget your duty towards God in these perilous days, in the which the Lord will try us. I trust you do increase, by reading of the Scriptures, the knowledge you have of God, and that you diligently apply yourself to follow the same ; for the knowledge helpeth not, except the life be according thereunto. Further, I do heartily pray you to consider the state of your widowhood ; and if God shall put in your mind to change it, remember the saying of St. Paul, 1 Cor. vii. It is lawful for the widow or maiden to marry to whom they list, so it be in the Lord ; that is to say, to such a one as is of Christ's religion.

Dearly beloved in Christ, remember these words ; for you shall find thereby great joy and comfort, if you change your state. Whereof I will, when I have better leisure (as now I have none at all), further advertise you. In the meantime I commend you to God, and the guiding of his good Spirit, who stablish and confirm you in all well doing, and keep you blameless to the day of the Lord. Watch and pray, for this day is at hand.

Yours assured in Christ,  
John Hooper.

**An Answer to a Friend of his, for a Woman that was troubled  
with her Husband in matters of Religion,**

How she should behave herself towards him.

The grace and peace of God our dear Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As concerning the party whom you wrote unto me of, I have here sent you mine advice, and what I think is best in this case to be done. First, she shall remember the counsel of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7, where he speaketh to such as be coupled in matrimony, and be of two sundry and divers religions : If the unbelieving man will dwell with the faithful woman, the wife cannot forsake him. Or in case the unbelieving woman will dwell with her believing husband, the husband cannot forsake her. But if the unbelieving party (whether it be husband or wife) will depart, the believing party is at liberty. Now in this time, to believe that the priest can make God, or to believe that which was not God yesterday can be both God and man to day, and so to honour that which was but very bread yesterday, for<sup>1</sup> the true God that made both heaven and earth and all that be in them, and for<sup>1</sup> the body and soul of Christ that suffered for our redemption, and took from us



our sins upon the cross, is very idolatry, and to be committed of no Christian man ; for the pain of it without repentance, is everlasting damnation. In matrimony it is meet therefore, that which party soever be persuaded and knoweth the truth, be it the husband or the wife, the truth be spoken, taught, and opened unto the party that is not persuaded. For as St. Paul saith, How knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife ? or how knowest thou, O woman, whether thou shalt save thy husband ? Therefore let the best and more godly party be diligent in saving (by his or her labours) the party that is not instructed nor persuaded in the truth. If it prevail, then is the worse part amended, and the best part hath done his or her duty and office, as it is commanded. Ephes. iv. Col. iii. 1 Pet. iii.

In case the worse part will not be amended, but tarry still in error, and so offend the Almighty God, the author of marriage, let the best part that is persuaded and knoweth the truth, as in this case the woman, labour with her companion to be free and at liberty, and not to be compelled to honour any false God, or to serve God otherwise than she knoweth she may do with a good conscience, as she is taught by the word of God. And if she may thus obtain to be at liberty, and be not compelled to do things against her conscience, she may not in any wise depart from him that she is married unto. If this woman cannot win her husband to the truth, nor obtain to live freely and at liberty in the faith of Christ herself, let her cause some godly and grave men or women to persuade with her husband, as well for his own better knowledge, as for the freedom and liberty of herself ; and let her, and whosoever entreateth of the matter, use modesty, soberness, and charity, and pray unto God that their doings may take virtuous and godly success. In case (which God forbid !) the husband will not reform himself of his error, nor suffer his wife to refrain the company and fellowship of such as be present at the mass, whereas<sup>1</sup> an idol is honoured for God ; this wife must make answer soberly and Christianly, that she is forbidden by God's laws to commit idolatry, and that God is more to be obeyed than man, and so in any case beware she offend not against the first commandment, which is, Thou shalt have no other gods but me. 1 where  
Acts 5.  
Exod. 20.

It may come to pass, that when the husband shall perceive the wife's love and reverence towards him, and also her constancy and strength in the truth and true religion of GOD, although he be not converted unto the truth by her, yet he will be contented to suffer her to use the liberty of her conscience, without compulsion to any religion that she doth by God's word detest and abhor. But if there be no remedy, but either the wife must follow in idolatry her husband's commandment, or else suffer the extremity of the law ; here must the wife remember and learn whether there be any law or not, that can compel her ordinarily to come to the

mass, whereas idolatry is committed. If there be no law or other means to compel her than her husband's foul words, which be nothing else but threatenings to put her in fear, she must, if she can, with wisdom and womanhood amend the same; if she cannot, then must she Christianly and patiently bear them as a woman of God, that for his sake must suffer as much as his pleasure is to lay upon her.

In case there be a law to compel her and all other, if otherwise she will not obey, to come to the mass; first she must wisely and discreetly weigh her husband's nature, whether he is wont to be in deed, works, and offers,<sup>1</sup> cruel as he is in words. If she can find that his nature is (as the most part of men's be,) more churlish and cruel in words than in works, then howsoever he threateneth by dangerous words, he will not accuse his wife to harm her, but rather excuse her. In case either for lack of love, or for fear of losing of his goods, she perceive verily that he mindeth<sup>2</sup> to bring her in danger by a law; then must she pray to God, and use one of these two extreme remedies. First, if she find by prayer, herself strong to abide the extremity of the law, yea though she should die, let her in no case depart from her husband. In case she find herself too weak to suffer such extremity, then, rather than to break company and marriage between God and her, conjoined by the precious blood of Christ, she must convey herself into some such place as idolatry may be avoided. For if the husband love the wife, or the wife the husband, more than Christ, he nor she be not meet for Christ. Matt. x. 16. Luke xiv. 9. Yea, if a man love his own life more than Christ, he is not meet for Christ. And what doth it avail a man to win all the world, and to lose his soul? But here the woman must take heed, that in case for the keeping of the marriage between God and her, she depart from her husband, that she be always in honest, virtuous and godly company, that she may at all times have record for her godly behaviour, if any thing should be laid to her charge; and let her live a sole, sober, and modest life, with prayer and soberness to God, that it may please him to banish such wicked laws and wicked religion, as make debate between God and man, and husband and wife; and then God shall from time to time give counsel to every good man and woman, what is best to be done in such pitiful cases, to his honour, and to the salvation of our woeful and troubled consciences. Out of the Fleet, by the prisoner of the Lord,

John Hooper.

To my beloved in the Lord, W. P.

The grace of God be with you. I have sent you letters for my wife, who is at Frankfort, in High Almayne.<sup>1</sup> I pray you convey them trustily and speedily, and seal them close after the merchants fashion, that they be not opened. William Downton, my servant, hath the first copy of that I wrote concerning Master Hales' hurt. I would Master Bradford did see it, and then the copy to be well kept, lest any man of malice should add anything to the matter, more and worse than I have made it. I pass not of that<sup>2</sup> may come of it. I thank God, and my conscience beareth me record, that I did it of zeal to the word of God, which the Bishop of Winchester called the doctrine of desperation. Not only my heart, but also my mouth, my pen, and all my power shall be against him, even till death, (by God's help,) in this case, let God do with the matter as it pleaseth his high Majesty; to whom I commend you. 29th April, 1554.

<sup>1</sup> Upper  
Ger-  
many.

<sup>2</sup> I care  
not what

Yours, John Hooper.

To my dearly beloved friend in Christ, Master John Hall.

The grace of God be with you. Amen. It was much to my comfort, I assure you, when I understood by this bearer, my faithful servant William Downton, that you and your wife were in health. Many times I had occasion to inquire for you, before the departure of my poor wife, to have helped her out of the land from the hands of the cruel; but I could hear nothing where you were. It was told me you abode in the country with your wife—to whom make my hearty commendations, and to the rest of all your house that fear God: and my trust is, you do not forget your duty towards God in this troublesome world. See that you tarry with him in one hour of trouble, and doubtless he will keep you for ever with him in the joys everlasting. I would write more, but this bearer can tell what need I have to make haste. Fare you well, as myself, and be strong in Christ; for I thank him, for my part, I am not ashamed of his Gospel, neither afraid of the Pope, the devil, nor the gates of hell. The Lord's will be done. Written the 4th day of August, Anno 1554.

Your poor friend,

John Hooper.

## An Exhortation to Patience,

Sent to his godly Wife, Ann Hooper: whereby all the true Members of Christ may take comfort and courage, to suffer trouble and affliction for the profession of his holy Gospel.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ (dearly beloved, and my godly wife,) Matt. 18. in St. Matthew's Gospel said to his disciples, that it was necessary slanderers should come; and that they could not be avoided, he perceived as well by the condition of those that should perish and be lost for ever in the world to come, as also by their affliction that should be saved. For he saw the greatest part of the people would contemn and neglect whatsoever true doctrine or godly ways should be shewed unto them, or else receive it and use it as they thought good, to serve their pleasures, without any profit to their souls at all, not caring whether they lived as they were commanded by God's word or not; but would think it sufficient to be counted to have the name of a Christian man, with such works and fruits of his profession and Christianity, as his fathers and elders, after their custom and manner, esteem and take to be good fruits and faithful works, and will not try them by the word of God at all. These men, by the just judgment of God, be delivered unto the craft and subtilty of the devil, that they may be kept, by one slanderous stumbling block or other, that they never 1 so that come unto Christ, who came to save those that were lost: as<sup>e</sup> ye may see how God delivereth wicked men up unto their own lusts, to do one mischief after another, careless, until they come into a reprobate mind, that forgetteth itself and cannot know what is expedient to be done or to be left undone; because they close their eyes, and will not see the light of God's word offered unto them; and being thus blinded, they prefer their own vanities before the truth of God's word. Rom. 1. 1 Thes. 2. Whereas<sup>2</sup> such corrupt minds be, there is also corrupt election and choice of God's honour: so that the mind of man taketh falsehood for truth, superstition for true religion, death for life, damnation for salvation, hell for heaven, and persecution of Christ's members for God's service and honour. 2 where And as these men wilfully and voluntarily reject the word of John 8, 9. God, even so God most justly delivereth them into the blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, that they cannot understand nor yet consent to any thing, that God would have preached and set forth, to his glory, after his own will and word: wherefore they hate it mortally, and of all things most detest God's holy word. And as the devil hath entered into their hearts, that they themselves cannot nor will not come to Christ to be instructed by his holy word; even so can they not abide any other man to be a Christian man, and to lead his life after the word of God, but hate him, persecute him, rob him, imprison him, yea and kill him,

whether he be man or woman, if God suffer it. And so much are those wicked men blinded, that they pass of<sup>1</sup> no law, whether it be God's or man's, but persecute such as never offended, yea, do evil to those that daily have prayed for them, and wish them God's grace. In their Pharaonical and blind fury, they have no respect to nature: for the brother persecuteth the brother, the father the son, and most dear friends, in devilish slander and offence, are become most mortal enemies. And no marvel; for when they have chosen sundry masters, the one the devil, the other God, the one shall agree with the other, as God and the devil agree between themselves. For this cause, that the more part of the world doth choose to serve the devil under cloked hypocrisy of God's title, Christ said, It is expedient and necessary that slanderers should come; and many means be devised to keep the little babes of Christ from the heavenly Father. But Christ saith, Woe be unto him by whom the offence cometh: yet is there no remedy, man being of such corruption and hatred towards God, but that the evil shall be deceived and persecute the good, and the good shall understand the truth and suffer persecution for it, until the world's end. For as he that was born after the flesh, persecuted in times past him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Seeing therefore we live, for this life, amongst so many and great perils and dangers, we must be well assured by God's word how to bear them, and how patiently to take them, as they be sent to us from God. We must also assure ourselves, that there is no other remedy for Christians in the time of trouble, than Christ himself hath appointed us. In St. Luke, he giveth us this commandment: Ye shall possess your lives in patience, saith he. In the which words, he giveth us both commandment what to do, and also great consolation and comfort in all troubles. He sheweth also what is to be done, and what is to be hoped for, in troubles: and when troubles happen, he biddeth us be patient, and in no case violently nor seditiously to resist our persecutors, because God hath such care and charge of us, that he will keep in the midst of all troubles the very hairs of our head, so that one of them shall not fall away without the will and pleasure of our heavenly Father. Whether the hair, therefore, tarry in the head, or fall from the head, it is the will of the Father. And seeing he hath such care for the hairs of our head, how much more doth he care for our life itself! Wherefore let God's adversaries do what they lust, whether they take the life or take it not, they can do us no hurt, for their cruelty hath no further power than God permitteth them: and that which cometh unto us by the will of our heavenly Father, can be no harm, no loss, neither destruction unto us, but rather gain, wealth, and felicity. For all troubles and adversity, that chance to such as be of God, by the will of the heavenly Father, can be none other but gain and advantage.

I regara

Matt. 18.

Gen. 4.  
Gal. 4.

Luke 21.

Matt. 10.

Rom. 8.

That the spirit of man may feel these consolations, the giver of them (the heavenly Father,) must be prayed unto, for the merits of Christ's passion: for it is not the nature of man that can be contented, until it be regenerated and possessed with God's Spirit, to bear patiently the troubles of the mind or of the body. When the mind and heart of a man seeth of every side sorrow and heaviness, and the worldly eye beholdeth nothing but such things as be troublous, and wholly bent to rob the poor man of that he hath, and also to take from him his life; except the man weigh these brittle and uncertain treasures that be taken from him with the riches of the life to come, and this life of the body with the life in Christ's precious blood, and so for the love and certainty of the heavenly joys contemn all things present, doubtless he shall never be able to bear the loss of goods, life, or any other things of this world. Therefore St. Paul giveth a very godly and necessary lesson to all men in this short and transitory life, and therein sheweth how a man may best bear the iniquity<sup>1</sup> and troubles of this world: If ye be risen again with Christ, saith he, seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God the Father.

<sup>James 1.</sup>  
1 Cor. 1, 8.

<sup>Injustice</sup>  
Col. 3.

<sup>2 over</sup>

Wherefore the Christian man's faith must be always upon the resurrection of Christ when he is in trouble: and in that glorious resurrection he shall not only see continual and perpetual joy and consolation, but also the victory and triumph of<sup>2</sup> all persecution, trouble, sin, death, hell, the devil, and all other persecutors, and tyrannies of<sup>3</sup> Christ and of<sup>3</sup> Christ's people; the tears and weepings of the faithful dried up, their wounds healed, their bodies made immortal in joy, their souls for ever praising the Lord, and conjunction and society everlasting with the blessed company of God's elect in perpetual joy. But the words of St. Paul in that place, if they be not marked, shall do little profit to the reader or hearer, and give him no patience at all in this impatient and cruel world.

In the first part, St. Paul commandeth us to think or set our affections on things that are above. When he biddeth us seek the things that are above, he requireth that our minds never cease from prayer and study in God's word, until we see, know, and understand the vanities of this world, the shortness and misery of this life, and the treasures of the world to come, the immortality thereof, and the joys of that life; and so never cease seeking, until such time as we know certainly, and be persuaded what a blessed man he is that seeketh the one and findeth it, and careth not for the other though he lose it: and in seeking to have right judgment between the life present and the life to come, we shall find how little the pains, imprisonment, slanders, lies, and death itself, is in this world, in respect of the pains everlasting, the prison infernal, and dungeon of hell; the sentence of God's just judgment, and everlasting death.

When a man hath, by seeking the word of God, found out what the things above be, then must he (as St. Paul saith,) set his affections upon them. And this commandment is more hard than the other. For man's knowledge many times seeth the best, and knoweth that there is a life to come better than this life present; as you may see how daily men and women can praise and commend, yea and wish for heaven and to be at rest there, yet they set not their affection upon it; they do more affect and love in deed<sup>1</sup> a trifle of nothing in this world that pleaseth their affection, than a treasure of all treasures in heaven, which, their own judgment saith, is better than all worldly things. Wherefore we must set our affections upon the things that be above: that is to say, when anything, worse than heaven, upon the earth offereth itself to be ours if we will give our good wills to it and love it in our hearts; then to see by the judgment of God's word, whether we may have the world without offence of God, and such things as be for this worldly life without his displeasure. If we cannot, St. Paul's commandment must take place: set your affection on things that are above. If the riches of this world may not be gotten nor kept with God's law, neither our lives be continued without the denial of his honour, we must set our affection upon the riches and life that is above, and not upon things that be on the earth.

Therefore this second commandment of St. Paul requireth, that as our minds judge heavenly things to be better than things upon the earth, and the life to come than the life present; so we should choose them before other, and prefer them, and have such affection to the best, that in no case we set the worst before it; as the most part of the world doth, and hath done, for they choose the best and approve it, and yet follow the worst.

But these things (my godly wife,) require rather cogitation, meditation and prayer, than words or talk. They be easy to be spoken of, but not so easy to be used and practised. Wherefore seeing they be God's gifts, and none of ours, to have as our own when we would, we must seek them at our heavenly Father's hand; who seeth and is privy how poor and wretched we be, and how naked, how spoiled and destitute of all his blessed gifts we be, by reason of sin.

He did command therefore his disciples, when he shewed them that they should take patiently the state of this present life, full of troubles and persecution, to pray that they might well escape those troubles that were to come, and be able to stand before the Son of man. When ye find yourself too much oppressed (as every man shall be sometime,) with the fear of God's judgment, use the 77th psalm, that beginneth—I will cry unto God with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me. In which psalm is both godly doctrine, and great consolation unto that man or

<sup>1</sup> in reality

Matt. 24.

Ps. 77

Read also his exposition upon this psalm, most comfortable for all broken and afflicted hearts.

woman that is in anguish of mind. Use also in such troubles the 88th psalm, wherein is contained the prayer of a man that was brought into extreme anguish and misery, and, being vexed with adversaries and persecutions, saw nothing but death and hell; and although he felt in himself, that he had not only man but also God angry towards him, yet he by prayer humbly resorted unto God as the only port of consolation, and, in the midst of his desperate state of trouble, put the hope of his salvation in him whom he felt his enemy. Howbeit no man of himself can do this; but the Spirit of God, that striketh the man's heart with fear, prayeth for the man stricken and feared, with unspeakable groanings. And when you feel yourself, or know any other, oppressed after such sort, be glad: for after that God hath made you to know what you be of yourself, he will doubtless show you comfort, and declare unto you what you be in Christ, his only Son: and use prayer often; for that is the means whereby God will be sought unto for his gifts.

Rom. 8.

Note this well to thy comfort, that art afflicted; and read the 4th chap. of Eccl.

These psalms be for the purpose, when the mind can take no understanding, nor the heart any joy, of God's promises: and therefore were these psalms also made, vi. xxii. xxx. xxxi. xxxviii. lxix.; from the which you shall learn both patience and consolation. Remember that although your life (as all Christian men's be,) be hid, and appeareth not what it is, yet is it safe (as St. Paul saith,) with God in Christ: and when Christ shall appear, then shall your lives be made open in him with glory. But in the mean time, with seeking and setting our affections upon the things that be above, we must patiently suffer whatsoever God shall send unto us in this mortal life. Notwithstanding, it might fortune some would say, Who is so perfect, that can let all things pass as they come, and have no care of them? suffer all things and feel

Col. 3.

<sup>1</sup>tempted

nothing, be attempted<sup>1</sup> of the devil, the world and the flesh, and not be troubled? Verily, no man living. But this I say, that, in the strength of Jesus Christ, things that come may pass with care, for we be worldly; and yet are we not carried with them from Christ, for we be in him godly. We may suffer things, and feel them as mortal men; yet bear them, and overcome them as Christian men. We may be attempted of the devil, the flesh and the world: but yet although these things pinch, they do not pierce; and although they work sin in us, yet in Christ no damnation to those that be grafted in him.

Rom. 8.

Hereof may the Christian man learn both consolation and patience. Consolation, in that he is compelled both in his body and goods to feel pain and loss, and in the soul heaviness and anguish of mind; howbeit none of them both shall separate him from the love that God beareth him in Christ. He may learn patience, forasmuch as his enemies both of the body and soul, and the pains also they vex us withal for the time, if they tarry with us as long as we live, yet when death cometh they shall<sup>2</sup> avoid

<sup>2</sup>depart



and give place to such joys as be prepared for us in Christ: for no pains of the world be perpetual; and whether they shall afflict us for all the time of our mortal life, we know not, for they be the servants of God, to go and to come as he commandeth them. But we must take heed we meddle not forcibly nor seditiously, to put away the persecution appointed unto us by God: but remember Christ's saying, Possess you your lives by your patience. Luke 21. And in this commandment, God requireth in every man and woman this patient obedience. He saith not, It is sufficient that other holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists and martyrs continued their lives in patience, and patient suffering the troubles of this world; but Christ saith to every one of his people, By your own patience ye shall continue your life: not that man hath patience of himself, but that he must have it for himself of God, the only giver of it, if he purpose to be a godly man. Now therefore, as our profession and religion requireth patience outwardly, without resistance and force; so requireth it patience of the mind, and not to be angry with God, although he use us that be his own creatures, as him listeth. We may not also murmur against God, but say always his judgments be right and just, and rejoice that it pleaseth him by troubles to use us as he used heretofore such as he most loved in this world; and have a singular care to this commandment, Gaudete et exultate, be glad and rejoice—for he sheweth great cause why: your reward (saith he) is great in heaven. Matt. 5.

These promises of him that is the truth itself, shall (by God's grace) work both consolation and patience in the afflicted Christian person. And when our Saviour Christ hath willed men in trouble to be content and patient, because God in the end of trouble in Christ hath ordained eternal consolation; he useth also to take from us all shame and rebuke, as though it were not an honour to suffer for Christ, because the wicked world doth curse and abhor such poor troubled Christians. Wherefore Christ placeth all his honourably, and saith, Even so persecuted they the prophets that were before you. We may also see with whom the afflicted for Christ's sake be esteemed, by St. Paul to the Hebrews: Heb. 11. whereas<sup>1</sup> the number of the blessed and glorious company of 1 x here saints appear now to our faith in heaven in joy; yet in the letter, for the time of this life, in such pains and contempt, as was never more. Let us therefore consider both them, and all other things of the world since the fall of man; and we shall perceive nothing to come to perfection, but with such confusion and disorder to the eye of the world, as though things were rather lost for ever, than like to come to any perfection at all. For of godly men, who ever came to heaven, (no not Christ himself,) until such time as the world had thought verily, that both he and all his had been clean

Wisdom 5. destroyed and cast away? as the wise man saith of the wicked people: We thought them to be fools, but they be in peace.

We may learn by things that nourish and maintain us, both meat and drink, to what loathsomeness and (in a manner) abhorring they come unto, before they work their perfection in us. From life they be brought to the fire, and clean altered from what they were when they were alive: from the fire to the trencher and knife, and all-to<sup>1</sup> hacked: from the trencher to the mouth, and as  
 1 quite small ground as the teeth can grind them: and from the mouth into the stomach, and there so boiled and digested before they nourish, that whosoever saw the same, would loath and abhor his own nourishment before it come to his perfection. Is it then any marvel, if such Christians as God delighteth in be so mangled and defaced in this world, which is the kitchen and mill to boil and grind the flesh of God's people in, till they achieve their perfection in the world to come? And as man looketh for the nutriment of his meat when it is full digested, and not before; so must he look for his salvation when he hath passed this troublous world, and not before. Raw flesh is not meat wholesome for man: and unmortified men and women be no creatures meet for  
 Matt. 10. God. Therefore Christ saith, that his people must be broken and all-to<sup>1</sup> torn in the mill of this world, and so shall they be most fine meal unto the heavenly Father. And it shall be a Christian man's part, and the duty of a mind replenished with the Spirit of God, to mark the order of God in all things, how he dealeth with them, and how they suffer, and be content to let God do his will upon them: as St. Paul saith, they weep until the number of the  
 Rom. 8. elect be fulfilled, and never be at rest, but look for the time when God's people shall appear in glory.

We must therefore patiently suffer, and willingly attend upon God's doings, although they seem clean contrary, after our judgment, to our wealth and salvation; as Abraham did when he was bid to offer his son Isaac, in whom God promised the blessing and multiplying of his seed. Joseph at the last came to that which God promised him, although in the meantime, after the judgment of the world, he was never like to be (as God said he should be) lord over his brethren. When Christ would make  
 John 9. the blind man to see, he put clay upon his eyes, which, after the judgment of man, was means rather to make him double blind, than to give him his sight; but he obeyed, and knew that God could work his desire, what means soever he used contrary to man's reasons: and as touching this world, he useth all his after the  
 1 Pet. 4. same sort. If any smart, his people be the first: if any suffer shame, they begin: if any be subject to slander, it is those that he loveth, so that he sheweth no face or favour (nor love almost) in this world

outwardly to them, but layeth clay upon their sore eyes that be sorrowful; yet the patient man seeth (as St. Paul saith,) life hid under these miseries and adversities, and sight under foul clay; and in the mean time he hath the testimony of a good conscience, and believeth God's promises to be his consolation in the world to come, which is more worth unto him than all the world is worth besides: and blessed is that man in whom God's Spirit beareth record that he is the son of God, whatsoever troubles he suffer in this troublesome world.

Rom. 8.

And to judge things indifferently,<sup>1</sup> my godly wife, the troubles be not yet generally as they were in our good fathers' times, soon after the death and resurrection of our Saviour Christ Jesus, whereof he spake in St. Matthew. Of the which place you and I have taken many times great consolation, and especially of the latter part of the chapter, wherein is contained the last day and end of all troubles (I doubt not) both for you and me, and for such as love the coming of our Saviour Christ to judgment. Remember therefore that place, and mark it again, and ye shall in this time see great consolation, and also learn much patience. Was there ever such troubles as Christ threatened upon Jerusalem? Was there since the beginning of the world such affliction? Who was then best at ease? The apostles, that suffered in body persecution, and gathered of it ease and quietness in the promises of God. And no marvel; for Christ saith, Lift up your heads, for your redemption is at hand, that is to say, your eternal rest approacheth and draweth near. The world is stark blind, and more foolish than foolishness itself, and so be the people of the world. For when God saith, Trouble shall come, they will have ease. And when God saith, Be merry, and rejoice in trouble, we lament and mourn, as though we were castaways. But this the flesh (which is never merry with virtue, nor sorry with vice, never laugheth with grace, nor ever weepeth with sin,) holdeth fast with the world, and letteth God slip.

1 impar-  
tially.

Matt. 24.

Luke 21.

But, my dearly beloved wife, you know how to perceive and to beware of the vanity and crafts of the devil well enough in Christ. And that ye may the better have patience in the Spirit of God, read again the xxivth chapter of St. Matthew, and mark what difference is between the destruction of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the whole world: and you shall see, that then there were left alive many offenders to repent; but at the latter day there shall be absolute judgment and sentence (never to be revoked) of eternal life and eternal death upon all men; and yet towards the end of the world, we have nothing so much extremity as they had then, but even as we be able to bear. So doth the merciful Father lay upon us now imprisonment, (and I suppose for my part shortly death,) now spoil

Matt. 24.

of goods, loss of friends—and the greatest loss of all, the knowledge of God's word. God's will be done! I wish, in Christ Jesus our only Mediator and Saviour, your constancy and consolation, that you may live for ever and ever; whereof in Christ I doubt not: to whom, for his blessed and most painful passion, I commit you. Amen. 13th October, 1553.

Your brother in Christ,

John Hooper.

### A Letter sent to the Christian Congregation,

Wherein he proveth that true faith cannot be kept secret in the heart without confession thereof openly to the world when occasion serveth.

St. Paul, in the 10th chap. to the Romans, annexeth the faith of Christ in the heart, with the confession of the mouth, so that the one (it seemeth by him) can be no more without the other, than fire can be without heat; saying these words, With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth he confesseth unto salvation. Wherein he declareth, that even as the cause of our acceptance through Christ, is the confidence and faith of the heart in the promises of God; so is the confession outwardly of the same faith by the mouth, the fruit that all Christian faithful hearts bring forth through the same gift of GOD. And whereas<sup>1</sup> this effect of confession of faith is not, there wanteth also the cause of confession, which is true faith: for as the tree is known by her fruits, so is faith by her effects. And as the want of fruit is a demonstration that the tree is unprofitable; so the want of true confession of faith, is a token that the faith is dead. The end of the unprofitable tree, is cutting down and casting into the fire: the end of the fruitless faith is death, and casting to eternal damnation.

<sup>1</sup> where

Matt. 3.

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

Wherefore St. Peter requireth us to make answer to every man that demandeth of us, of such hope as is in us, with gentleness and reverence; which is a very testimony that we sanctify God in our hearts, as it is before expressed in the same chapter. For the greatest honour that man can give to God, is to confess in the time of trouble, truly and faithfully, his holy word and faith. Wherefore it is the duty of every Christian, to pray and study to have a thorough knowledge of his faith in Christ; and, as the glory of God shall require, and the cause of his religion, to be ready to make answer for the same (howsoever the world, fear, displeasure, friendship, or other lets<sup>2</sup> shall move us to the contrary); upon pain, saith Christ in the 10th of Matthew, that I will deny him before my Father which is in heaven. But how hard a thing it is to confess Christ in the days of trouble, not only the Scrip-

<sup>2</sup> hindrances.  
Matt. 10.

ture, but also daily experience in good men and women doth declare. True confession is warded on every side with many dangers, on the right hand on the left hand, now with fair means, then with foul threatenings, fearful and dangerous: as it is said by Christ our Saviour, They shall betray you to the judges, and of them ye shall be beaten and judged to death. Of the other side shall pull us back the love of wife, child, brother, sister, kin, friends, and the love unto ourselves. But he that is overcome by any of these means, hath his judgment: He is not meet for me, saith Christ:

These things be impossible unto men; yet to Christian men, in Christ possible, and so necessary, that Christianity and true religion cannot be in him, that is afraid to confess Christ and his Gospel in the time of persecution. The wisdom of the world doth say, Although I accomplish the desire of my friends, and to the sight of the world am present at the mass, and with my body do as other men do, or as I may do; yet my heart is clean contrary to their belief, and I do detest such idolatry, and believe the thing that I am present at, is mere idolatry and abomination. Here be fair words for an evil purpose, and pretended<sup>1</sup> excuse, for a just condemnation before God. For if it be true that ye know the thing which ye resort unto, to be the dishonour of God, why do ye honour it with your presence? If ye know it to be evil, why refrain ye not from it? If your conscience say it is idolatry, why serveth your body such things as your faith abhorreth? If in your heart you know but one God, why with your exterior presence serve ye the thing that ye know is not God? If your faith see idolatry, why doth your silence confess and allow the same? Two men in one, God loveth not. If the inward man know the truth, why doth the outward man confess a falsehood? If your spirit be persuaded that the mass is idolatry, why do ye with your bodily presence, use it as a God, and give godly honour to it? Do ye not perceive that it is written, Esay xxix. Matt. xv. These people honour me with their mouth, but their hearts be far from me? The cause why God was offended with these people, was that outwardly they confessed him and served him, but their hearts were far from him inwardly. Wherefore ye may see what it is to bear two faces in one hood, outwardly to serve God, and inwardly to serve the devil.

Now mark of this place<sup>2</sup> if it be so horrible and damnable a thing to be false in the heart, which none knoweth but God, and is worthy also of damnation; what is to be judged of the outward and manifest use of idolatry, which not only God, but also every good man knoweth and abhorreth. There is no colour, nor cloaked hypocrisy, that God can away with. If the heart think not as the tongue speaketh, or else the tongue speak

<sup>1</sup> *hypocritical*

<sup>2</sup> *learn from this scripture*

otherwise than the heart thinketh, both be abominable before God. Read ye the third and the sixth chapters of the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, whereas<sup>1</sup> St. Paul saith, Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost? If your body be the temple of the Holy Ghost, what agreement hath it with idolatry? Can one body at one time be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and be present at such idolatry as God abhorreth and detesteth? Can a man serve two masters? If he do, he loveth (as Christ saith) the one and hateth the other. As God requireth of a faithful man a pure heart, even so requireth he that his external profession in all things be according thereunto; for both body and soul be debtors unto God, and he redeemed them both. The word of God saith unto us, Glorify and bear God in your bodies. If we be present at such idolatry as God forbiddeth, and our own knowledge in conscience is assured to be evil, do we glorify God in our bodies? No, doubtless we dishonour him, and make our bodies the servants of idolatry, not only to God's dishonour, but also to the great danger both of body and soul. For this is a true saying of St. Augustine; He that doth against his conscience, buildeth to hell fire.

It is not enough for a Christian man to say, I know the mass is nought, but to obey civil laws and orders I will do outwardly as other men do, yet in my heart abhor it, and never think it to be good. Doubtless these two minds, the spirit to think well, and the body to do evil, in this respect be both naught, and God will spue the whole man out of his mouth, as he did the minister of the congregation of Laodicea. Apoc. 3. The eighth chapter and the tenth of the first to the Corinthians, in this matter, and in this time, be places very much expedient to lead and govern the judgment of every Christian man: where we may see that the Corinthians in deed had knowledge, and perceived right well that neither the idols amongst them, neither the meat dedicated unto the idols were any thing, and passed as light<sup>2</sup> of both, as of things of nothing, and upon that knowledge used to be present, and also to eat at the feast, and of the meat dedicated unto idols. Wherewithal Paul was so sore offended, that he gave this sentence; If a man see thee which hast knowledge, sit at table in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak, be boldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died. Now when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

This judgment of Paul is more to be followed, than all our own feigned and wrested defences, which would fain seem to do well, when we halt on both sides, which God abhorreth.

1 Cor. 6.

1 where

Matt. 6.

1 Cor. 6.

2 made  
as little  
account

1 Cor. 8.

Paul hath a profound and deep consideration of that man's fault that hath knowledge, and perceiveth his dissimulation to be dangerous and perilous to all persons which he dwelleth withal. First, such as be of a right and stayed judgment, and will not prostrate their bodies to an idol, do condemn, and needs must, such dissimulation. The very idolaters themselves have a defence of their abomination, by the presence of him that the Christian congregation knoweth to have knowledge. The weaker sort that would gladly take the best way, by a dissembler's halting and playing of both hands, embraceth, both in body and in soul, the evil that he abhorreth in his heart, and though he have knowledge, yet with his presence he esteemeth it as other do, which have no knowledge. If St. Paul said that the weak brother doth perish for whom Christ died, by him that abused knowledge in meats and drinks, that of themselves be indifferent, how much more by the knowledge of him that useth manifest idolatry, forbidden of God as a thing not indifferent! Take heed what St. Paul meaneth, and what he would prove against this man which had knowledge that neither the idols, neither the meats dedicated to idols, were any thing. Forsooth this would he prove; that a poor man that wanteth knowledge, by the example of him that hath knowledge, doth there adventure to do evil, which he would not do in case he saw not those that he hath good opinion of to go before him as authors of the evil. And indeed the ignorant people, or those that be half persuaded in a truth, yea, or else thoroughly persuaded what is evil, when they have any notable men or women for an example to follow, they think in following of them they be excused, yea although peradventure they do it against their consciences; as ye may see how many good men by the example of Peter began to dissemble, yea Barnabas himself, Gal 2. the apostle of the Gentiles. \*

But how great offence this is before God, so to make a doubtful conscience, or striving against knowledge, to do any thing that is not godly, let the judgment of men pass, and measure it from God's word. Christ saith, It were better a millstone were hanged about such an offender's neck, and cast into the sea. And doubtless the pain<sup>1</sup> must be the greater, because we give offence willingly, and against our own consciences; and this before God is a wicked knowledge that causeth another to perish. Woe be unto him that is learned, to bring his brother<sup>n</sup> to destruction. Doth a Christian man know the truth, to bring his brother to a lie? For those weaklings, that we make to stumble, Christ died, as St. Paul saith. God defend<sup>2</sup> we should confirm any man's conscience in evil! <sup>1</sup> *guilt finally* <sup>2</sup> *for id*

Let every man of God weigh with himself the doctrine of St. Paul, that commandeth us to fly idolatry. And mark what St. Paul <sup>1</sup> *Cor. 10*

in that place calleth idolatry. It is to be seen plainly, that he speaketh not of such idolatry as men that lack knowledge in their hearts what God is, and what God is not, do commit. For in the eighth chapter before he saith, that men know that the idols were no gods; and that although by name the Gentiles had many gods, yet *they* knew there was but one God. Therefore he meaneth nothing by this commandment, Fly idolatry, but to avoid such rites, ceremonies, and usages, as outwardly were used in the honour and reverence of the idols, that were no gods: and, weighing the right use of the Lord's supper, and the dignity thereof, with the manner and use of the Gentiles towards their gods, he would bring the church of the Corinthians to understand how that, as the divine and sacred rites, ceremonies, and use of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, did sanctify him and declare him that used it to be the servant and child of God, so did the rites and sacraments of the Gentiles defile the users thereof, and declared them to be the servants and children of the idols, notwithstanding that they knew in their hearts the idol was nothing. God by his sacrament doth couple us unto him: let us pray therefore to him, that we pollute not ourselves with any rites, ceremonies, or usages not instituted by God, and so divide ourselves from him.

In this cause, if a faithful man should be at the mass, it is to be considered with what mind those, that he doth there accompany himself withal, do come thither, and what the end is of the work that the priest doth. The people come to honour the bread and wine for God, and the priest purposeth to consecrate both God and man, and so to offer Christ to the Father, for the remission of sin. Now do they that adjoin themselves unto those people, profess and declare a society and fellowship of the same impiety, as St. Paul laid to the Corinthians' charge. St. Paul was not offended with the Corinthians, because they lacked knowledge of the true God; but because, contrary to their knowledge, they associated themselves with idolaters. For this is true, that in all rites, sacraments, and honourings, whether they be of God or of the devil, there is a profession of a communion; so that every man protesteth to be of the same religion that the rest be of, that be partakers with him.

I know there be many evasions made by men, that judge a man may with safeguard of conscience be at the mass. But forasmuch as Master Calvin, Master Bullinger, and other have thoroughly answered them; such as be in doubt, may read their books. This is my conscience after God's word.

John Hooper.



An Epistle of the famous learned man Master Henry Bullinger, written to Master Hooper in the time of his trouble: which, for the worthiness of the matter, we thought not impertinent here to place amongst his letters.

**Reverendissimo Vigorniae et Glocestriae Episcopo,**

D. Joanni Hoopero, nunc victo Jesu Christi, Compatri and Domino meo colendissimo, fratrique charissimo, in Anglia;

Gratiam et pacem per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum, cum sapientia patientia et fortitudine Spiritus sancti, concedat tibi et omnibus propter nomen suum victis, Pater caelestis.

Binas a tua humanitate literas accepi, frater charissime; priores mense Septembris anni praeteriti, posteriores mense Maio anni praesentis, utrasque ex carcere. Ego vero, quum timerem ne frustra responderem, quum tibi meas literas reddi non posse vererem, vel malum aliquod tibi conciliarem et conduplicarem, a munere scribendi abstinui. Qua quidem in re, me habes excusatum haud dubie, maxime quum, rebus adhuc pacatis et integris, ad libellos nedum epistolas meas ne semel quidem per annum integrum respondere dignatus sis, perseverante me nihilominus in scribendi munere: sicuti ne nunc quidem, posteaquam in vincula conjectum audiebam, unquam a precibus abstinui, rogans Patrem nostrum caelestem per unicum intercessorem nostrum Christum Jesum, ut tibi et conceptivis tuis omnibus concedat patientiam, fidem, et constantiam in finem usque. Evenit nunc tibi, (mi frater,) quod eventurum nobis, quum apud nos esses, sepeissime nobis ipsis praesagebamus! maxime quum de rebus Antichristi, potentia, felicitate et victoriis loqueremur. Scis enim illud Danielis: Roborabitur fortitudo ejus et non in viribus suis, et supra quam credi potest, vastabit universa, et prosperabitur et faciet, et interficiet robustos, ac populum sanctorum, secundum voluntatem suam, etc. Scis quid praedixerit nobis Dominus apud Matth. cap. 10, et Joan. 15 et 16. Quid item electum Christi organum Paulus scriperit in 2. ad Timotheo, cap. 3. Unde nihil dubito de tua, per gratiam Dei, fide et patientia, quum scias te nihil inexpectatum aut fortuitum pati, et ea quae sustines propter causam optimam, verissimam, et sanctissimam sustinere. Quid enim verius et sanctius est doctrina nostra, quam persequantur Papistae Antichristicolae? Omnia salutis tribuimus uni Christo et institutis ejus, sicuti et ab ipso et discipulis ejus accepimus: illi vero illa ipsa et Antichristo suo Romano et institutis ejus communicari volunt. His ergo non minus obsistendum est, quam Heliam Baalitis obstitisse legimus. Si enim Jesus est Christus, agnoscant illum esse complementum suae ecclesiae, et quidem plene: si autem Antichristus est Rex et Sacerdos, deferant illi hunc honorem. Quousque claudicant in utrumque latus? An dabunt illi nobis meliorem Christo? Aut quis erit aequalis Christo qui cum ipso componatur, nisi quem Apostolus vocat τὸν ἀντικείμενον? Si autem Christus sufficit suae Ecclesiae, quid (oro) opus est illis sutelis et additamentis? Caeterum his disputationibus nihil opus apud te esse scio, qui sincere doctus et radicans es in Christo, haud ignorans te habere in ipso omnia, et nos in illo esse completos. Perge ergo constanter confiteri Christum et execrari Antichristum, memor sanctissimi et verissimi illius sermonis Domini nostri Jesu Christi: Qui vicerit possidebit omnia, et ero illi Deus et ipse erit mihi filius. Timidis autem et incredulis, et execratis, et homicidis, et scortatoribus, et veneficis, et idololatriis, et omnibus mendacibus, pars illorum erit in stagno ardenti igne et sulphure, quod est mors secunda. Facile superatur mors prima, etiamsi ardens sit pro Domino: recte enim dicunt ignem hunc nostrum vix umbram esse ejus qui incredulis et defectoribus paratus est. Concedit praeterea Dominus, ut mox superare ejus virtute possimus mortem primam, quam et ipse gustavit et superavit, promittens interim gaudia nunquam finienda et amplitudine inf-

Dan. 8.

Apoc. 21.

Apoc. 21. fabilia; quæ et percepturi sumus, simul atque hinc migraverimus. Sic enim iterum dicit angelus Domini: Si quis adoraverit Bestiam et imaginem ejus, et acceperit characterem in fronte sua aut in manu sua, et hic bibet de vino iræ Dei quod mixtum est mero in calice iræ ipsus, et cruciabitur igne et sulphure in conspectu angelorum sanctorum et in conspectu Agni, et fumus tormenti eorum ascendit in sæcula sæculorum, nec habent requiem die et nocte qui adorant Bestiam et imaginem ejus, et si quis acceperit characterem nominis ejus. Hic patientia sanctorum est. Hic qui custodiunt mandata Dei et fidem Jesu. His addit mox, Et audivi vocem de cælo dicentem mihi, Scribe: Beati mortui qui in Domino moriuntur anodo (vel protinus scilicet beati sunt): etiam, dicit Spiritus, ut requiescant a laboribus suis; sed opera illorum sequuntur illos: non enim erit labor noster frustraneus et inanis.

Tim. 6. Amplissimam ergo promissionem quum habeas, sis fortis in Domino: certa bonum certamen, serva fidem Domino in finem usque. Cogita te ducem et propugnatorem habere Christum Dei filium: omnes autem Prophetas, Apostolos et Martyres, esse tuos commilitones. Qui nos persequuntur et tribulant, homines sunt, peccatores, et mortales, quorum gratiam prudens non emerit teruncio. Sed et vita nostra alias brevis est et caduca; felices nos si in Christo obdormiamus: hic concedat tibi, et omnibus concaptivis, fidem et constantiam. Commenda me reverendisimis et sanctissimis Christi confessoribus D. Cranmero episcopo Cantuar., D. Ridlæo episcopo Lond., et D. Latimero seni. Hos et alios omnes captivos salutabis ex me et ex omnibus Symmystis, qui omnes imprecantur vobis gratiam Dei et constantiam in veritate. Oramus sedulo cum tota Ecclesia pro vobis.

Quod attinet ad statum nostræ Ecclesiæ, is omnino manet adhuc qualis erat quum a nobis recederes in patriam. Utinam Deo simus grati, et fidem non tantum verbis confiteamur, sed exprimamus vere bonis operibus ad gloriam Dei nostri. Aliquo crescit valde sermo Domini per Italiam vicinam et per Galliam. Interim pili graves sustinent persecutiones, et magna constantia et gloria per tormenta concedunt ad Dominum.

Ego et tota domus mea, cum generis et affinibus, recte in Domino valemus. Salutant te sigillatim omnes et precamur tibi constantiam, condolentes tibi et concaptivis reliquis. Venerunt ad nos Angli studiosi, pii, et docti viri. recepti sunt a magistratu nostro. Cohabitant decem, reliqui agunt hinc inde apud viros bonos. Inter alios mihi charus et familiaris est D. Thomas Leverus. Si quid est quod in gratiam uxoris tuæ et liberorum potuero, me totum libenter illis impendam: qua de re ad uxorem tuam scribo, audio enim illam agere Francfordiæ. Sis fortis et lætus in Christo, expectansejus liberationem ut et quando ipsi fuerit visum. Dominus Jesus misereatur Angliæ, et illuminet illam Spiritu suo; ad gloriam nominis sui et animarum salutem. Dominus Jesus servet te et liberet ab omni malo, cum omnibus qui invocant nomen ejus. Vale, et vale æternum. 10 Octobris, 1554. Tiguri.

Nosti manum.

H. B.

The same in English.

### To the most Reverend Father, Master John Hooper,

Bishop of Worcester and Gloucester, and now prisoner for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, my fellow elder and most dear brother, in England.

The heavenly Father grant unto you, and to all those which are in bonds and captivity for his name's sake, grace and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, with wisdom, patience, and fortitude of the Holy Ghost.

I have received from you two letters (my most dear brother), the former in the month of September, of the year past, the latter in the month of May, of this present year; both written out

of prison. But I, doubting lest I should make an answer to you in vain, whilst I feared that my letters should never come unto your hands, or else increase and double your sorrow, did refrain from the duty of writing. In the which thing I doubt not but you will have me excused, especially seeing you did not vouchsafe, no not once in a whole year, to answer to my whole libels<sup>1</sup> rather than letters, whereas I continued still notwithstanding in writing unto you; as also at this present, after I heard that you were cast in prison, I did not refrain from continual prayer, beseeching our heavenly Father, through our only mediator Jesus Christ, to grant unto you, and to your fellow prisoners, faith and constancy unto the end.

Now is that thing happened unto you, my brother, the which we did oftentimes prophesy unto ourselves, at your being with us, should come to pass, especially when we did talk of the power of antichrist, and of his felicity and victories. For you know the saying of Daniel, His power shall be mighty, but not in his strength, and he shall wonderfully destroy and make havoc of all things, and shall prosper and practise, and he shall destroy the mighty and the holy people after his own will. You know what the Lord warned us of beforehand, by Matthew, in the xth. chapter, by John in the xvth. chapter, and the xvith.; and also what that chosen vessel St. Paul hath written, in the second to Timothy, and the third chapter. Wherefore I do nothing doubt (by God's grace) of your faith and patience, while you know that those things which you suffer are not unlooked for, or come by chance, but that you suffer them in the best, truest, and most holy quarrel: for what can be more true and holy than our doctrine, which the papists, those worshippers of antichrist, do persecute? All things touching salvation, we attribute unto Christ alone, and to his holy institutions, as we have been taught of him and of his disciples; but they would have even the same things to be communicated as well to their antichrist and to his institutions.

Such we ought no less to withstand, than we read that Elias withstood the Baalites. For if Jesus be Christ, then let them know that he is the fulness of his church, and that perfectly: but, and if Antichrist be king and priest, then let them exhibit unto him that honour. How long do they halt on both sides? Can they give unto us any one that is better than Christ? or who shall be equal with Christ, that may be compared with him, except it be he whom the apostle calleth the adversary? Christ be sufficient for his church, what needeth this patching and piecing? But I know well enough, I need not to use these disputations with you, which are sincerely taught and have taken root in Christ, being persuaded that you have all things in him, and that we in him are made perfect.

<sup>1</sup> pamphlets

Daniel 8.

Eph. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Thess. 2.

Go forward therefore, constantly to confess Christ, and to defy antichrist, being mindful of this most holy and most true saying of our Lord Jesus Christ; He that overcometh shall possess all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son; but the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and the murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. The first death is soon overcome, although a man must burn for the Lord's sake; for they say well, that do affirm this our fire to be scarcely a shadow of that which is prepared for the unbelievers, and them that fall from the truth. Moreover, the Lord granteth unto us that we may easily overcome by his power the first death, the which he himself did taste and overcome; promising withal such joys as never shall have end, unspeakable, and passing all understanding, the which we shall possess so soon as ever we depart hence.

For so again saith the angel of the Lord, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or on his hand, the same shall drink of the wrath of God, yea, of the wine which is poured into the cup of his wrath, and he shall be tormented in fire and brimstone, before the holy angels and before the Lamb: and the smoke of their torments shall ascend evermore; and they shall have no rest day nor night, which worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the print of his name. Here is the patience of saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. To this he addeth by and by, I heard a voice saying to me, Write, blessed be the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth (or speedily they be blessed—John v.): even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, but their works follow them; for our labour shall not be frustrate or in vain. Therefore, seeing you have such a large promise, be strong in the Lord, fight a good fight, be faithful to the Lord unto the end; consider that Christ the Son of God is your captain, and fighteth for you, and that all the prophets, apostles, and martyrs, are your fellow soldiers.

They that persecute and trouble us, are men sinful and mortal, whose favour a wise man would not buy with the value of a farthing; and besides that, our life is short, frail, and transitory. Happy are we if we depart in the Lord; who grant unto you, and to all your fellow prisoners, faith and constancy. Commend me to the most reverend fathers, and holy confessors of Christ, Doctor Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, Doctor Ridley, Bishop of London, and the good old father, Doctor Latimer. Them, and all the rest of the prisoners with you for the Lord's cause, salute in my name, and in the name of all my fellow ministers; the

Apoc. 21.

Apoc. 14.

In this  
time of  
Anti-  
christ is  
the pa-  
tience and  
faith of  
God's chil-  
dren  
tried,  
whereby  
they shall  
overcome  
all his ty-  
ranny.—  
Read  
Matt. 24.

which do wish unto you the grace of God, and constancy in the truth.

Concerning the state of our church, it remaineth even as it was when you departed from us into your country. God grant we may be thankful to him, and that we do not only profess the faith with words, but also express the same effectually with good works to the praise of our Lord. The word of God increaseth daily in that part of Italy that is near unto us, and in France. In the mean while, the godly sustain grievous persecutions; and, with great constancy and glory, through torments they go unto the Lord. I and all my household, with my sons-in-law, and kinsmen, are in good health in the Lord. They do all salute you, and pray for your constancy, being sorrowful for you and the rest of the prisoners.

There came unto us Englishmen, students, both godly and learned; they be received of our magistrate. Ten of them dwell together, the rest remain here and there with good men. Among the rest, Master Thomas Lever is dear unto me and familiar. If there be any thing wherein I may do any pleasure to your wife and children, they shall have me wholly at commandment, whereof I will write also to your wife, for I understand she abideth at Frankfort. Be strong and merry in Christ, waiting for his deliverance, when and in what sort it shall seem good unto him. The Lord Jesus shew pity upon the realm of England, and illuminate the same with his Holy Spirit, to the glory of his name and the salvation of souls. The Lord Jesus preserve you, and deliver you from all evil, with all them that call upon his name. Farewell, and farewell eternally. The 10th of October, 1554. From Zurich.

You know the hand.

H. B.

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LETTERS OF  
DOCTOR TAYLOR, PARSON OF HADLEIGH.  
IN SUFFOLK,

Who by his death and martyrdom, there witnessed and confirmed that doctrine, which he had before most painfully and faithfully taught, the 9th of February, in the year of our Lord, 1555. laboriously

**To my dear Fathers and Brethren,**

Doctor Crammer, Doctor Ridley, and Doctor Latimer, prisoners in Oxford, for the faithful testimony of God's holy Gospel.

Right reverend fathers in the Lord, I wish you to enjoy continually God's grace and peace through Jesus Christ; and God be praised again and again, for this your most excellent promotion

Many profess God ad ignem exclusive, that is, in words and outward profession, but few stick to him ad ignem inclusive, that is, in deed, and in suffering for his sake.

which ye are called unto at this present ; that is, that ye are counted worthy to be allowed amongst the number of Christ's records and witnesses. England hath had but a few learned bishops that would stick to Christ *ad ignem inclusive*. Once again I thank God heartily in Christ for your most happy onset, most valiant proceeding, most constant suffering of all such infamies, hisings, clappings, taunts, open rebukes, loss of living and liberty, for the defence of God's cause, truth and glory. I cannot utter with pen how I rejoyce in my heart for you three ; such captains in the foreward, under Christ's cross, banner, or standard, in such a cause and skirmish, when not only one or two of our dear Redeemer's strong-holds are besieged, but all his chief castles, ordained for our safeguard, are treacherously impugned. This your enterprise, in the sight of all that be in heaven, and of all God's people in earth, is most pleasant to behold. This is another manner of nobility, than to be in the forefront in worldly warfares. For God's sake pray for us, for we fail not daily to pray for you. We are stronger and stronger in the Lord, his name be praised, and we doubt not but ye be so in Christ's own sweet school. Heaven is all and wholly of our side : therefore *Gaudete in Domino semper, et iterum gaudete et exultate*.

Your assured in Christ,

Rowland Taylor.

### To a Friend of His,

Which was desirous to know the talk that was betwixt him and the Queen's Commissioners, at the time of his examination.

Whereas you would have me to write the talk, between the king and Queen's most honourable council and me on Tuesday, the 22nd of January, this so far as I remember, was the effect thereof.

First, my Lord Chancellor said, You among other are at this time sent for, to enjoy the King's and Queen's Majesties' favour and mercy, if you will now rise again with us from the fall, which we generally have received in this realm, from the which (God be praised !) we are now clearly delivered miraculously. If you will not rise with us now, and receive mercy now offered, you shall have judgment according to your demerits. To this I answered, That so to rise, should be greatest fall that ever I could receive ; for I should so fall from my dear Saviour Christ to Antichrist. For I do believe that the religion set forth in King Edward's days, was according to the vein of the Holy Scripture, which containeth fully all the rules of our christian religion, from the which I do not intend to decline so long as I live, by God's grace.

Then Master secretary Bourne said, Which of the religions mean you of, in King Edward's days ? for you know there were divers books of religion set forth in his days. There was a religion set

forth in a catechism by my Lord of Canterbury; do you mean, that you will stick to that? I answered, my Lord of Canterbury made a catechism to be translated in English, which book was not of his own making, yet he set it forth in his own name, and truly that book for the time did much good; but there was after that set forth by the most innocent King Edward (for whom God be praised everlastingly!) the whole church service, set forth with great deliberation, and the advice of the best learned men of the realm, and authorised by the whole Parliament, and received and published gladly by the whole realm; which book was never reformed but once, and yet by that one reformation it was so fully perfected, according to the rules of our religion in every behalf, that no christian conscience could be offended with any thing therein contained—I mean, of that book reformed. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Didst thou never read the book that I had set forth of the Sacrament? I answered, that I had read it. Then he said, How likest thou that book? With that, one of the council (whose name I know not) said, My Lord, That is a good question; for I am sure that book stoppeth all their mouths. Then said I, My Lord, I think many things be far wide from the truth of God's word in that book. Then my Lord said, Thou art a very varlet. To that I answered, That is as ill as Raca, or Fatue.<sup>1</sup> Then my Lord said, Thou art an ignorant beetle brow.<sup>2</sup> To that I answered, I have read over and over again the Holy Scriptures, and Saint Austin's works through, and Saint Cyprian, Eusebius, Origen, Gregory Nazianzen, with divers other books throughout: therefore, I thank God, I am not utterly ignorant. Besides these, my Lord, I professed the civil law, as your Lordship did, and I have read over the canon law also. Then my Lord said, With a corrupt judgment thou readest all things: touching my profession, it is Divinity, in which I have written divers books. Then I said, My Lord, ye did write one book De vera obedientia: I would you had been constant in that; for indeed you never did declare a good conscience that I heard of, but in that one book. Then my Lord said, Tut, tut, tut: I wrote against Bucer in priests' marriages; but such books please not such wretches as thou art, which hast been married many years. To that I answered, I am married indeed, and I have had nine children in holy matrimony, I thank God: and this I am sure of, that your proceedings now at this present in this realm against priests' marriages, is the maintenance of the doctrine of devils, against natural law, civil law, canon law, general councils, canons of the apostles, ancient doctors, and God's laws.

Then spake my Lord of Durham, saying, You professed the civil law, as you say: then you know that Justinian writeth, that priests at their taking of orders should swear, that they were never married; and he bringeth in to prove that, Canones Apostolorum.

<sup>1</sup> *than*  
<sup>fool</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> *thick*  
*head*

To that I answered, that I did not remember any such law of Justinian: but I am sure that Justinian writeth in Titulo de indicta viduitate, in cod., that if one would bequeath to his wife in his testament a legacy, under a condition that she should never marry again, and take an oath of her for the accomplishing of the same, yet she shall marry again if he die, notwithstanding the aforesaid condition and oath taken and made against marriage: and an oath is another manner of obligation to God, than is a papistical vow. Moreover in the Pandects it is contained, that if a man do manumit his handmaid under a condition that she shall never marry; yet she may marry: and her patron shall lose *jus patronatus*, for his adding of the unnatural and unlawful condition against matrimony.

Then my Lord Chancellor said, Thou sayest that priests may be married by God's law; how provest thou that? I answered, By the plain words and sentences of St. Paul both to Timothy and to Titus, where St. Paul doth speak most evidently of the marriage of priests, deacons, and bishops. And St. Chrysostome, writing upon the epistle to Timothy, saith, It is an heresy to say that a bishop may not be married. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Thou lyeest of Chrysostome; but thou doest as all thy companions do, belye ever without all shame, both the Scriptures and the doctors. Didst thou not also say, that by the canon law priests may be married; which is most untrue, and the contrary is most true. I answered, We read in the decrees, that the four general councils, Nicene, Constantino<sup>ple</sup>, Ephesian, and Chalcedon, have the same authority that the four Evangelists have. And we read in the same decrees, which is one of the chief books of the canon law, that the council of Nice, by the means of one Paphnutius, did allow priests' and bishops' marriages: therefore by the best part of the canon law, priests may be married.

Then my Lord Chancellor said, Thou falsifiest the general council: for there is express mention in the said decree, that priests should be divorced from their wives which be married. Then said I, If those words be there as you say, then am I content to lose this great head of mine: let the book be fetched. Then said my lord of Durham, Though they be not there, yet they may be in *Ecclesiastica Historia*, which Eusebius wrote, out of which book the decree was taken. Then said I, It is not like that the pope would leave out any such sentence, having such authority, and making so much for his purpose. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Gratian was but a patcher, and thou art glad to snatch up such a patch as maketh for thy purpose. I answered, My lord, I cannot but marvel that you do call one of the chief papists that ever was, but a patcher. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Nay, I call thee a snatcher and a patcher. To make an end, wilt thou not return again with us to the catholic church? and with that



he rose. And I said, By God's grace I will never depart from Christ's church. Then I required that I might have some of my friends to come to me in prison. And my lord chancellor said, Thou shalt have judgment within this week. My lord of Durham would that I should believe as my father and my mother. I alleged St. Augustine, that we ought to prefer God's word before all men. And so I was delivered again unto my keeper.

R. T.

The Copy of a Writing that Dr. Taylor sent to a friend  
of his,

Concerning the causes wherefore he was condemned.

It is heresy to defend any doctrine against the Holy Scripture : therefore the Lord Chancellor, and bishops consenting to his sentence against me, be heretics ; for they have given sentence against the marriage of priests, knowing that St. Paul to Timothy and Titus writeth plainly, that bishops, priests, and deacons may be married ; knowing also that by St. Paul's doctrine, it is the doctrine of devils to inhibit matrimony, and St. Paul willeth every faithful minister to teach the people so, lest they be deceived by the marked merchants. 1 Tim. iv. These bishops are not ignorant, that it is not only St. Paul's counsel and lawful, but God's commandment also to marry, for such as cannot otherwise live chaste, neither avoid fornication. They know that such as do marry, do not sin. They know that God, before sin was, ordained matrimony, and that in paradise, between two of his principal creatures, man and woman. 1 Cor. 7.  
Gen. 2.

They know what spirit they have, which say it is evil to marry, seeing God said ; It is not good for man to be alone without a wife, having no special gift contrary to the general commandment and ordinance, divers times repeated in the book of Genesis, which is, to increase and multiply. They know that Abraham carried into the land of Canaan his old and yet barren wife, the virtuous woman Sarah, with him, leaving father and mother and country, being otherwise at God's commandment. For though father and mother and other friends are dear and near, yet none are so dearly and nearly joined together, as man and wife in matrimony ; which must needs be holy, for that it is a figure and similitude of Christ and his church. They know that St. Paul giveth a great praise to matrimony, calling it honourable ; and that, not to and among *many*, but to and among *all* men without exception, whosoever have need of that God's remedy for man's and woman's infirmity. They know that if there were any sin in matrimony, it were chiefly to be thought to be in the bed-company : but St. Paul saith that the bed-company is undefiled. Gen. 2.  
Gen. 1.  
Gen. 12.  
Eph. 5.  
Heb. 13.

Gen. 18. They know that the having of a wife was not an impediment for  
 Exod. 18. Abraham, Moses, Isaac, Jacob, David, &c. to talk with God,  
 Gen. 25. neither to the Levites', bishops' and priests' office, in the time of the  
 Gen. 31. Old Testament or the New. They know that Christ would not  
 2 Kings 7. be conceived or born of the blessed mother the Virgin Mary,  
 Matt. 1. before she was espoused in marriage, his own ordinance.

They know by St. Cyprian and St. Austin, that a vow is not an  
 1 hinder impediment sufficient to let<sup>t</sup> matrimony, or to divorce the same.  
 They know that St. Chrysostome saith, It is heresy to affirm that  
 a bishop may not have a wife. They know that St. Ambrose will  
 have no commandment but counsel only to be given, touching the  
 observing of virginity. They know that Christ with his blessed  
 mother and apostles were at a marriage, and beautified and  
 John 2. honoured the same with his presence and first miracle. To be  
 short, they know that all that I have here written touching the  
 marriage of priests, is true, and they know that the papists them-  
 selves do not observe, touching the matter, their own laws and  
 canons; and yet they continue marked in conscience with an hot  
 iron as detestable heretics in this behalf. The Lord give them  
 grace to repent, if it be his good will. Amen.

My second cause why I was condemned as a heretic, is that I  
 denied the transubstantiation and concomitation, two juggling  
 words of the papists, by the which they do believe, and will  
 compel all others to believe, that Christ's natural body is made of  
 bread, and that the Godhead by and by is joined thereunto: so  
 that immediately after the words called the words of consecration,  
 there is no more bread and wine in the sacrament, but the sub-  
 stance only of the body and blood of Christ together with his  
 Godhead: so that the same, being now Christ, both God and man,  
 ought to be worshipped with godly honour, and to be offered to  
 God both for the quick and the dead, as a sacrifice propitiatory  
 and satisfactory for the same. This matter was not long debated  
 in words, but because I denied the foresaid papistical doctrine,  
 yea rather plainly most wicked idolatry, blasphemy, and heresy, I,  
 was judged a heretic. I did also affirm the pope to be Antichrist,  
 and popery Antichristianity: and I confessed the doctrine of the  
 Bible to be a sufficient doctrine touching all and singular matters  
 of Christian religion and of salvation.

I also alleged, and the oath against the supremacy of the  
 bishop of Rome was a lawful oath, and so was the oath made by  
 us all touching the king's or queen's preeminence. For Chry-  
 sostome saith, that apostles, evangelists, and all men in every  
 realm, were ever and ought to be ever, touching both body and  
 goods, in subjection to the kingly authority, who hath the sword  
 in his hand as God's principal officer and governor in every  
 realm. I desired the bishops to repent, for bringing the realm  
 from Christ to Antichrist, from light to darkness, from verity to

vanity. Thus you know a sum<sup>l</sup> of my last examination and condemnation. Pray for me, and I will pray for you. 1 the substance

God be praised, since my condemnation I was never afraid to die : God's will be done. If I shrink from God's truth, I am sure of another manner of death than had Judge Hales. But God be praised, even from the bottom of my heart, I am immovably settled upon the rock ; nothing doubting, but that my dear God will perform and finish the work, that he hath begun in me and other. To him be all honour, both now and ever, through Christ our only and whole Saviour. Amen.

R. T.

### A Letter which he sent to his Wife and Children

And other of his friends in Hadley, as his farewell and last testament.

I say to my wife, and to my children, The Lord gave you unto me, and the Lord hath taken me from you, and you from me ; blessed be the name of the Lord. I believe that they are blessed which die in the Lord. God careth for sparrows, and for the hairs of our heads. I have ever found him more faithful and favourable than any father or husband. Trust ye therefore in him, by the means of our dear Saviour Christ's merits ; believe, love, fear, and obey him. Pray to him, for he hath promised to help. Count me not dead, for I shall certainly live, and never die. I go before, and ye shall follow after, to our long home. I go to the rest of my children, Susan, George, Ellen, Robert, and Zachary. I have bequeathed you to the only Omnipotent. Apo. 14.  
Luke 12.

I say to you, my dear friends of Hadley, and to all other which have heard me preach, that I depart hence with a quiet conscience as touching my doctrine : for the which, I pray you, thank God with me ; for I have after my little talent declared to other, those lessons that I gathered out of God's book, the blessed Bible. Therefore if I or any angel from heaven should preach to you any other Gospel, than that ye have received, God's great curse upon that preacher ! Beware, for God's sake, that ye deny not God, neither decline from the word of faith, lest God decline from you, and so ye do everlastingly perish. Gal. 1.

For God's sake beware of popery : for though it appear to have in it unity, yet the same is in vanity and Antichristianity, and not in Christ's faith and verity. Beware of the sin against the Holy Ghost, now after such a light opened so plainly and simply, truly, thoroughly, and generally to all England.

The Lord grant all men his good and holy Spirit, increase of his wisdom, increase of contemning the wicked world, increase

of desiring heartily to be with God and the heavenly company, through Jesus Christ—our only mediator, advocate, righteousness, life, sanctification, and hope. Amen, amen. Pray, pray.

Rowland Taylor, departing hence in sure hope, without all doubting, of eternal salvation—I thank God my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, my certain Saviour. Amen.  
5th February, Anno 1555.

## LETTERS OF MASTER LAURENCE SAUNDERS,

Parson of Allhallows in Bread street, London: who, after faithful testimony of his doctrine by long imprisonment, was condemned to the fire, and at Coventry (by God's providence, no doubt, to confirm that he had in that country also fruitfully taught,) suffered with most valiant and cheerful courage; as ye may read in the book of Martyrs, fol. 1048: the 8th day of February in the year of our Lord 1555.

**To my most dear and reverend Fathers in Christ,**

Doctor Ridley and Doctor Latimer, prisoners in Oxford.

In my most humble wise, I salute you, most reverend Fathers in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Col. 1. Immortal thanks and everlasting praises be given unto that our Father of mercies, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; which hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his beloved son, by whom we have redemption through his blood, &c. Oh most happy estate, that in an unspeakable wise, our life is hid with Christ in God: but whensoever Christ, which is our life, shall shew himself, then shall we also appear with him in glory. In the mean season, as our sight is but in a glass, even in a dark speaking, so we walk in faith, not after outward appearance. The which faith although, for want of outward appearance, reason reputeth but as vain; yet the chosen of God do know the effect thereof to bring a more substantial taste and lively fruition of very<sup>1</sup> felicity and perfect blessedness, than reason can reach, or senses conceive. By this faith, we have in our profession all good things: yea, even those which the eye hath not seen, and the ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, &c.

Col. 3.  
1 Cor. 13.  
2 Cor 5.  
1 true  
2 Cor. 2.

Then if hereby we do enjoy all good things, it followeth that we must needs possess, have and enjoy you, most reverend

fathers, who be no small part of our joy and good things given us of God. We heretofore have had the fruition of you by bodily presence, to our inexplicable benefit (praised be that our gracious God therefore); and now in spirit we have the experience of unspeakable comfort by your reverend fatherhoods, for that in this so glorious sort, ye become a town set upon a hill, a candle upon a candlestick, a spectacle unto the world, and to the angels, and unto men. Matt. 5.

So that, as we to our great comfort do feel, ye also may assuredly say, with St. Paul, that the things which happen unto us do chance unto the great furtherance of the Gospel: so that our bonds in Christ are manifest, not only throughout all the judgment hall, but in all whole Europe; insomuch that many of the brethren in the Lord, being encouraged through our bonds, dare more boldly speak the word without fear. And herein as you have with St. Paul greatly to rejoice, so we do rejoice with you; and we do indeed with you give thanks for this excellent worthy favour of our God towards you, that Christ is thus magnified in you, yea and hereafter shall be magnified in your bodies, whether it be through life or death. Of which thing truly we are assured in our prayers for you, and ministering of the Spirit. And although for your own parts Christ is unto you life, and death advantage, and that your desire is (as indeed it were better for you,) to be loosed, and to be with Christ, yet for the church of Christ were it much more necessary, that ye should abide in the flesh: yea, the merciful God, even for his Christ's sake, grant that ye may abide and continue, for the furtherance of the church and rejoicing of faith, that the rejoicing thereof may be the more abundant through Jesus Christ by your restoring again. Amen, amen. But if it seem better otherwise unto the Divine wisdom, that by speedy death he hath appointed you to glorify him, the Lord's will be done. Yea, even as we do rejoice both on your behalfs and also on our own, that God is magnified by life, and should be more abundantly glad for the continuance thereof; so we shall no less rejoice to have the same wrought by death. We shall give thanks for this honour given unto you, rejoicing that ye are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ; and that it is given to you of God, not only that ye should believe in him, but also that ye should suffer for his sake. And herein we shall have to rejoice in the behalf of the church of Christ, whose faith may be the faster fixed upon God's verity, being confirmed with three such worthy witnesses. Oh, thanks be to God for this his unspeakable gift. 1 Cor. 4.  
Phil. 1.

And now, most reverend fathers, that ye may understand the truth of us and our estate, how we stand in the Lord, I do assure your reverences, partly by that I perceive by such of our brethren as be here in bonds with me, partly by that I hear of them which Phil. 1.  
I what

be in other places, and partly by that inward experience which I, most unworthy wretch have of God's good comfort, more abundance whereof I know there is in others; ye may be assured, I say, by God's grace, that ye shall not be frustrate of your hope of our constant continuance in the cheerful confession of God's everlasting verity. For even as we have received the word of truth, even the Gospel of our salvation, wherein we believing are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, the which Spirit certifieth our spirit that we are the children of God, and therefore God hath sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father; so after such portion as God measureth unto us, we with the whole church of Christ, and with you, reverend fathers, receiving the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore I have spoken, we also believe, and therefore speak.

For the which we, in this dangerous bondage and other afflictions, having even such a fight as we have seen in you and have heard of you—we are in no wise afraid of our adversaries. And forasmuch as we have such an office, even as God hath had mercy on us, we go not out of kind,<sup>1</sup> but even with you, after our little power, we labour to maintain the faith of the Gospel; knowing most certainly, that though we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be God's and not ours, yet shall we not be dashed in pieces, for the Lord will put his hand under us. When we are troubled on every side, yet are we not without shift:<sup>2</sup> when we are in poverty, we are not utterly without something: when we suffer persecution, we are not forsaken therein: when we are cast down, yet we shall not perish: but to communicate<sup>3</sup> with our sweet Saviour Christ in bearing the cross it is appointed unto us, that even with him also we shall be glorified. For it is a true saying, If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we be patient, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he shall also deny us.

Wherefore we be of good cheer always, bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might appear also in our body. For we know that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by the means of Jesus, and shall join us to himself together with you. Wherefore we are not worried; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our tribulation, which is momentary and light, prepareth an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory unto us, while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen, are temporal; but things which are not seen, are eternal. We testify unto you, reverend fathers, that we draw these waters with joy out of the wells of the Saviour. And I

Eph. 1.

Rom 8.

Gal. 4.

2 Cor. 4.

Psa. 116.

Phil. 1.

<sup>1</sup> *we faint not*

2 Cor. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *re-source*<sup>3</sup> *share*

2 Tim. 2.

2 Cor. 4.

Essay 68.

trust we shall continually with you bless the Lord, and give thanks to the Lord, out of these wells of Israel: we trust to be merry together at the great supper of the Lamb, whose spouse we are by faith, and there to sing that song of everlasting Hallelujah. Amen. Yea, come Lord Jesu. The grace of our Lord Jesu Christ be with you. Amen. Apost. 19.

### To the professors of the Gospel

And true doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ, in the town of Lichfield.

Grace and peace, with continuance in unfeigned faith and a good conscience, be unto you in Christ Jesu. Amen.

At what time it pleased that gracious God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, wonderfully to work the deliverance of their offspring the Israelites, even as he brought to pass the same by his mighty arm, so did he thereunto admit man's ministry as his ordinary instrument; and therefore instructed first Moses, that faithful servant of his, what was to be done, as also with what cheerful courage he should do the same. These people, by the hand of this Moses, were brought by no small perils, the midway toward their promised patrimony, whenas<sup>1</sup> it pleased God to take unto himself his servant Moses from this miserable vale. In whose place he appointed Joshua, that worthy leader of the Lord's people; who not alonely<sup>2</sup> for his part did boldly take in hand so dangerous an enterprise, but also with earnest study stirred up his said people with lusty courage, to go forward in the appointed passage of their jeopardous journey. Yea, he was able abundantly to comfort them, with such comforts as he himself received of his God, who at sundry times assured him thereof, saying unto him thus; Even as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee, I will not forsake thee, neither leave thee, be thou therefore of good courage and strong: fear not, neither be dismayed, for I am with thee in all that thou takest in hand. Whatsoever things be written, are written for our doctrine, &c. Deut. 34.  
1 when  
Jos. 1.  
2 only

Dearly beloved, albeit that in these days it may be said truly that ye have very few such captains to be compared with Moses or Joshua, God's singular jewels, yet that same Lord, which is no changing, but even the same merciful and almighty defender of all his people at all times, doth and shall in some degree direct you his chosen children in the highway toward your heavenly inheritance, by the hand of a Moses, in some part resembling these two principal patterns. For though we your brethren, who heretofore by our vocation have sat in the chair of Moses, and be ghostly captains as Moses and Joshua unto you—though, I say, we well know and acknowledge how little we have to boast of, as

of ourselves, yet this we have to rejoice of in the Lord our God, that, as we have been of him appointed unto such a place and function, so we do not altogether degenerate. For first, unto our own strengthening, even that gracious God which biddeth us to be strong by the operation of his Spirit, performeth the same in some part in us; all glory be unto him therefore. Also in the word of the Lord, we testify unto you to be strong in the Lord, and shrink not back because of the sundry temptations assaulting you in the passage unto your country through the wilderness of this world. Be content to be proved, as those people were.

Exod. 16.  
1 *coveting*

Do not addict yourselves unto the fantasying<sup>1</sup> of the flesh-pots of Egypt, most unthankfully relinquishing the promised possession. We give you to know what warranties we have of prosperous success in such our proceedings; no less, be ye assured, than those former captains Moses and Joshua had. For besides that all the same most comfortable promises, which made them and their people to be bold to proceed in their enterprise, do belong unto us, we have to rejoice in our God for his unmeasurable mercies more plentifully poured upon us, by that abundant grace in his dear Son our Christ, in whom he offereth us all fulness of favour and benevolence, all readiness of deliverance, appointing all credit<sup>2</sup> without care to be given unto such a governor. Yea

2 *confidence*

and that same his Christ, who is made of him our anointed Saviour, is now become our grand captain—yea, what is he not unto us, to do us good? He is our shepherd; we be his people and the sheep of his pasture: he is our husband; we be his spouse.

John 10.

He hath promised to keep his sheep, that none shall snatch them out of his hands. He hath promised to be with his church always, yea, and that effectually; to be with it, even as the head to give life unto the members and parts of the body, even as the vine-stock to quicken the vine branches, and even as the most loving husband to tender, cherish, defend, and keep his well beloved spouse. Let us be bold to commit ourselves unto such a safe conductor, casting our care upon him: for were it not that he many times more careth for us, than we can for ourselves, it would not be well with us. Full little did Peter perceive

Matt. 23.

any cause of grievance<sup>3</sup> for that perilous fall which after befell. But that sovereign Shepherd<sup>4</sup> before hand espied the spiteful desire of that wolfish Satan to sift his Peter that seely poor sheep: and therefore prayed unto his Father that Peter's faith might not faint. Such a shepherd shall he be alway unto his people, humbly complaining unto him in extreme dangers. And great cause have we so to do; considering not only the greedy desire of this Satan, most tyrannously raging like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, but also the imbecility in ourselves, being such as is not able to withstand the least of his assaults: but on the contrary, being overwhelmed with the waves which be stirred

3 *anxiety apprehension*  
Luke 24.

1 Pet. 5.

4 *superintending*



up by these tempests of his temptations, we are compelled to cry with these disciples, who in their extremity cried, Save us, Lord, Matt. 8. or else we perish.

The times be perilous : we must therefore be circumspect, and not solace ourselves in carnal security ; but, being content to enter into the ship of Christ's cross, and objecting<sup>1</sup> ourselves to all 1 expos- ing jeopardous passages in the adventurous journeying to our heavenly country, let us for this present voyage account it comfort enough, to have the fellowship of such a fellow-venturer. He once, being in the ship with his disciples, did with his word assuage the swelling of the sea so dangerous. He hath not left us alone in the ship of this frail flesh, but joineth with us in this dangerous journey ; as well by his once being subject unto all bodily infirmities as we be (sin only except), as also by his assuring us of his gracious assistance, now that he is become before his heavenly Father our prince, our priest, and our prophet, always prest<sup>2</sup> and ready to help by his power, propitiation, and inspiration of His 2 at hand Holy Spirit. And what though he for a season do sleep, and do so suffer us (unto our seemings) to sink ? He will be awaked, being pulled by prayer : and therefore doth he delay our speedy deliverance, even to fortify our faith by importune prayer.

Let us then with instance,<sup>3</sup> apply this business, and the rather in 3 ear- nestness respect of the dangerous dotting of this old age of the world. For it is with the men of this latter age of the world as it is with a very aged man, who, for impotency of the powers both of the mind and the body, is brought to much imbecility. Then do the wits by weakness wander out of the way. The body, by feebleness and default of the former strength, doth stagger : and full weakly doth any limb or part of that wretched body execute the function unto it belonging. In like manner is it with the church of Christ, in this doating old age of the world. There is nothing such fulness in God's graces as heretofore hath been, in the primitive church, and the times immediately ensuing. There is less perfection in the faith, fear, and love towards God, and charity towards the brethren. There is less zeal to confess God, and less constancy to continue in God's truth, than was heretofore. And this is not strange unto them which do observe the fore-speaking of the Scriptures, as well of the prophets of our Saviour Christ, as also of his apostles, by whom it hath been signified beforehand what dangerous days should come in the latter times ; as, Matt. xxiv. 2 Thess. ii. 1 Tim. iv. 2 Tim. iii. 2 Pet. ii.

Wherefore let us which are come into these latter dangerous times, first consider how that the Holy Ghost hath given us warning thereof, and also that we by proof have experience of the verifying of the same : let us now (I say) the more earnestly apply our humble petition unto that merciful Father, and his Son

our sweet Saviour, who is the head of his church, even this his body (weak though it be) that he will vouchsafe not so much to observe the backsliding and shrinking of this his feeble body, as to respect the fore-speakings of these perilous times: and let us, with and in the name of the whole church, remember often the prayer of David, Ps. 71: "Lord, cast me not away in the time of mine old age, when my strength doth decay." That time of the church is even now present: and truly if we be instant in prayer, we be not without warranties of God's promise to obtain that we pray for. Yea, call upon me (saith he) in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee. For the elects' sake, it is said, the dangerous days shall be shortened. Yea, faithful is he, that will not suffer us to be tempted above that we be able to abide.

Psa. 40.

Matt. 24.

1 Cor. 10.

We may be bold to put our gracious God in remembrance of his old mercies, and with David say, O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them. The testimonies of his word do teach us, how he hath from the beginning alway gathered unto himself a congregation and church; unto the which his chosen church he hath bound himself by his covenant of mercy to be their God and Saviour, and besides that hath poured upon them his sundry blessings and benefits. But again, it is to be seen in the Scriptures, how that even these peculiar God's people did at sundry times fall from that their heavenly profession, as well to idolatry and false gods' service, as also unto dissolute living, thereby provoking God's wrathful plagues and punishments; the which indeed oftentimes, as they were often deserved, so they fell upon them. But even as the God of Israel did visit the offences of his people with his rod of chastisement, so did he not at any time take away his mercies from them; and that, for that covenant of mercy made unto them in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob their forefathers. And therefore, when at any time through his grace they did by repentance turn unto him, he most fatherly embraced them with the arms of his mercy.

Psa. 44.

Psa. 89.

I like-  
wise

These things be written for us, that we in semblable wise should consider first the dignity whereunto we have been called, that is, even to be his church and people. Yea, in comparing our profession with either the heathenish Turks and infidels, or unto the people which are professed unto this hypocritical papistry, we have to advance ourselves as the true children of Christ; for that we bear the right badges of God's true people, and that is, the earnest desire towards the propagation of God's most holy word, and the right use of the sacraments agreeable to the same; having joined therewith a readiness of heart and mind to suffer affliction and persecution for the confession of our faith, or at the least rather than we will deny or put away faith and a

good conscience. And besides these outward notes and tokens declaring that we be the true church, there is a nearer token in God's elect; which is the inward testimony of God's spirit, which beareth witness unto our spirit that we be God's children, causing us to cry Abba Father, and being indeed the earnest-penny of our salvation. Rom. viii

But notwithstanding that we be thus promoted by our God, and dignified by his graces, yet must we consider how unworthily we have used, in sundry wise, these God's graces and blessings: yea, so unthankfully we have received them, that no less plagues, by God's just judgment, belong unto us, than was at that time due unto those his people. Wherefore let us faithfully confess that we have offended with our forefathers. The which being done in our conversion unto the Lord our God with our whole heart, let us assure ourselves, that, even as he hath and doth visit our sins with this captivity of body and conscience and such other plagues, being his rod of chastisement, so hath he not taken away his mercy from us: but will plentifully visit us with the same; even for that covenant of mercy made unto us, not in Abraham, Isaac, and David, but in that promised seed of Abraham, in that spiritual David, even Jesus Christ; who is that peaceable Solomon, making peace between us and his Father by the offering of his body and shedding of his blood, by whose means we must look for the guilt of our sins to be forgiven, and the plagues thereby purchased to be taken away. And now, dearly beloved, we be taught by that heavenly Spirit which our God hath given unto us, to seek comfort in these times of affliction, not in hope of rebellion, or fulfilling unprofitable, yea, pestilent Welsh prophecies, but in the most comfortable and glad tidings of the heavenly promises assured in his dear Christ. Psa. 80.

And touching this most miserable state of the ghostly captivity of conscience and bodily bondage, wherein for our sins presently<sup>1 at present</sup> we be holden, let us first most obediently kiss this rod of our Father, by obedient submission to abide all extremity that man may do unto us, rather than to forego faith and a good conscience. Let us also beseech our heavenly Father, for his Christ's sake, to leave off beating us, and to take away the rod; either by converting the hearts of those which afflict and persecute us (for so did he sometime take away the rod, as namely by converting of Nebuchadnezzar and Manasses); or else, if such wicked scourges be not to be converted, but be reprobates, vessels of God's wrath, children of perdition, such upon whom it pleaseth God to shew his judgments, and in whom he will shew his power—if, I say, they be such, let us wish most earnestly that our God will speedily arise, that his and our enemies may shortly be scattered. Yea, he knoweth what these execrable erecters of the Romish religion are. They be the proud builders of the Babyonical tower. They will

climb up into God's kingdom by their own attempts, not expecting and waiting for God's help. Yea, that Lord be judge betwixt them and us!

Tit. 2.  
1 eager

He knoweth that as their buildings tend unto the destruction of that true and only foundation Christ, so our building by God's word hath and doth tend to the substantial laying of that only foundation, and to the establishing of Christ's chosen church upon that same rock, with an unfeigned faith and pure conscience, and also unto the building upon the same faith all fruitful works of the Spirit, to serve GOD in holiness and righteousness, &c. Yea, that ever living Lord knoweth, the earnest desire of our hearts, is even the greedy<sup>1</sup> expectation of the glorious coming of that great judge, unto whose judgment (lo, heaven and earth be witness, and ye God's saints!) we do appeal: in the mean season abiding our God's good pleasure, to do with us that may most redound unto his glory whether to live or die; nothing doubting in him to be strengthened, merely and cheerfully to make a sacrifice and burnt offering for the confirmation of this infallible verity taught by us, and once received of you. And join with us, dear fellow heirs, as we join with you in humble prayer, that even as all we be by faith handfasted unto our husband, and knit on to our head Jesu Christ, and also be kindled by love one to another, as mutual members in this mystical body, so we may persevere and continue unto the end; and that by and in our Christ we may increase more and abound in the Spirit of grace and prayer, whereby to fetch all heavenly influence from that our head Christ one for another, even as in the body one member ministereth unto another. Amen, amen. In the Marshalsea. 17th October, 1554.

A prisoner in the Lord, trusting shortly to be with the Lord.  
L. Saunders.

**To Mistress Lucy Harrington,**

A godly Gentlewoman, and friendly in his trouble to him and his.

Your most gentle commendations, whereof this messenger made remembrance unto me, was for two causes very comfortable. First, for that thereby I understood of the state of your health and bodily welfare; for the which I give thanks unto GOD, who grant the long continuance thereof, to his honour and fatherly good will, whereunto I will daily say, Amen. And further, I was refreshed by the expressing of your mindful friendship towards me far unworthy thereof. Wherein I take occasion of much rejoicing in our so gracious a God and merciful Father; who, as he hath in his unmeasurable mercy by faith handfasted us his

chosen children unto his dear son our Christ, as the spiritual spouse of such a heavenly husband ; so he linketh us by love one unto another, being by that bond compact together with charitable readiness to do good one unto another : so that first to the glory of our God and his Christ, then to our own joying in the testimony of a good conscience, and last of all to the stopping of the mouths and confusion of our adversaries, we bear the badge as the right spouse of our Christ—which he himself noteth in this his saying : Herein shall all men know that ye be my disciples, if ye love one another. John 13.

Then farther, by this bond of mutual love, is set forth the fatherly providence of God towards us his children : that though it be he which careth for us, in whom we live, move, and be, who feedeth all flesh with bodily sustenance, yet hath he appointed us in these present necessities, to stand in his stead one unto another. Wherein is not only set forth our dignity, but also that unspeakable accord and unity among us the many members in this mystical body. And though that, either for lack of ability, or else through distance of place, power and opportunity of helping one another do fail ; yet wonderful is the working of God's children through the Spirit of prayer, as whereby they fetch all heavenly influence from Christ their celestial head by his Spirit, to be measured severally as may serve to the maintenance of the whole body. Thus doth our faithful prayer which we make one for another, distribute and scatter God's bountiful blessings both ghostly and bodily, when ordinary ability lacketh, and when the arm may not reach such God's riches. According hereunto I well perceive and understand your readiness to do good unto all : and especially I have experience of your ready good will towards me, in your hearty desire to stretch out your helping hand to relieve my lack, and of your help to be extended to me in the other spiritual sort by your good prayer, I doubt not ; as I also therein assure you of my help, being all that I may do, and yet the same not so much as I would do. John 15.

My need concerning bodily necessities, is as yet furnished by God's provision, so that I am not driven to any extremity wherefore to be burdenous<sup>1</sup> to you, as your gentle benevolence provoketh me : the Lord reward you therefore. <sup>1</sup>burdensome

If God make me worthy to be his witness at this present, in giving this corruptible body to burn for the testimony of his truth, it is enough for me to say unto you, that I have a poor wife and child whom I love in the Lord, and whom I know for my sake you will tender<sup>2</sup> when I am departed hence. To be short, I say unto you as I say unto myself, Rejoice in the Lord, cast your care on him, for he careth for us, &c. and according to the time present, let us, with our Christ and all his dear disciples, weep ; let us with him (I say) weep awhile, that we may laugh with him <sup>2</sup>take care of

everlastingly. Let us consider of what sort of people they were, whom St. John by revelation did behold in the heavenly bliss and everlasting joy. These are they (said the angel unto him), which came out of great tribulation, and made their garments white in the blood of the Lamb: and therefore are they in the presence of the seat of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth in the seat will dwell among them; they shall hunger no more, neither thirst, neither shall the sun light on them, neither any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the seat shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Though we sow in sorrow, we shall reap in great joy; and for this hope's sake we seek the things above, and forsake the things present.

I beseech you, give most hearty salutations unto my good lady Fitzwilliams, unto whom I wish as to you and to myself in all good things. The grace of God be always with you and that good family. Amen.

L. S.

### Another Letter to Mistress Lucy Harrington.

Grace and mercy, &c. It happeneth oftentimes that abundance of matter, bringing with it much vehemence of friendly affection, maketh men dumb: and even then chiefly when there is most eager purpose of speaking, silence doth suppress, and causeth the party so affected, imperfectly to express, that he goeth about to utter. Such impediment, by much matter mingled with fervency of affection, feel I sometimes in myself, letting<sup>1</sup> the utterance either by tongue or writing of the abundance of the heart. The love of our most gracious God and heavenly Father, bestowed upon us in the merits of His Christ our Saviour, who may by conception of mind comprehend, passing indeed all understanding? Much less may the same by any means be expressly uttered. And as such heavenly blessings, which by faith we fetch from above, be inexplicable; so is it hard to utter, when the faithful are set on fire by love, their readiness to reach forth and to give by charity, as by faith they have received. But, alas, we carry this treasure in earthen vessels: many times faith is feeble, and then love loseth her fervour. Pray we therefore—Lord, increase our faith; and love forthwith will be on fire.

And immortal thanks be given unto our God, who in our Christ hath bestowed upon us the first-fruits of his Spirit, who crieth in our hearts, Abba, Father. And as St. Paul saith, Seeing we have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore have I spoken; we also believe and therefore we speak.

Rom 8.  
1 Cor. 4

1 hinder-  
ing

Yea, God knoweth, this spirit putteth in us a mind to speak ; but in attempting thereof, we are driven with Moses to say, O Lord, I am slow mouthed and of uncircumcised lips ; and with Jeremy, O Lord, I cannot speak. Albeit that this infancy refraineth<sup>1</sup> the opening of such abundance of heart in my tender Christian duty to be declared towards you, yet I beseech you let this be settled in your understanding : that as St. Paul expresseth unto his Corinthians, that they were in his heart either to live or to die, with many other such sayings, uttered unto them and the Galatians, expressing his vehement affection towards them ; so in some part I would be like affected towards all God's children, and especially towards you whom I know in Christ, and to whom I will not say how much I am indebted. I thank you for your great friendship and tender good will towards my wife : yea, that good gracious God recompence you, which may worthily with the more countervail<sup>2</sup> the same, and fulfil that which lacketh of thankful duty in us.

*1 this inability hindereth*

*2 who can suitably with more things reward*

And because of that which heretofore I have conceived of you, and of your love more than natural towards me and mine, I make myself thus bold to lay this burden upon you, even the care and charge of my said poor wife ; I mean, to be unto her a mother and a mistress, to rule and direct her by your discreet counsel. I know she conceiveth of you the same that I do, and is thankful unto God with me for such a friend ; and therefore, I beseech you even for Christ's sake, put never from you this friendly charge over her, whether I live longer or shortly depart. But to charge you otherwise, thanks be to God, neither I neither she have any such extreme need : if we had, I would be as bold with you as mine own mother. I beseech you, give my hearty salutations unto Master Fitzwilliams and my good lady, with thanks also for my poor wife and child : the Lord recompence them.

L. S.

**To his godly and faithful Wife,**

And to his dear friends Master Robert Harrington and Master Hurland.

Grace and comfort, &c. Dear wife, rejoice in our gracious God and his our Christ, and give thanks most humbly and heartily to him for this day's work, that in any part I, most unworthy wretch, should be made worthy to bear witness unto his everlasting verity ; which Antichrist, with his, by main force (I perceive), and by most impudent pride and boasting, will go about to suppress. Remember God always, my dear wife, and so shall God's blessing light upon you and our Samuel. Oh remember always my words, for Christ's sake : be merry, and grudge not against God—and pray, pray ! We be all merry here, thanks be

unto God, who in his Christ hath given us great cause to be merry; by whom he hath prepared for us such a kingdom, and doth and will give unto us some little taste thereof even in this life, and to all such as are desirous to take it. Blessed (saith our Christ) be they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for such shall be satisfied. Let us go, yea, let us run to seek such treasure, and that with whole purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord; to find such riches in his heavenly word, through his Spirit obtained by prayer. My dear friends and brethren, Master Harrington and Master Hurland, pray, pray! Spiritus quidem promptus est, caro autem infirma. When I look upon myself, quid ego stupidus et attonitus habeo quod dicam, nisi illud Petri, Exi a me, Domine, quia homo peccator sum. But then feel I that sweet comfort, Lucerna pedibus meis verbum Domini, et lumen semitis meis, et hæc mea est consolatio in humilitate mea. Then wax I bold with the same Peter to say, Domine, ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ eternæ habes.

This comfort have I, when the Giver thereof doth give it. But I look for battles, which the root of unfaithfulness, the which I feel in me, will most eagerly give unto my conscience when we come once to the combat. We be (I ween) within the sound of the trump of our enemies; play, ye that be abroad, the part of Moses, orantes in omni loco, sustollentes puras manus, and God's people shall prevail; yea, our blood shall be their perdition who do most triumphantly spill it; and we then, being in the hands of our God, shall shine in his kingdom, and shall stand in great stedfastness against them which have dealt extremely with us. And when these our enemies shall thus see us, they shall be vexed with horrible fear, and shall wonder at the hastiness of the sudden health, and shall say with themselves, having inward sorrow and mourning for very anguish of mind, These are they whom we sometime had in derision and jested upon: we fools thought their lives to be very madness, and their end to be without honour; but, lo they are accounted among the children of God! The blessing of God be with you all! Salute, I pray you, my sister B. S., with other our friends in the same house. God's grace keep them, with all the rest of our godly acquaintance, lovers of the truth and furtherers of the true confession of the same: whom all I bid most heartily to be merry in the Lord, rejoicing in hope, preparing themselves to be patient in tribulation, with continuance in prayer.—Let somebody buy for me a pencil of lead to write withal, for I shall hardly have pen and ink here, since all liberty of writing is taken away from us.



## Another Letter to his Wife,

And to Master Harrington and Master Hurland.

Grace and comfort, &c. Wife, you shall do best not to come often unto the grate where the porter may see you. Put not yourself in danger where it needs not: you shall, I think, shortly come far enough into danger, by keeping faith and a good conscience; which (dear wife) I trust you do not slack to make reckoning and account upon, by exercising your inward man in meditation of God's most holy word, being the sustenance of the soul, and also by giving yourself to humble prayer: for these two things be the very means how to be made members of our Christ meet to inherit his kingdom.

Do this (dear wife) in earnest, and not leaving off: and so we too shall, with our Christ and all his chosen children, enjoy the merry world in the everlasting immortality; whereas here will nothing else be found but extreme misery, even of them which most greedily seek this worldly wealth; and so, if we two continue God's children grafted in our Christ, the same God's blessing which we receive, shall also settle upon our Samuel. Though we do shortly depart hence, and leave the poor infant (to our seeming) at all adventures, yet shall he have our gracious God to be his God: for so hath he said, and he cannot lie; I will be thy God, saith he, and the God of thy seed. Yea, if you leave him in the wild wilderness destitute of all help, being called of God to do his will, either to die for the confession of Christ, either<sup>1</sup> any<sup>1</sup> or work of obedience; that God which heard the cry of the little poor infant of Agar, Sarah's handmaiden, and did succour it, will do the like to the child of you or any other fearing him, and putting your trust in him. And if we lack faith, as we do indeed many times, let us call for it; and we shall have the increase both of it, and also of any other good grace needful for us, and be merry in GOD, in whom also I am very merry and joyful.

O Lord, what great cause of rejoicing have we, to think upon that kingdom which he vouchsafes, for his Christ's sake, freely to give us, forsaking ourselves and following him! Dear wife, this is truly to follow him, even to take up our cross and follow him; and then as we suffer with him, so shall we reign with him everlastingly. Amen. Shortly, shortly! Amen.

My dear friends, Master Harrington and Master Hurland, pray, pray, and be merry in God: and I beseech you, as you may, let the good brethren abroad be put in mind of our dear tried brethren and sisters, who have (the Lord be praised) made known their constancy in confessing the truth, to the glory of GOD, and

comfort (I doubt not) of his church abroad. Thus have they sown spiritual things, confessing Christ. I trust they will not be forgetful, that they may reap, of them which are of ability and at liberty, their carnal things. Hereof I speak now, because of my tender desire towards these dear brethren here now in bonds and in other places; and also for that I doubt whether I may have wherewith to write hereafter. The keeper saith, he must needs see that we write not at all. The devil roareth: but be of good cheer; he will shortly be trodden under foot, and the rather by the blood of martyrs. Salute, in my most hearty manner, good Master Harrington and my good Lady F. I am theirs as long as I live, and pray for them: desire them to do likewise for me, and for all us sheep appointed to the slaughter.

A prisoner in the Lord,

Laurence Saunders.

### An Answer to a Friend of his,

Who sent to know what Doctor Weston did at the Marshalsea.

Master Weston came to confer with Master Grimbold; and what he hath with him concluded, I know not: pray that it may be to God's glory. Amen. Master Weston of his gentleness visited me, and offered me friendship in his worldly wily sort, &c. I had not so much manner<sup>1</sup> to take it at his hands, saying that I was well enough, and ready cheerfully to abide the extremity, to keep thereby a good conscience. You be asleep in sin, said he. I would awake (quoth I), and do not forget Vigilate et orate, &c. What church was there (quoth he), thirty years past? What church was there in Elias' time? quoth I, &c. Joan of Kent (quoth he), was of your church. No (quoth I), we did condemn her as a heretic. Who was of your church (quoth he), thirty years past? Such (quoth I) as that Romish Antichrist and his rabble had reputed and condemned as heretics. Wickliffe, Thorpe, Oldcastle (quoth he), &c. Yea (quoth I), and many more, as stories do tell. The bishop of Rome hath (quoth he) long time played a part in your railing sermons; but now be ye sure he must play another manner of part. More pity (quoth I); and yet some comfort it is to see how that the best learned, wisest, and holiest of you all, have heretofore had him to play a part likewise in your sermons and writings; though now, to please the world, ye turn with the weathercock. Did you ever (quoth he) hear me preach against the bishop of Rome? No (quoth I), for I never heard you preach, but I trow you have been no wiser than other, &c.—Pray, pray! God keep that family and bless it.

Laurence Saunders.

<sup>1</sup> manner  
there

## To his Wife,

And other of his dear friends and lovers in the Lord.

Grace and comfort in Christ Jesu, our only comfort in all extreme assaults, be with you. Amen.

Fain would this flesh make strange of that which the spirit doth embrace. Oh, Lord, how loth is this loitering sluggard to pass forth in God's path! It fantasieth, forsooth, much fear of fraybugs;<sup>1</sup> and were it not for the force of faith pulling it forward <sup>1 spec-  
ires</sup> by the bridle of God's most sweet promises, and of hope pricking on behind, great adventure there were of fainting by the way. But blessed and everlastingly blessed be that heavenly Father of ours, who, in his Christ our sufficient Saviour, hath vouchsafed so to shine in our heart, that he giveth us the light of the knowledge <sup>2 Cor. 4.</sup> of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ: and having this treasure in our earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be God's, and not ours, we are, according to his good will, troubled on every side, yet are we not without shift; we are in poverty, but yet not without that is sufficient. We suffer persecution, but are not forsaken therein. We are cast down, nevertheless we perish not. We bear in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might appear also in our bodies.

Wherefore, by the grace of our Christ, we shall not be wearied nor be dismayed by this our probation through the fire of affliction, as though some strange thing had happened unto us: but by his power we shall rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's passions;<sup>1</sup> that when he doth appear, we may be merry and glad, <sup>1 suf-  
fering</sup> knowing that our tribulation which is momentary and light, pre-  
pareth an exceeding and eternal weight of glory unto us, not looking on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy: he that <sup>Psa. 126.</sup> goeth on his way now weeping, and scattereth his good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy and bring his sheaves with him. Then, then shall the Lord wipe away all tears from our eyes. Then, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, <sup>1 Cor. 15.</sup> Death is swallowed up in victory; Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Yea, thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now then in the mean season, it remaineth for us to follow St. Peter's bidding. Let them, saith he, that are troubled <sup>1 Peter 4.</sup> according to the will of God, commit their souls to him with well doing, as unto a faithful Creator and Maker. He is our Maker. We be his handy work and creatures, whom now when he hath made, he doth not so leave and forsake as the carpenter doth the

ship, leaving it at all adventures to be tossed in the tempest ; but he comforteth us his creatures, and in him we live, move, and have our being. Yea, not only that, but now that he hath in his dear Christ repaired us, being before utterly decayed, and redeemed us, purging us unto himself as a peculiar people by the blood of His Son, he hath put on a most tender good will and fatherly affection towards us, never to forget us ; unto whom by such sure promises he hath plighted such faith, that though it were possible that the mother could forget her infant, and not be tender hearted to the child of her womb, yet may it not be that his faithful believers should see him fall into forgetfulness. He biddeth us to cast our care on him, and telleth us that he assuredly careth for us. And what though for a season he suffereth us to be troubled in the troublous tempests of temptation, and seemeth in much anger to have given us over and forgotten us ? Let not us for all that leave off to put our trust in him ; but let us with godly Job conclude<sup>1</sup> in ourselves and say, Yea, though he kill me, yet will I put my trust in him. Let us with the blessed Abraham in hope even contrary to hope, by belief, lean unto that our loving Lord, who though for our probation he suffereth us to be afflicted and proved for a season, yet will he not be always chiding, neither keepeth he his anger for ever ; for he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust. Wherefore look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is his mercy towards them which fear him. Look how wide the east is from the west, so far hath he set our sins from us. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him.

Oh what great cause of rejoicing have we therefore in our most gracious God ! We cannot but burst out into the praising of such a bountiful benefactor, and say with the Psalmist, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

My dear wife, riches I have none to leave behind me, wherewith to endow you after the worldly manner : but that treasure of tasting how sweet Christ is unto hungry consciences, (whereof, I thank my Christ, I do feel part, and would feel more,) I bequeath unto you, and to the rest of my friends ; to all you I say, that love me in the Lord, to retain the same insense<sup>2</sup> of heart always, Pray, pray ! I am merry, and I trust shall be merry, in spite of all the devils in Hell. I utterly refuse<sup>3</sup> myself, and I resign myself wholly unto my Christ, in whom I know I shall be strong as he seeth needful. Pray, pray, pray !

L. Saunders.

## To his Wife.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord. Entirely beloved wife, even as unto mine own soul and body, so do I daily in my hearty prayer wish unto you; for I do daily, twice at the least, in this sort remember you. And I do not doubt (dear wife) but that both I and you, as we be written in the book of life, so we shall together enjoy the same everlastingly, through the grace and mercy of God, our dear Father in his Son our Christ. And for this present life, let us wholly appoint<sup>1</sup> ourselves to the will of our good God, to glorify him either by life or by death: and even that same merciful Lord make us worthy to honour him either way, as pleaseth him. Amen. I am merry, I thank my God and my Christ, in whom, and through whom, I shall (I know) be able to fight a good fight, and finish a good course, and then receive the crown which is laid up in store for me, and all the true soldiers of Christ. <sup>1 Tim. 4.</sup> Wherefore, wife, let us, in the name of our God, fight lustily to overcome the flesh, the devil, and the world. What our harness and weapons be in this kind of fight, look the sixth unto the Ephesians; and pray, pray, pray! I would that you make no suit for me in any wise. Thank, you know whom, for her most sweet and comfortable putting me in remembrance of my journey whither I am passing. God send us all good speed, and a joyful meeting. I have too few such friends to further me in that journey, which is indeed the greatest friendship. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

A prisoner in the Lord,

Laurence Saunders.

## To his Wife.

Grace, mercy, and peace. &c. Dear wife, even that our merciful God and most loving Father, whom we call upon daily, and of whose mercies we daily taste, and who will be a most tender Father unto all them which heartily turn unto him, believe in him and cast their care upon him—that our good God (I say), even for his Son our sweet Christ's sake, be your helper and keeper. Amen, Amen. And now you see his goodness towards you by many ways, provoking you to embrace him as your only God and only comfort. He is more ready mercifully to receive you, than you can be ready to run unto him for help. He saith by his prophet. I will favour them even as a father doth favour his child that offendeth. And in another place, Is it possible that a mother can forget her child which she hath borne? if she be forgetful, yet will not I forget thee. Thus saith he, unto all such as unfeignedly seek him. Essay 49.

1 pro-  
tection

You be in the Lord's bonds, and in his blessed tuition,<sup>1</sup> I do not doubt. Commend yourself, and that which he hath given you, unto his merciful and blessed will; and so do I, and shall do, by his goodness. Exercise yourself in the comfortable remembrance of God's manifold and merciful promises. Put him in remembrance of the same by often prayer, and put your whole trust in him; who for his name's sake, his promise sake, and for his Christ's sake, will do that is best for you. Commend me to all the godly there. Send me word in any wise if you lack. Take heed that you be no more chargeable unto them at whose house you be, than you shall fully content them, in any wise. God keep you.

### A letter written to Stephen Gardiner,

Bishop of Winchester, and then Lord Chancellor; as an answer to some things wherewith he had before charged him.

He mean-  
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public  
preaching  
of God's  
word in  
his own  
parish.  
This pro-  
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was to in-  
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preaching  
of God's  
holy word.  
<sup>1</sup> impar-  
tially

Touching the cause of mine imprisonment, I doubt whether I have broken any law, either proclamation. In my doctrine I did not; forasmuch as, at the time, it was permitted by the proclamation to use according unto our consciences such service as was then established. My doctrine was then agreeable unto my conscience and the service then used. The act which I did was such as, being indifferently<sup>1</sup> weighed, sounded to no breaking of the proclamation, or at least to no wilful breaking of it, forasmuch as I caused no bell to be rung, neither occupied I any place in the pulpit after the order of sermons or lectures. But be it that I did break the proclamation: this long time of continuance in prison may be thought to be more than sufficient punishment for such a fault.

Acts 24.

Touching the charging of me with my religion, I say with St. Paul, Confiteor hoc, quod juxta viam quam vocant hæresim, sic colo patrium Deum, credens omnibus quæ in lege et prophetis scripta sunt, spem habens in Deum, &c. Quin in hoc et ipse studeo, sine offendiculo conscientiam habere erga Deum et erga homines semper. That is to say: This I confess, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my forefathers, believing all things which are written in the law and prophets, and have hope towards God, &c. And herein I endeavour myself to have always a clear conscience towards God and towards men: so that, God I call to witness, I have a conscience. And this my conscience is not grounded upon any vain fantasy, but upon the infallible verity of God's word, with the witnessing of his chosen church agreeable unto the same. It is an easy thing for them which take Christ for their true Pastor, to discern the voice of their true Shepherd from the voice of wolves, hirelings and strangers; forasmuch as

Christ saith, Oves meæ vocem meam audiunt; that is, My sheep hear my voice. Yea, and thereby they shall have the gift to know the right voice of the true Shepherd, and so to follow him and to avoid the contrary, as he also saith, Oves pastorem sequuntur, quia noverunt vocem ejus; alienum vero non sequuntur, sed aufugiunt ab eo, quia non noverunt vocem alienorum. That is, The sheep follow the shepherd, for they know his voice: a stranger will they not follow, but fly from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger. Such inward inspiration doth the Holy Ghost put into the children of God, being indeed taught of God, but otherwise unable to understand the true way of their salvation. And albeit that the wolf, as Christ saith, cometh in sheep's clothing, yet he saith, Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos; that is, By their fruits ye shall know them. For there be certain fruits whereby the wolf is bewrayed; notwithstanding that otherwise, in sundry sorts of devout holiness, in outward show, he seemeth never so simple a sheep. That the Romish religion is ravening and wolfish, it is apparent in three principal points.

First, It robbeth God of his due and only honour.

Secondly, It taketh away the true comfort of conscience, in obscuring or rather burying of Christ and his office of salvation.

Thirdly, It spoileth God of his true worship and service, in spirit and truth, appointed in his prescript commandments; and driveth men unto the inconvenience<sup>1</sup> against the which Christ with the prophet Esaias doth speak sharply: Populus hic labiis me honorat, cor autem eorum longe a me est; sed frustra me colunt, docentes doctrinas et præcepta hominum. That is, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me: they worship me in vain, teaching the doctrine and precepts of men. And in another place: Rejicitis mandatum Dei, ut traditionem vestram statuatis. That is, Ye cast away the commandments of God, to maintain your own traditions. Wherefore I, in conscience weighing the Romish religion, and, by indifferent<sup>2</sup> discussing thereof, finding the foundation unstedfast, and the building thereupon but vain; and on the other side, having my conscience framed after the right and uncorrupt religion, ratified and fully established by the word of God and the consent of his true church; neither may nor do intend, by God's gracious assistance, to be pulled one iota from the same, no, though an angel from heaven should preach any other doctrine. And although either for lack of so learned knowledge and profound judgment, or of so expedite utterance of that I do know and judge, as shall be required, I shall not be able sufficiently to answer for the convincing of the gainsayer; and albeit I cannot explicitâ fide (as they call it) conceive all that is to be conceived, discuss all that is to be discussed, effectually express all that is to be expressed; nevertheless, I do bind myself, as by humble simplicity, so by my fidem implicitam (as it

John 10.

1 impro-  
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Essay 26.  
Matt 26.

2 impar-  
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is called) to wrap my belief in the credit thereof, that no authority of that Romish religion, repugnant thereunto, shall by any means remove me from the same.

A prisoner in the Lord,

L. Saunders.

**To his Wife, and other of his Friends,**

After his condemnation to the fire, and a little before his death.

Grace in Christ, with the consolation of the Holy Ghost, to the keeping of faith and a good conscience, confirm and keep you for ever, vessels to God's glory. Amen.

Oh what worthy thanks can be given to our gracious God, for his unmeasurable mercies plentifully poured upon us! And I, most unworthy wretch, cannot but at this present from the bottom of my heart pour out the bewailing of my great ingratitude and unkindness, towards so gracious a God, and loving a Lord. I beseech you all, as for my other many sins, so especially for this sin of mine unthankfulness against God, crave for me, in commending me unto God's mercy in Christ by your hearty prayers, pardon, and forgiveness. To stand to number these mercies in particulars, were to number the drops of the sea, and sand on the shore, and the stars in the sky. Oh, my dear wife, and ye the rest of my friends that love me in the Lord, rejoice, rejoice with me; rejoice (I say) with thanksgiving for this my present promotion to be made worthy to magnify my God; not only in my life by my slow mouth and uncircumcised lips to bear testimony unto his truth, but also by my blood to seal the same, to the glory of God, and confirming of his church.

And as yet, I testify unto you, the comfort in my sweet Christ doth drive from my phantasy the fear of death. But if my dear husband do for my trial leave me alone to myself, I know in what case I shall then be: but if for proof he do so, I am sure he will not be far from me. Though he stand behind the wall, and hide himself (as Solomon saith in his mystical ballad), yet will he peep in by a crest<sup>1</sup> to see how I do. He is so tender-hearted a Joseph, that though he speak roughly to his brethren and handle them hardly, yea and put his best beloved-brother Benjamin in prison, yet can he not contain himself from weeping with us and upon us, with clipping<sup>2</sup> us about the neck and kissing us: such a brother is our Christ unto us all. Wherefore hasten to go unto him, as Jacob did, and his sons and family, leaving their own country and acquaintance. Yea, this Joseph of ours hath obtained for us his brethren, that Pharaoh the infidel shall minister unto us chariots, wherein to be carried to come unto him: as we have experience how our very adversaries help us unto our everlasting bliss, by

Cant. 2.

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the door

2 taking

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their speedy dispatch ; yea, how all things have been helping unto us, blessed be our God. And be not afraid of fraybugs<sup>1</sup> by the way : fear rather the everlasting fire, fear the serpent that hath a sting—and that is this bodily death to them which are not grafted in Christ, being without faith and a good conscience, and so not acquainted with Christ, the killer of death.

But, O my dear friends and brethren, we (we, whom God hath delivered from the power of darkness, and hath translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, by putting off the old man, and by faith putting on the new, even our Lord Jesus Christ, his wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and redemption : we, I say,) have to triumph against that terrible and spiteful serpent the devil, sin, death, hell, and damnation ; for Christ our brazen serpent hath pulled away the sting thereof, so that now we may boldly in beholding the serpent, this bodily death, spoiled of her sting, triumph, and with our Christ and all his elect say, O death, where is thy sting ? O hell, where is thy victory ? Thanks be unto God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore be merry, my dear friends and brethren ; always remember the Lord, my fellow-heirs of the everlasting kingdom : rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, continue in prayer ; and for us pray, now already appointed to the slaughter, that we may be unto our heavenly Father a fat offering and an accepted sacrifice. I may hardly write unto you ; wherefore let these few words be a witness of commendations to you, and all them which love us in the faith, and namely unto my flock, among whom I am now resident by God's providence, but as a prisoner. And, although I am not among them as I have been, to preach to them out of a pulpit, yet doth God now preach unto them by me, and by this mine imprisonment and captivity, which now I suffer among them, for Christ's gospel's sake, bidding them to beware of the Romish antichristian religion and kingdom, requiring and charging them to abide in the truth of Christ, which is shortly to be sealed with the blood of their pastor ; who though he be unworthy of such a ministry, yet Christ their high pastor is to be regarded ; whose truth hath been taught them by me, is witnessed by my chains, and (by his power) shall be by my death also. Be not careful, good wife, cast your care on the Lord, and commend me unto him in repentant prayer, as I do you and our Samuel, whom even at the stake I will offer, as myself, unto God. Fare ye well all in Christ, in hope to be joined with you in joy everlasting. This hope is laid up in my bosom. Amen, amen ; pray, pray !

Out of the Counter in Bread-street,

L. Saunders.

<sup>1</sup> *spec-  
tres*

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 15.

To this  
his flock  
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also a fruit  
ful letter  
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and charg-  
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is not yet  
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light.

To his Wife, and other of his friends.

Grace and comfort in Christ. Amen. Dear wife, be merry in the mercies of our Christ; and ye also, my dear friends. Pray, pray for us, every body. We be shortly to be dispatched hence unto our good Christ. Amen, amen. Wife, I would you sent me my shirt, which you know whereunto it is consecrated. Let it be sewed down on both the sides, and not open. Oh, my heavenly Father! look upon me in the face of thy Christ, or else I shall not be able to abide thy countenance, such is my filthiness. He will do so; and therefore I will not be afraid what sin, death, hell, and damnation can do against me. O wife, always remember the Lord. God bless you. Yea, he will bless thee, good wife, and thy poor boy also: only cleave thou unto him, and he will give thee all things. Pray, pray, pray!

To Master Robert Glover and John Glover,

Two worthy brethren, as in the flesh, so in the Lord; the one afterward a Martyr, the other a faithful confessor.

My dearly beloved and mine own hearts in the Lord, Masters Glovers, with all yours, and the rest which with you unfeignedly fear God and comfort yourselves in his sweet Christ: I beseech you be thankful unto that merciful Lord always for his unspeakable goodness, and, among other, for me his most unworthy minister. I thank my God Christ, I was never better acquainted with him in all my life; and I perceive he is no less loving than his word warranteth him to be. Be thankful, I say, and pray, pray! *multum valet deprecatio iusti*. I was at this present much occupied, else I would have enlarged in some matter needful, &c. The devil roareth, because he cannot have his foul will; he must be at length (I ween) eased by the blood of God's saints; and yet that shall be his bane, be sure, and that shortly, by God's goodness. Be merry and fear not, little flock, saith our sweet Comforter, for it pleaseth your father to provide a kingdom for you. Etiam, Amen. *Veni, Domine Jesu, veni cito*. The heavenly blessing of God be with you all.—In the Marshalsea, 28th October, 1553.

A prisoner of the Lord, the Lord's name be blessed for ever,

Laurence Saunders.

**Another Letter to Masters Glogers,**

Written the same morning that he was burnt.

Grace and consolation in our sweet Saviour Christ. Oh, my dear brethren, whom I love in the Lord, being loved of you also in the Lord, be merry and rejoice for me, now ready to go up to that mine inheritance, which I myself indeed am most unworthy of—but my dear Christ is worthy, who hath purchased the same for me with so dear a price. Make haste, my dear brethren, to come unto me, that we may be merry, eo gaudio quod nemo tollet a nobis. Oh wretched sinner that I am, not thankful unto this my Father, who hath vouched me worthy to be a vessel unto his honour. But, O Lord, now accept my thanks, though they proceed out of a not enough circumcised heart.—Salute my good sisters your wives: and, good sisters, fear the Lord. Salute all other that love us in the truth. God's blessing be with you always. Amen. Even now towards the offering of a burnt sacrifice! Oh, my Christ, help, or else I perish.

Laurence Saunders.

**A Letter written to a certain Backslider**

From the truth of God's word, which he had both professed and taught; the which, because it is thought of some, albeit not certainly known, to be written by Master Saunders, we have here annexed unto his letters.

In mine own name, and in the name of many other your old familiars and acquaintance, I do write unto you in heaviness of heart, for that we have heard of your fall. Oh how much better had it been for you never to have set your hand to the plough, than negligently to look back; yea, and foolishly to follow that plough that tilleth not God's field, but turneth up the roots of that seed which in times past you yourself have sown. Alas, how foolish a builder were you, that would enterprise to build upon the rock Christ, seeing in yourself not only the lack of those things which be required to the finishing of that work, but also the lack of a will to have them; as appeareth by that, that you go about to overthrow that little which you seemed to have mightily builded upon that rock.

How foolish a virgin have you declared yourself to be, which have gone forth to meet the bridegroom, and tarried so long for his coming, not having oil in store, but are now driven, when you hear the voice of the forerunner, to seek at them that sell? You banqueted with the children of the bridegroom so long as he was Matt. 25.

with us, but now he is gone, you leave us alone to fast. You were contented to be fed at Christ's hand with five thousand, but when he willeth you not to seek the meat that perisheth, you depart. The children of Israel were much to be blamed, for that they desired to be in Egypt again; and yet was their lack and labour then more in desert than yours in London. Alas, wretched man! what hath caused thee thus to cast away thyself, once knowing the truth, and to take in hand to be a minister in Antichrist's church? Art thou so soon weary of the heavenly manna, and so ready to return to thy old vomit again? We thought thou hadst been so clean escaped through the word of grace, that thou hadst been a worthy man to be a comfort to them that stand, a succour to the weak, and a help to them that fall: and art thou now rolled in thy filthy puddle again, and art become an helper to put other into the same? Oh more than damnable doings, the forgiveness whereof far passeth the hope of man! And were it not that things impossible to man are possible with God, we should utterly despair of thy return. But knowing that with God there is no impossibility, we will not only advertise thee to remember from whence thou art fallen, that thou mayest seek to rise again, but we will also pray that he to whom thy return is possible, will vouchsafe of his infinite mercies to work it in thee.

Thou hast with Judas sold thy most loving and gentle Master: repent thee, Peter, and no doubt thou shalt find mercy. To fall is a thing annexed to the corrupt nature of man; but to lie still in the filthy puddle of perdition, is to despise God, the author and first maker of nature. To fall into the darkness of error is a point of man's ignorance; but to walk on still in darkness, is to love darkness more than light. To wink at the brightness of the sun, is a weakness of the eyes; but to fly the light is to be of the night. To leave the rough way that leadeth unto life, and walk in the pleasant way that leadeth unto perdition, is to love this life; but not to leave the way when we are warned, is to despise the life to come. Briefly, to leave the good things undone that God commandeth, and to do that evil which he forbiddeth, is to deserve everlasting damnation at his hand that rewardeth every man according to his works: but not to repent of that evil, when God calleth by his means, is to kindle the wrath of God against the impenitent and obstinate sinner.

Lest you therefore should be found a despiser of God the author of nature, a lover of darkness more than light; not of the day but altogether of the night; a lover of this life and an hater of the life to come; and finally, such a one as would kindle the wrath of God against you; repent, and come again to Christ. Remember what joy there is in heaven among the angels, at the conversion of a sinner. Forget not thy merciful spouse, which

would not cast off the adulterous Israel when she had committed whoredom with stocks and stones, notwithstanding that he had purged her from her filth, and married her to himself. Be mindful of that loving Lord, which hath said, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he convert and live; and in what day soever the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, I will remember his iniquity no more. What should separate us from the love of this Lord? What should make us to fly from this our captain? Should the weariness of an arm? Should the lack of such things as the phantasy would have? Better it were for us to enter into life with weary arms and thin cheeks, than with lovely countenances and lusty limbs to be cast into hell-fire. Make not provision for the flesh with the loss of your soul. Believe him that hath promised all things necessary to them that seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He hath not at any time deceived you: why then should you seek such shameful shifts to make provision for the flesh? Have not you yourself had experience of the care that he taketh for them that put their trust in him? And now, why are you fallen from him for the belly's sake?

Ezek. 18.

No weariness should discourage us to bear the Lord's armour or to fight under his banner, nor lack cause us to shrink from him.

This have I written to call you back again, if you be not clean gone out of the way. But and if you be so given over to error, that you think light to be darkness and darkness to be light, good to be evil and evil to be good, Christ to be Belial and Belial to be Christ, the temple of God to be the synagogue of Satan, and the synagogue of Satan to be the temple of God; then have I nothing to say unto you, but The Lord confound both you and all such. But with God's grace we trust to hear better of you.

The 20th of September, 1555.

**A Letter sent to Master Farrer, Bishop of St. David's, Doctor Taylor, Master Bradford, and Master Philpot;**

Which, albeit it was written before his condemnation, we thought good here to place as it came unto our hands.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.

Good fathers and dear brethren, be thankful unto our most gracious God, which hath preserved us, and shall (I doubt not), from blaspheming his blessed name; yea, not only that, but also, ex ore infantium et lactentium perficiet laudem, &c. They offer us (on God's name) our liberty and pardon, so that we will rise with them unto that faith which we with them were fallen from. Yea or No, must be answered in haste. They will not admit any needful circumstances, but all (as heretofore) most detestable and abominable. Rise with them we must unto the unity. A pardon

(say I) of me must not be so dearly purchased. A pardon I desire, for to live with an unclogged conscience. 'The Donatists,' say they, 'sought for such singularity, but they were not meet to live in a commonwealth; no more be you, as you shall shortly understand. Wherefore away with him;' yea the time was named within this sevensnight. There be twelve hours in the day. Death shall be welcome (say I), as being looked for long since; and yet do justice ye were best, for Abel's blood cried—you wot what. The Spirit of God be upon you, and God save your honours. Thus departed I from them. Pray, pray! Ah, ah, puer sum, nescio loqui. My brother P. shall shew you more herein. By him send me word what you have done. Fare ye well, and pray, pray! I would gladly meet with my good brother Bradford on the back-side about eleven of the clock. Before that time I cannot start out, we have such out-walkers; but then will they be at dinner.

Yours, as you know,

Laurence Saunders.

### Another Letter to Mistress Harrington,

Written also before his condemnation, which, as it is here last in order, coming last unto our hands, so it seemeth to be the first he wrote unto her.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Jesu Christ. Amen.

Such is the knot wherewith true Christians are compact and joined together, as members in the mystical body of Christ, that no man can express the commodities<sup>1</sup> so well as they which thereof have experience; and yet neither can they by words be able to utter that which therein the conscience conceiveth, passing in deed all understanding. And hereof can I, unworthy wretch, somewhat speak of experience; for that, by exercise of the inward man and practice of conscience, I have some acquaintancé with my good God and his sweet Christ: and namely<sup>2</sup> now in this my present estate, it pleaseth that merciful Lord to give me some taste of his mercies, by the assurance and the sealing up of his gracious promises in my conscience by his Holy Spirit; whereby I do feel the incomparable benefit of his heavenly blessing, poured upon us his chosen congregation.

We be called in Christ with a holy vocation. We be grafted in him as branches, in that so heavenly a vine. We be knit unto him as the sundry members of that body, whereof he only is the head; in whom all the body is coupled together in every joint, wherewith one ministereth unto another according to the operation, as every part hath his measure, and increaseth the

John 11.

<sup>1</sup> *advantages*

<sup>2</sup> *particularly*

<sup>2</sup> Tim. 1.  
John 15.

Ephes. 4

body unto the edifying of itself in love. And we be handfasted unto him, as the spiritual spouse of so heavenly a husband, even Eph. 5. flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone: so that to the faithful believer what can be lacking unto perfect felicity, in such a communion and precious partaking with Christ in all heavenly treasures? For from him we may fetch abundant fulness to supply our extreme emptiness. We be quick<sup>1</sup> in him, as lively 1 alive branches in the vine stock. We be made alive unto God in him, as members of the body do live by the head: and we be by faith in him accepted as his dear spouse. And in this matrimonial bond and covenant he hath made with us a most happy exchange. He hath taken unto him what we brought, and giveth us all that is his, be it never so precious, so entirely he loved us. Thus be we made rich in him, as many as thus know him and thus do believe him to be ours. And blessed be that heavenly Father, who Luke 10. hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hath revealed the same unto his chosen little ones; who, with holy Paul, do count all things but loss, and do judge them but dung, for the Phil. 3. excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord, to win him and to be found in him, not having righteousness of themselves, but the righteousness which cometh of God through faith in Christ, in knowing him. and the virtue of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his passions,<sup>2</sup> to be conformable unto his death, whereby to attain the resurrection from death. This, this is that treasure 2 suf- ferings hid in the field, whereof is spoken, Matthew xiii. the which a man Matt. 13. findeth, and hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. This is that precious pearl, &c.

Now even as the conceiving of this communion and fellowship which we have with Christ, bringeth such peace as passeth all understanding; so (as I said) the Christian knitting of faithful believers in this Christ's mystical body, is unto the understanders a joyful joining and enjoying, and a profitable fruition one of another: as in the body one member thereof ministereth unto another, thereby taking comfort one in another; whereof St. Eph. 4. Paul most lively and comfortably speaketh, in the 4th chapter to the Ephesians, which words be above mentioned. The bond of this compacting and knitting of us together is love. For even as our head Christ, by his unmeasurable mercy and unspeakable love towards us, doth assure himself unto us to be one with us, we being in him and he in us; so this love is by his Spirit poured into our hearts; whereby we be taught, that the faithful believers, as they are in number many, so are they in Christ many members making but one body. And hereof ensueth the careful compassion and cheerful rejoicing of one for another, as occasion requireth. Hereof proceedeth not only a thankfulness unto God for his graces received, but also a continual perseverance in

praying one for another, thereby to purchase the mutual partaking of his manifold blessings needful for us. And finally hereby is wrought in us a lively feeling of a spiritual welfare, even as in the body one member is the better for the welfare of the other ; and thus much hereof.

Which as I do not amplify as an idle speculation, without some practice of the same, so must I confess that I am far from that feeling which I ought and also would have thereof. Notwithstanding, I yield most humble thanks unto my God, who hath practised me in some comfortable unfeigned experience of the same ; and, as I somewhat have felt, so I somewhat have spoken. And yet the rather do I rejoice to enlarge herein unto you, my dear Christian friend, good Mistress Harrington, for that I do well know that you have drank of the Holy Spirit with other, unto whom the knowledge hereof seemeth not foolishness (as it doth unto worldlings), but is indeed the wisdom of God, and the high power of God to save all them that believe it. And for because I do esteem you as one of the members belonging unto that mystical body, I do with no small comfort many times remember you, giving God thanks for you : and daily do I by name remember you in my prayers, yea, and also your family, that you may in the fear of God consider your great charge, and that (the rather by your abiding in the true reverend fear of God) they whom you have charge of may be virtuously transformed into the same. Amen, amen.

I doubt not but that you have learned the lesson of St. Paul  
 1 Tim. 1. unto his Timothy : Have faith and a good conscience, the which while some have put from them, they have made shipwreck of their faith. I know I shall not need to bid you fly from idolatry, yea, the most detestable idol of the mass. The Lord minister unto you right understanding in all things ; and pray, pray ! and for me also, for I know I both have and shall fare the better for your prayer. I can tell you by experience, that our Christ is even that sweet Saviour that we have taken him to be, and he will be the helper at an extreme pinch. Oh how sweet is he unto them that will be the simple sheep of his pasture ! They can say with the faith of David : The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall lack nothing, &c. I can be merry in him, I thank him therefore : and I thank you for your remembrance of me, whereof I understand by your letters unto Master James Haddon. I would not refuse the blessing of your benevolence, in ministering unto my necessity, if my case so required ; but, I thank God, I am not as yet in any need, therefore be not you therein careful. And for this time no more, but Pray, pray ! and I pray that good God, even our own God, to keep you always. Amen.—In haste, the 21st of November, 1553, a prisoner in the Lord.

Yours, as you know,

L. Saunders.



*Certain godly Verses not here to be omitted, which he wrote to his prison-fellows of the Marshalsea.*

The grace of God declared is, in Christ his Son most dear,  
 And teacheth us in holiness to live in His true fear.  
 Whoso then, in that heavenly birth, a child is rightly born,  
 His father's will he followeth, and thereunto is sworn.  
 Children of love their father's will do lovingly embrace ;  
 Servants of fear their master's will to do, do somewhat pass,<sup>1</sup>  
 To children and to servants both, the rod doth oftimes reach ;  
 The children and the servants both, the rod doth penance teach.  
 All ye therefore which here remain in strait captivity,  
 Be servants unto righteousness, from sin be loose and free.  
 Be mindful of all duty due unto the Lord above,  
 Be thankful for his benefits, the pledges of his love.  
 Consider with yourselves, I say, to sanctify the Lord,  
 In every place continually, by thought, deed, and by word.

*1 regard*

L. Saunders.

LETTERS OF THAT HEARTY AND ZEALOUS  
 MAN OF GOD MASTER JOHN PHILPOT,

Archdeacon of Winchester ; who, besides the great tyranny and torments which he suffered in Bonner's blind coal-house, and other his painful imprisonments, was also most cruelly martyred, for the testimony of the Lord Jesus ; the 18th day of December, in the year of our Lord, 1557.

*A Letter which he sent to the Christian congregation,*

Exhorting them to refrain themselves from the idolatrous service of the Papists, and to serve God with a pure and undefiled conscience after his word.

It is a lamentable thing to behold at this present in England, the faithless departing both of men and women from the true knowledge and use of Christ's sincere religion, which so plentifully they have been taught and do know, their own consciences bearing witness to the verity thereof. If that earth be cursed of God, which, eftsoons<sup>2</sup> receiving moisture and pleasant dews from heaven, doth not bring forth fruit accordingly, how much more grievous judgment shall such persons receive, which, having received from the Father of heaven the perfect knowledge of his word by the ministry thereof, do not shew forth God's worship after the same ? If the Lord will require, in the day of judgment, a godly usury of all manner of talents which he lendeth unto men and women, how much more will he require the same of his pure

*Heb. 6.*

*2 continually*

Matt. 25. religion revealed unto us, (which is of all other talents the chiefest, and most pertaining to our exercise in this life,) if we hide the same in a napkin, and set it not forth to the usury of God's glory, and edifying of His church by true confession? God hath kindled the bright light of his Gospel, which in times past was suppressed and hid under the vile ashes of man's traditions, and hath caused the brightness thereof to shine in our hearts, to the end that the same might shine before men to the honour of his name. It is not only given us to believe, but also to confess and declare what we believe, in our outward conversation. For as St. Paul writeth to the Romans, the belief of the heart justifieth, and to knowledge<sup>1</sup> with the mouth maketh a man safe.

Matt. 5. It is all one before God not to believe at all, and not to shew forth the lively works of our belief. For Christ saith, Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else make the tree evil and the fruit evil, because a good tree bringeth forth good fruit; so that the person which knoweth his master's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. And not all they which say Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God, but he that doth the will of the Father. And whosoever in the time of trial is ashamed of me (saith Christ) and of my words, of him the Son of man will be ashamed before his Father. After that we have built ourselves into the true church of God, it hath pleased him by giving us over into the hands of the wicked synagogues to prove our building, and to have it known as well to the world as to ourselves, that we have been wise builders into the true church of God upon the rock, and not on the sand; and therefore now the tempest is risen, and the storms do mightily blow against us, that we might notwithstanding stand upright and be firm in the Lord, to his honour and glory, and to our eternal felicity. There is no new thing happened unto us; for with such tempests and dangerous weathers the church of GOD hath continually been exercised. Now once again, as the prophet Haggai telleth us, the Lord shaketh the earth, that those might abide for ever which be not overthrown.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, be stable and immovable in the word of God, and in the faithful observation thereof; and let no man deceive you with vain words, saying, that you may keep your faith to yourselves, and dissemble with Antichrist, and so live at rest and quietness in the world, as most men do, yielding to necessity. This is the wisdom of the flesh: but the wisdom of the flesh is death and enmity to God; as our Saviour for example aptly did declare in Peter, who exhorted Christ not to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the passover and there to be slain, but counselled him to look better to himself. Likewise the world would not have us to forsake him,<sup>1</sup> neither to associate ourselves to the true church, which is the body of Christ, whereof we are

<sup>2</sup> him,  
i. e. the  
world

lively members, and to use the sacraments after God's word, with the danger of our lives. But we must learn to answer the world as Christ did Peter, and say, Go behind me, Satan, thou savourest not the things of God. Shall I not drink of the cup which the Father giveth me? For it is better to be afflicted and to be slain in the church of God, than to be counted the son of the king in the synagogue of false religion. Death for righteousness is not to be abhorred, but rather to be desired, which assuredly bringeth with it the crown of everlasting glory. These bloody executioners do not persecute Christ's martyrs, but crown them with everlasting felicity. We were born into this world to be witnesses unto the truth, both learned and unlearned. Now since the time is come that we must shew our faith, and declare whether we will be God's servants in righteousness and holiness, as we have been taught and are bound to follow, or else with hypocrisy serve unrighteousness; let us take good heed that we be found faithful in the Lord's covenant, and true members of his church, in the which through knowledge we are engrafted; from the which if we fall by transgression with the common sort of people, it will more straitly be required of us, than many yet do make account thereof. We cannot serve two masters. We may not halt on both sides, and think to please God; we must be fervent in God's cause, or else he will cast us out from him. For, by the first commandment, we are commanded to love God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our power and strength: but they are manifest transgressors of this commandment, which with their heart, mind, or bodily power do communicate with a strange religion, contrary to the word of God, in the papistical synagogue, which calleth itself the church and is not. As greatly do they offend God now, which so do, as the Israelites did in times past, by forsaking Jerusalem the true church of God, and by going to Bethel to serve God in a congregation of their own setting up, and after their own imaginations, for the which doing God utterly destroyed all Israel, as all the prophets almost do testify. This happened unto them for our example, that we might beware to have any fellowship with any like congregation to our destruction. God hath one Catholic church dispersed throughout the world; and therefore we are taught in our creed to believe one Catholic church, and to have communion therewith; which Catholic church is grounded upon the foundation of the prophets and of the apostles; and upon none other, as St. Paul witnesseth to the Ephesians. Therefore, wheresoever we perceive any people to worship God truly after that word, there we may be certain the church of Christ to be, unto the which we ought to associate ourselves; and to desire, with the prophet David, to praise God in the midst of this church. But if we behold, through the iniquity of time, congregations to be made with

Heb. 11.

Psa. 116.

Luke 16.

IKings 18.

Apc. 3.

IKings 13.

Eph. 2

1sa. 22.

counterfeit religion, otherwise than the word of God doth teach, we ought then, if we be required to be companions thereof, to say again with David, I have hated the synagogue of the malignant, and will not sit with the wicked. In the Apocalypse, the church of Ephesus is highly commended, because she tried such as said they were apostles and were not in deed, and therefore would not abide the company of them. Further, God commanded his people that they should not seek Bethel, neither enter into Galgala where idolatry was used, by the mouth of his prophet Amos.

Psa. 26.

ApoC. 2.

Amos 5.

1 Cor. 3.

Also we must consider that our bodies be the temple of God, and whosoever (as St. Paul teacheth) doth profane the temple of God, him the Lord will destroy; may we then take the temple of Christ, and make it the member of an harlot? All strange religion and idolatry is counted whoredom with the prophets; and that, more detestable in the sight of God than the adulterous abuse of the body. Therefore the princes of the earth, in the Revelation of St. John, be said to go a-whoring, when they are in love with false religion and follow the same. How then by any means may a Christian man think it tolerable to be present at the popish private mass, which is the very profanation of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ? and at other idolatrous worshipings and rites, which be not after the word of God, but rather the derogation thereof, in setting man's traditions above God's precepts? since God by his word judgeth all strange religion, which is not according to his institution, for whoredom and adultery.

1 foolish-ly

1 Cor. 6.

Some fondly<sup>1</sup> think that the presence of the body is not material, so that the heart do not consent to their wicked doings. But such persons little consider what St. Paul writeth to the Corinthians, commanding them to glorify God as well in body as in soul. Moreover, we can do no greater injury to the true church of Christ, than to seem to have forsaken her, or disallow her by cleaving to her adversary; whereby it appeareth, to others which be weak, that we allow the same, and so, contrary to the word, do give a great offence to the church of God, and do outwardly slander (as much as men may) the truth of Christ. But woe be unto him by whom any such offence cometh. Better it were for him to have a mill-stone tied about his neck, and to be cast into the bottom of the sea. Such be traitors to the truth, like unto Judas, who with a kiss betrayed Christ.

Mar. 8.

Our God is a jealous God, and cannot be content that we should be of any other body than of that unspotted church, whereof he is the head only, and wherein he hath planted us by baptism. This jealousy which God hath towards us, will cry for vengeance in the day of vengeance, against all such as now have so large consciences to do that which is contrary to God's glory and the sincerity of his word; except they do in time repent and

cleave inseparably to the Gospel of Christ, how much soever at this present both men and women otherwise, in their own corrupt judgment, do flatter themselves. God willeth us to judge uprightly, and to allow and follow that which is holy and acceptable in his sight, and to abstain from all manner of evil; and therefore Christ commandeth us in the Gospel to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. St. Paul to the Hebrews saith, that if any person withdraw himself from faith, he shall not be approved in his judgment; and therefore he saith also, that we are none such as do withdraw ourselves unto perdition, but we belong unto faith, for the attainment of life.

St. John in the Apocalypse telleth us plainly, that none of those who are written in the book of life, do receive the mark of the beast, which is, of the papistical synagogue, either in their foreheads or else in their hands, that is, apparently or obediently. St. Paul [to the Ephesians and] to the Philippians affirmeth, that we may not have any fellowship with the works of darkness, but in the midst of this wicked and froward generation we ought to shine like lights, upholding the word of truth. Further he saith, that we may not touch any unclean thing; which signifieth, that our outward conversation in foreign things ought to be pure and undefiled as well as the inward, that with a clean spirit and rectified body we might serve God justly, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Finally, in the 18th of the Apocalypse, God biddeth us plainly to depart from this Babylonical synagogue, and not to be partakers of her trespass. St. Paul to the Thessalonians commandeth us, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately,<sup>1</sup> and not according to the institution which he hath received of him.

Ponder therefore well, good brethren and sisters, these Scriptures, which be written for your erudition and reformation; whereof one iota is not written in vain; which be utterly against all counterfeit collusion to be used of us with the papists in their fantastical religion, and be adversaries to all them that have so light consciences in so doing. And if they do not agree with this adversary (I mean the word of God), which is contrary to their attempts, he will, as it is signified in the Gospel, deliver them to the judge, which is Christ, and the judge will deliver them to the executioner, that is the devil, and the devil shall commit them to the horrible prison of hell fire; where is the portion of all hypocrites, with sulphur and brimstone, with wailing and gnashing of teeth, world without end. But yet many will say for their vain excuse, God is merciful, and His mercy is over all. But the Scripture teacheth us, That cursed is he that sinneth upon hope of forgiveness. Truth it is, that the mercy of God is above all his works, and yet but upon such as fear him, for so is it written in the Psalms; The mercy of GOD is on them that fear him, and on such

as put their trust in him: where we may learn, that they only put their trust in God that fear him; and to fear God, is to turn from evil and to do that is good. So that such as do look to be partakers of God's mercy, may not abide in that which is known to be manifest evil and detestable in the sight of God.

Another sort of persons do make them a cloke for the rain under the pretence of obedience to the magistrates, whom we ought to obey, although they be wicked. But such must learn of Christ to give to Cæsar that is Cæsar's, and to God that is due to God; and with St. Peter to obey the higher powers in the Lord, albeit they be evil, if they command nothing contrary to God's word; otherwise we ought not to obey their commandments, although we should suffer death therefore: as we have the apostles for our example herein to follow, who answered the magistrates as we ought to do in this case, not obeying their wicked precepts; saying, Judge you whether it be more righteous that we should obey men rather than GOD. Also Daniel chose rather to be cast into the den of lions to be devoured, than to obey the king's wicked commandments. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. There is no excuse for the transgression of God's word, whether a man do it voluntarily or at commandment, although great damnation is to them by whom the offence cometh.

Some other there be, that, for an extremerefruge in their evil doings, do run to God's predestination and election, saying, that if I be elected of God to salvation, I shall be saved whatsoever I do. But such be great tempters of God, and abominable blasphemers of God's holy election; and cast themselves down from the pinnacle of the temple in presumption, that God may preserve them by his angels through predestination. Such verily may reckon themselves to be none of God's elect children, that will do evil that good may ensue; whose damnation is just, as St. Paul saith. God's predestination and election ought to be with a simple eye considered, to make us more warily to walk in good and godly conversation according to God's word, and not to set cock in the hoop, and put all on God's back, to do wickedly at large: for the elect children of God must walk in righteousness and holiness, after that they be once called to true knowledge; for so saith St. Paul to the Ephesians, that God hath chosen us before the foundations of the world were laid, that we should be holy and blameless in his sight. Therefore St. Peter willeth us through good works to make our vocation and election certain to ourselves, which we know not but by the good working of God's Spirit in us, according to the rule of the Gospel; and he that transformeth not himself to the same in godly conversation, may justly tremble and doubt that he is none of the elect children of God, but of the viperous generation, and a child of darkness. For the children of light will walk in the works of light and not of darkness; though

Luke 20.  
Pet. 2.

Acts 4.  
Dan 6.

Matt. 15.

Rom. 3.

Eph. 1.

2 Pet. 1.

they fall, they do not lie still. Let all vain excusations be set apart, and while ye have light, as Christ commandeth, believe the light and abide in the same, lest eternal darkness overtake you unawares. The light is come into the world; but alas, men love darkness more than the light. God giveth us his pure eyesalve to heal our blindness in this behalf. Oh that men and women would be healed, and not seek to be wilfully blinded. The Lord open their eyes, that they may see how dangerous a thing it is to decline from the knowledge of truth contrary to their conscience. Prov 24. John 12. John 3. Heb. 6.10.

But what said I? Conscience? Many affirm, their conscience will bear them well enough to do all that they do, and to go to the idolatrous church to service—whose conscience is very large, to satisfy man more than God. And although their conscience can bear them so to do, yet I am sure that a good conscience will not permit them so to do; which cannot be good, unless it be directed after the knowledge of God's word: and therefore in Latin this feeling of mind is called *Conscientia*, which soundeth<sup>1</sup> by interpretation with knowledge. And therefore if our conscience be led of herself, and not after true knowledge, yet we are not so to be excused; as St. Paul beareth witness, saying, Although my conscience accuseth me not, yet in this I am not justified. And he joineth a good conscience with these three sisters, charity, a pure heart, and unfeigned faith. Charity keepeth God's commandments; a pure heart loveth and feareth God above all; and unfeigned faith is never ashamed of the profession of the Gospel, whatsoever damage she shall suffer in body thereby. 1 is s;no- nious 1 Cor 4. 1 Tim. 1.

The Lord, which hath revealed his holy will unto us by his word, grant us never to be ashamed of it: and give us grace so earnestly to cleave to his holy word and true church, that for no manner of worldly respect we become partakers of the works of hypocrisy, which God doth abhor; so that we may be found faithful in the Lord's Testament to the end, both in heart, word, and deed, to the glory of God, and our everlasting salvation. Amen.

John Philpot,

Prisoner in the King's Bench,

for the testimony of the truth; 1555.

To his dear friend in the Lord, John Careless,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

My dearly beloved brother Careless, I have received your loving letters, full of love and compassion; insomuch that they made my hard heart to weep, to see you so careful for one that hath been so un-

profitable a member as I have been and am in Christ's church. God make me worthy of that I am called unto; and I pray you cease not to pray for me. But cease to weep for him who hath not deserved such gentle tears; and praise God with me, for that I now approach to the company of them, whose want you may worthily lament. God give your pitiful heart his inward consolation. Indeed, my dear Careless, I am in this world in hell and in the shadow of death; but he that hath brought me for my deserts down unto hell, shall shortly lift me up to heaven, where I shall look continually for your coming, and others my faithful brethren in the King's Bench. And though I tell you that I am in hell in the judgment of this world, yet assuredly I feel in the same the consolation of heaven, praise God. And this loathsome and horrible prison is as pleasant to me, as the walk in the garden of the King's Bench. You know, brother Careless, that the way to heaven out of this life, is very narrow, and we must strive to enter in at a narrow gate. If God do mitigate the ugliness of mine imprisonment, what will he do in the rage of the fire whereunto I am appointed? And this hath happened unto me, that I might be hereafter an ensample of comfort, if the like happen unto you or to any other of my dear brethren with you in these cruel days; in the which the devil so rageth at the faithful flock of Christ, but in vain (I trust) against any of us, who be persuaded that neither life neither death is able to separate us from the love of Christ's Gospel, which is God's high treasure committed to our brittle vessels, to glorify us by the same. God of his mercy make us faithful stewards to the end, and give us grace to fear nothing, whatsoever in His good pleasure we shall suffer for the same.

That I have not written unto you ere this, the cause is our strait keeping, and the want of light by night, for the day serveth us but a while in our dark closet. This is the first letter that I have written since I came to prison, besides the report of mine examinations, and I am fain to scribble it out in haste. Commend me to all our faithful brethren; and bid them with a good courage look for their redemption, and frame themselves to be hearty soldiers in Christ. They have taken his press-money a great while; and now let them shew themselves ready to serve him faithfully, and not to fly out of the Lord's camp into the world, as many do. Let them remember that in the Apocalypse the fearful be excluded the kingdom. Let us be of good cheer; for our Lord overcame the world, that we should do the like. Blessed is the servant whom, when the Lord cometh, he findeth watching. Oh let us watch and pray earnestly one for another that we be not led into temptation. Be joyful under the cross, and praise the Lord continually; for this is the whole burnt sacrifice which the Lord chiefly delighteth in. Commend me to



my father Hunt ; and desire him to love and continue in the unity of Christ's true church, which he hath begun, and then shall he make me more and more to joy under my cross with him. Tell my brother Clements, that he hath comforted me much by his loving token, in signification of an unfeigned unity with us ; let him increase my joy unto the end perfectly.

The Lord of peace be with you all. Salute all my loving friends, Master Mering, Master Crooch, with the rest ; and especially Master Marshall and his wife, with great thanks for his kindness shewed unto me. Farewell, my dear Careless. I have dallied with the devil awhile, but now I am over the shoes ; God send me well out.

Out of the Coal-house, by your brother,

John Philpot.

### Another Letter written to John Careless,

Out of the Coal-house of darkness ; whereby he giveth light and heavenly comfort to his heavy and troubled mind.

The God of all comfort, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, send unto thee, my dear brother Careless, the inward consolation of his Holy Spirit, in all the malicious assaults and troublous temptations of our common adversary the devil. Amen.

That God giveth you so contrite a heart for your sins, I cannot but rejoice to behold the lively mark of the children of God ; whose property is to think more lowly and vilely of themselves than of any other, and oftentimes to set their sins before them, that they might the more be stirred to bring forth the fruits of repentance ; and learn to mourn in this world, that in another they might be glad and rejoice. Such a broken heart is a pleasant sacrifice unto God ; oh that I had the like contrite heart. God mollify my stony heart, which lamenteth not in such wise my former detestable iniquities. Praised be God that he hath given you this sorrowful heart in respect of righteousness ; and I pray you let me be partaker of these godly sorrows for sin, which be the testimony of the presence of the Holy Ghost.

Did not the sword of sorrow pierce the heart of the elect and blessed mother of our Lord ? Did not Peter weep bitterly for his sins, which was so beloved of Christ ? Did not Mary Magdalene wash the feet of our Saviour with her tears, and received therewithal remission of her sevenfold sins ? Be of good comfort, therefore, mine own dear heart, in this thy sorrow ; for it is the earnest-penny of eternal consolation. In thy sorrow laugh, for the Spirit of God is with thee. Blessed be they (saith Christ),

Matt. 5. that mourn, for they shall be comforted. They went forth and  
 Psal. 126. wept, saith the prophet; such shall come again having their  
 Psal. 51. gripes<sup>1</sup> full of gladness. And although a sorrowful heart in  
 1 *grasp* consideration of his sin be an acceptable sacrifice before God,  
 Luke 7. whereby we are stirred up to more thankfulness unto God,  
 knowing that much is forgiven us that we might love the more ;  
 yet the man of God must keep a measure in the same, lest he be  
 swallowed up by too much sorrow. St. Paul would not the  
 1 Thes. 4. Thessalonians to be sorry as other men which have no hope.  
 2 Cor. 7. Such a sorrow is not commendable, but worketh damnation, and  
 is far from the children of God ; who are continually sorrowful in  
 God, when they look upon their own unworthiness and hope  
 of forgiveness. For God to this end by his Spirit setteth the  
 Rom. 5. sins of His elect still before them, that where they perceive sin to  
 abound, there they might be assured that grace shall super-  
 abound ; and bringeth them down unto hell, that he might lift  
 them up with greater joy unto heaven. Wherefore, mine own  
 bowels in Christ, as long as you are not void altogether of hope,  
 be not dismayed through your pensive heart for your sins, how  
 huge soever they have been ; for God is able to forgive more than  
 you are able to sin ; yea, and he will forgive him, which with hope  
 is sorry for his sins.

But know, brother, that as oft as we do go about by the  
 help of God's Spirit to do that is good, the evil spirit Satan  
 layeth hard wait to turn the good unto evil, and goeth about to  
 1 *tares* mix the detestable darnel<sup>1</sup> of desperation with the godly sorrow of  
 a pure penitent heart. You be not ignorant of his malicious  
 subtlety ; and how that continually he assaulteth that good, which  
 the grace of God planteth. I see the battle betwixt you and him ;  
 but the victory is yours, yea, and that daily. For you have laid  
 hold upon the anchor of salvation, which is hope in Christ, the  
 which will not suffer you to be made ashamed. Be not discom-  
 forted that you have this conflict ; but be glad that God hath given  
 you the same, to try your faith, and that you might appear daily  
 worthy of the kingdom of God, for the which you strive. God  
 beholdeth your striving faith against Satan, and is pleased with  
 your mighty resistance. The Spirit which is in you is mightier  
 than all the adversary's power. Tempt he may, and lie in wait  
 at your heels, give you a fall unawares ; but overcome he shall  
 not, yea, he cannot, for you are sealed up already with a lively  
 faith to be the child of God for ever ; and whom God hath once  
 sealed for his own, him he never utterly forsaketh. The just  
 falleth seven times, but he riseth again. It is man's frailty to fall,  
 but it is the property of the devil's child to lie still. This strife  
 against sin is a sufficient testimony that you are the child of God ;  
 for if you were not, you should feel no such malice as he now  
 troubleth you withal. When this strong Goliath hath the hold, all

things be in peace which he possesseth ; and because he hath you not, he will not suffer you unassaulted. But stand fast, and hold out the buckler of faith, and with the sword of God's promises smite him on the scalp, that he may receive a deadly wound, and never be able to stand against you any more. St. James telleth you that he is but a coward, saying, Resist the devil and he will fly away. It is the will of God that he should thus long tempt you, and not go away as yet, or else he had done with you long ere this. He knoweth already that he shall receive the foil at your hands, and increase the crown of your glory ; for he that overcometh shall be crowned. James 4.

Therefore glory in your temptations, since they shall turn to your felicity. Be not afraid of your continual assaults, which be occasions of your daily victory. The word of God abideth for ever ; In what hour soever a sinner repenteth him of his sins they be forgiven. Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? Do you not perceive the manifest tokens of your election ? first, your vocation to the Gospel, and after your vocation the manifest gifts of the Spirit of God, given unto you above many other of your condition, with godliness which believeth and yieldeth to the authority of the Scriptures, and is zealous for the same ? Seeing you are God's own darling, who can hurt you ? Be not of a deject mind for these temptations, neither make your unfeigned friends to be more sorrowful for you than need doth require. Since God hath willed you at your baptism in Christ to be *Careless*, why do you make yourself careful ? Cast all your care on him ; set the Lord before your eyes always, for he is on your right side that you shall not be moved. Behold the goodness of God toward me. I am careless, being fast closed in a pair of stocks, which pinch me for very straitness ; and will you be careful ? I will not have that unseemly addition to your name. Be as your name pretendeth, for doubtless you have none other cause but so to be. Pray, I beseech you, that I may be still careless in my careful estate, as you have cause to be careless in your easier condition. Be thankful, and put away all care, and then I shall be joyful in my strait present care. Eze. 3.

Commend me to all our brethren, and desire them to pray for me that I may overcome my temptations ; for the devil rageth against me. I am put in the stocks in a place alone, because I would not answer to such articles as they would charge me with, all in a corner, at the bishop's appointment ; and because I did not come to mass when the bishop sent for me. I will lie all the days of my life in the stocks (by God's grace), rather than I will consent to the wicked generation. Praise God ; and be joyful, that it hath pleased him to make us worthy to suffer somewhat for his name's sake. The devil must rage for ten days. Commend me to Master Fokes, and thank him for his law books ; but law, neither equity,

will take any place among these blood-thirsty. I would, for your sake, their unjust dealing were noted unto the Parliament house, if it might avail. God shorten these evil days. I have answered the bishop meetly plain already; and I say to him, if he will call me in open judgment, I will answer him as plainly as he will require: otherwise I have refused, because I fear they will condemn me in hugger-mugger.<sup>1</sup> The peace of God be with you, my dear brother. I can write no more for lack of light, and that I have written I cannot read myself, and God knoweth it is written far uneasily: I pray God you may pick out some understanding of my mind towards you. Written in a coal-house of darkness, out of a pair of painful stocks, by thine own in Christ,

John Philpot.

### A Letter of John Careless,

Written to Master Philpot; which we thought best here to place apart from his other letters hereafter following, because it is an answer to the former letter.

A faithful friend is a strong defence; whoso findeth such a one, findeth a treasure.

A faithful friend hath no peer; the weight of gold and silver is not to be compared to the goodness of his faith.

A faithful friend is a medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him.—Ecclesiasticus 6.

The Father of mercy, and God of all consolation, comfort you with his Eternal Spirit, my most dear and faithful loving friend, good Master Philpot, as you have comforted me by the mighty operation of the same; the everlasting God be praised therefore for ever. Amen.

Ah, my dear heart, and most loving brother, if I should do nothing else day and night so long as the days of heaven do endure, but kneel on my knees and read psalms, I can never be able to render unto God condign<sup>2</sup> thanks for his great mercy, fatherly kindness, and most loving compassion, extended unto me most vile, sinful, wicked, and unworthy wretch. Oh that the Lord would open my mouth, and give me a thankful heart, that from the bottom of the same might flow his continual praise. Oh that my sinful flesh (which is the cause of my sorrow,) were clean separated from me, that I might sing psalms of thanksgiving unto the Lord's name for ever; that with good Samuel's mother I might continually record this noble verse following, the which, by good experience, I have found most true—praised be my good God therefore: The Lord (saith the good woman,) killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth down to hell and setteth up again. Praised be that Lord for ever, yea, and praised be his name, for that he hath given me true experience and lively feeling of the same.

<sup>1</sup> in the dark

<sup>2</sup> suitable

Blessed be the Lord God, whose mercy endureth for ever, which hath not dealt with me according to my deep deserts, nor destroyed me in his displeasure, when I had justly deserved it. Oh what reward shall I give again unto the Lord, for all the great benefits that he hath done for my soul? I will gladly receive the cup of salvation at his hand, and will worship his name with prayer and with praise.

Ah, my dear heart, yea, most dear unto me in the Lord, think not this sudden change in me to be some sickle phantasy of my foolish head (as indeed some other would surely suspect it to be); for doubtless it is the marvellous doing of the Lord, most merciful unto me his unworthy creature. God, for his great mercy's sake, give me grace to be more thankful unto him than I heretofore have been, and keep me that I never fall forth of his favour again. And now, my dear brother, and most blessed messenger of the Lord, whose beautiful feet have brought much glad tidings unto my soul, what shall I do or say unto you, in the least part to recompence your fatherly affection and godly care, that you continually keep for me? Oh that God would give me the spirit of fervent prayer, that I might yet that way supply some little part of my duty toward you. Ah, my true loving friend, how soon did you lay aside all other business to make a sweet plaister for my wounded conscience, yea, and that out of a painful pair of stocks, which place must needs be uneasy to write in. But God hath brought you into a strait place, that you might set my soul at liberty. Out of your pinching and painful seat, you have plentifully poured upon me your precious nard, the sweet savour whereof hath greatly refreshed my tired soul. The Lord likewise refresh you, both body and soul, by pouring the oil of his gracious Spirit into your sweet heart.

Ah, good Jeremiah, hath Pashur put thee in the stocks? why Jer. 20. now thou hast the right reward of a prophet. Thy glory never began to appear until now. I doubt not but shortly, instead of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Jesus the Son of the living God will Jer. 26. come and deliver thee forth of the hands of all thine enemies, and will also make good, against them and the antichristian synagogue, all the words that thou hast spoken in his name. The Lord hath made thee this day a strong defended tower, an iron pillar and a Jer. 1. brasen wall against the whole rabble of antichrist; and though they fight against thee never so fiercely, yet shall they not overcome thee; for the Lord himself is with thee to help and deliver thee, Jer. 16. and he will rid thee out of the hands of the wicked, and will deliver thee out of the hands of the tyrants. And in that you are not busy in casting pearls before swine, nor in giving holy things unto dogs, you are much to be commended in my simple judgment. And sure I am, that your circumspect and modest behaviour hitherto hath been as much to God's glory and confusion of

your enemies, as any man's doings that are gone before you. Wherefore mine advice and earnest desire is, with all other of your loving friends, that you still keep that order<sup>1</sup> with those blood-thirsty bishops that you have begun.

For though in conclusion they will surely have your blood; yet shall they come by it with shame enough, and to their perpetual infamy whilst the world doth endure. They would indeed condemn you in hugger-mugger<sup>2</sup> to darken God's glory if it might be: but Satan's thoughts are not unknown to you, and the depth of his subtlety is by you well foreseen. Therefore let them do whatsoever God shall suffer them to do, for I know all things shall turn to your best. Though you lie in the dark, slorried<sup>3</sup> with the bishop's black coal dust, yet shall you shortly be restored to the heavenly light, and made as white as snow in Salmon, and as the wings of a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold. You know, the vessel, before it is made bright, is soiled with oil and other things, that it may scour the better. Oh, happy be you, that you be now in the scouring house; for shortly you shall be set upon the celestial shelf as bright as angels.<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, my dear heart, I will now, according to your loving request, cast away all care, and rejoice with you and praise GOD for you, and pray for you day and night. Yea, I will now, with God's grace, sing psalms of praise and thanksgiving with you; for now my soul is turned into her old rest again, and hath taken a sweet nap in Christ's lap. I have cast my care upon the Lord, which careth for me; and will be *Careless* according to my name, in that respect which you would have me. I will leave out my unseemly addition as long as I live; for it can take no place where true faith and hope is resident. So soon as I had read your most godly and comfortable letter, my sorrows vanished away as smoke in the wind, my spirit revived, and comfort came again; whereby I am sure the Spirit of God was the author of it.

Oh, good master Philpot, which art a principal pot indeed, filled with most precious liquor, as it appeareth by the plenteous pouring forth of the same: oh, pot most happy, of the high potter ordained to honour, which dost contain such heavenly treasure in thy earthen vessel: oh, pot thrice happy, in whom Christ hath wrought a great miracle, altering thy nature and turning water into wine, and that of the best, whereout the master of the feast hath filled my cup so full, that I am become drunken in joy of the Spirit through the same. When martyrdom shall break thee (O vessel of honour), I know the fragrant savour of thy precious nard will much rejoice the heavy hearts of Christ's true members—although the Judases will grudge and murmur at the same, yea, and burst out into words of slander, saying, It is but lost and waste. Be not offended, dear heart, at my metaphorical speech; for I am disposed to be merry, and with David to dance before the ark of the Lord;

1 method

2 in the dark

3 be-daubed

Psa. 68.

4 a play upon the word angel, a silver coin.

and though you play upon a pair of organs<sup>1</sup> not very comely or easy to the flesh, yet the sweet sound that came from the same <sup>1 i e. the stews</sup> causeth me thus to do.

Oh that I were with you in body, as presently I am in spirit, that I might sing all care away in Christ; for now the time of comfort is come. I hope to be with you shortly, if all things happen aright; for my old friends of Coventry have put the council in remembrance of me not six days ago, saying that I am more worthy to be burnt than any that was burned yet. God's blessing on their hearts, for their good report. God make me worthy of that dignity, and hasten the time, that I might set forth his glory. Pray for me, dear heart, I beseech you, and will<sup>2</sup> all your company to do the same; and I will pray God for you all so long as I live. <sup>2 desire</sup> And now farewell in Christ, thou blessed of God's own mouth; I will for a time take my leave, but not my last farewell. Blessed be the time that ever I came into the King's Bench, to be joined in love and fellowship with such dear children of the Lord. My good brother Bradford shall not be dead while you be alive; for verily the spirit of him doth rest on you in most ample wise. Your letters of comfort unto me in each point do agree, as though the one were a copy of the other. He hath planted in me, and you do water; the Lord give good increase. My dear brethren and fellow-prisoners here, have them humbly and heartily commended unto you and your company, mourning for your misery, but yet rejoicing for your plenteous consolation and comfort in Christ. We are all cheerful and merry under our cross, and do lack no necessaries; praised be God for his providence, and great mercies towards us, for evermore. Amen.

John Careless.

### To certain Godly Women,

Forsaking their own country, and going beyond the seas, in the time of persecution, for the testimony of the Gospel.

The Spirit of truth, revealed unto you, my dearly beloved, by the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, be continually abiding with you, and augmented into a perfect building of you into the lively temple of God, through the mighty operation of his power. Amen.

I read in the Evangelists of certain godly women that ministered unto Christ, following him in the days of his passion,<sup>3</sup> and never forsook him, but, being dead in his grave, brought oil to anoint him, until that he had shewed himself unto them after his resurrection, and bidden them shew unto his disciples, which at his passion<sup>3</sup> were dispersed, and tell them that he was risen, and that they should see him in Galilee. To whom I may justly compare you (my loving sisters in Christ), who of late have seen <sup>3 suffer- ing</sup>

him suffer in his members, and have ministered to their necessity, anointing them with the comfortable oil of your charitable assistance, even to the death. And now since ye have seen Christ to live in the ashes of them whom the tyrants have slain, he willethe you to go away, upon just occasion offered you, and to declare to our dispersed brethren and sisters, that he is risen and liveth in his elect members in England, and by death doth overcome infidelity, and that they shall see him in Galilee, which is by forsaking this world, and by a faithful desire to pass out of this world by those ways, which he with his holy martyrs hath gone on before. God therefore (entire sisters,) direct your way, as he did Abraham and Tobias unto a strange land. God give you health both of body and soul, that ye may go from virtue to virtue, and grow from strength to strength, until ye may see face to face the God of Sion in his holy hill, with the innumerable company of his blessed martyrs and saints. Let there be continual ascensions unto heaven in your hearts. Let there be no decrease of any virtue, which is already planted in you. Be as the light of the just, such as, Solomon saith, increaseth to the perfect day of the Lord. Let the strength of God be commended in your weak vessels, as it is. Be examples of faith and sobriety to all that ye shall come in company withal. Let your godly conversation speak, where your tongue may not in the congregation. Be swift to hear, and slow to speak, after the counsel of St. James. Be not curious about other men's doings, but be occupied in prayer and continual meditation, with reverent talking of the word of God, without contention, amongst the saints. Let your faith shine in a strange country, as it hath done in your own; that your Father which is in heaven may be glorified by you to the end.

This farewell I send you, not as a thing needful, which know already what your duty is, and be desirous to perform the same; but as one that would have you understand, that he is mindful of your godly conversation, whereof he hath had good experience, and therefore writeth this to be as a perpetual memorial betwixt you and him, until our meeting together before God; where we shall joy that we have here lovingly put one another in memory of our duty to perform it. Farewell again, mine own bowels in Christ, and take me with you wheresoever you go, and leave yourselves with me, that in spirit we may be present one with another. Commend me to the whole congregation of Christ, willing them not to leave their country without witness of the Gospel, after that we all be slain, which already be stalled up and appointed to the slaughter; and, in the mean season, to pray earnestly for our constancy, that Christ may be glorified in us and in them, both by life and death. Farewell in the Lord.

Yours for ever,

John Philpot.



## An Exhortation to a Sister of his,

Constantly and cheerfully to stick to the truth, and to abide the trial of that doctrine which she had fruitfully professed.

God the eternal Father, who hath justified you by the blood of his Son Jesus Christ, and called you to hallow his name through a good conversation and profession of life, He sanctify you with daily increase of virtue and faith by his Holy Spirit ; that you may appear a vessel of sanctification in the midst of this wicked and perverse generation, to the laud and praise of the Gospel. Amen.

I have occasion, mine own dear sister, to praise God in you for two causes : the one, that to your ability you are ready to shew yourself a natural loving sister unto me your poor afflicted brother, as by your gentle tokens you have eftsoons<sup>1</sup> testified being absent, as also presently visiting me ; which well declareth that you be a very natural sister indeed, and to be praised in this behalf. But in the other, that you be also a sister to me in faith after Christ's Gospel, I am occasioned to thank God so much the more, how much the one excelleth the other, and the spiritual consanguinity is more perdurable than that which is of flesh and blood, and is a worker of that which is by nature—for commonly such as be ungodly, be unnatural and only lovers of themselves, as daily experience teacheth us. The living Lord, which through the incorruptible seed of his word hath begotten you to be my liege<sup>2</sup> sister, give you grace so to grow in that generation, that you may increase to a perfect age in the Lord, to be my sister with Christ for ever. Look, therefore, that you continue a faithful sister, as you are called and are godly entered, not only to me but to all the Church of Christ, yea, to Christ himself ; who voucheth you, in this your unfeigned faith, worthy to be his sister. Consider this dignity to surmount all the vain dignity of the world, and let it accordingly prevail more with you, than all earthly delights ; for thereby you are called to an equal portion of the everlasting inheritance of Christ, if now in nowise you do shew yourself an unnatural sister to him in forsaking him in trouble ; which I trust you will never, for no kind of worldly respect, do. You are under dangerous temptations to be turned from that natural love you owe unto Christ, and you shall be tried with God's people through a sieve of great affliction ; for so Satan desireth us to be sifted, that through fear of sharp troubles we might fall from the stableness of our faith, and so be deprived of that honour, joy, and reward, which is prepared for such as continue faithful brothers and sisters in the Lord's covenant to the end. Therefore the Wise Man, in the book of Ecclesiasticus, biddeth them that come to the service of the Lord, to prepare themselves to suffer temptations. Since, then,

<sup>1</sup> from  
time to  
time

<sup>2</sup> at-  
tached,  
devoted

Luke 22.

that for the glory of God and our faith we are called now to abide the brunt of them, and that when our adversary hath done all that he can, yet we may be stable and stand: this Christ our first begotten brother looketh for at our hands; and all our brethren and sisters in heaven desire to see our faith through afflictions to be perfect, that we might fulfil their number; and the universal church here militant rejoiceth at our constancy, whom all, by the contrary, we should make sorry, to the danger of the loss both of body and soul. Fear not, therefore, whatsoever be threatened of the wicked world: prepare your back, and see it be ready to carry Christ's cross. And if you see any untowardness in you (as the flesh is continually repugnant to the will of GOD), ask with faithful prayer, that the good Spirit of GOD may lead your sinful flesh whither it would not; for if we will dwell in the flesh and follow the counsel thereof, we shall never do the will of God, neither work that tendeth to our salvation. You are at this present in the confines and borders of Babylon, where you are in danger to drink of the whore's cup, unless you be vigilant in prayer. Take heed the serpent seduce you not from the simplicity of your faith, as he did our first mother Eve. Let no worldly fellowship make you partaker of iniquity. He that toucheth tar cannot but be defiled thereby, and with such as be perverse a man shall soon be perverted; with the holy you shall be holy. Therefore say continually, with the prophet David, Unto the saints which be on the earth, all my will is on them. You have been sanctified and made pure through the truth; take heed you be not unholy and defiled, lest the last be worse than the first.

I write not this because I stand in any doubt of your sincere continuance, of the which I have had so good experience: but because the days be evil; and in the same it is the duty of every one of us to exhort another. I am bold to put you, my good sister, in remembrance of that, which doth not a little comfort me to remember, in my troubles and daily temptations. Wherefore I doubt not, you will take that in good part which cometh from your brother both in spirit and body, who tendereth your salvation as earnestly as his own; that we might joy together eternally, with such joy as the world shall never be able to take from us. Thanks be unto God, you have begun to run a good and great time well in the ways of the Lord: run out the race to the end which you have begun, and then shall you receive the crown of glory. None shall be crowned but such as lawfully striveth. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good: and the Lord shall make you one of those faithful virgins that shall follow the Lamb where-soever he goeth—the which Christ grant both you and me. Amen.

Commend me to all them that love me in the Lord unfeignedly. God increase our faith, and give us grace never to be ashamed of his Gospel. That same request which I have made to my brother

John 21.

Psalm 15.

2 Tim. 2.

Apoc. 4.

This was  
for the  
first fruits  
of his Arch

Thomas I make also to you ; desiring you, by all means you can, to accomplish my request that my sureties might be satisfied with that is mine own to the contentation of my mind, which cannot be quiet until they be discharged : therefore, I pray you, help to purchase quietness, that I might depart out of this world in peace. My dissolution I look for daily ; but the Lord knoweth how unworthy I am of so high an honour, as to die for the testimony of his truth. Pray that God would vouchsafe to make me worthy, as he hath done of long imprisonment—for the which his name be praised for ever. Pray and look for the coming of the Lord, whose wrath is great over us ; and I will pray for you as long as I live. The 9th of July, in the King's Bench.

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to pay the  
same.

Your own loving brother, as well in faith as in body,  
John Philpot.

To my dear friend and brother in the Lord,  
Master Robert Harrington.

Gentle Master Harrington, I cannot tell what condign<sup>1</sup> thanks I *isuitable* may give unto God for you, in respect of that great gentleness, and pain which you have taken for the relief of me and of other our afflicted brethren in Christ. God be praised for his mercy, whose loving providence we have seen towards us by such faithful stewards as you have been towards a great many. Blessed be you of God, for the loving care which you have taken for his poor flock. God hath reserved your reward of thanks in heaven ; and therefore I do not go about to render you any, lest I might seem to judge that you looked for that here, which is reserved to a better place.

I thank God, for that I have found by your faithful and diligent industry ; and God forgive me my unworthiness of so great benefits. God give me grace to serve him faithfully, and to run out my race with joy. Glorious is the course of the martyrs of Christ at this day. Never had the elect of God a better time for their glory than this is : now may they be assured, under the cross, that they are Christ's disciples for ever. Methinks I see you desiring to be under the same ; the flesh draweth back, but the Spirit saith it must be brought whither it would not. Here *John 21.* is the victory of the world ; here is true faith and everlasting glory. Who is he which desireth not to be found faithful to his Master ? And now is the time that every faithful servant of Christ hath just opportunity to shew himself a glorious soldier in the Lord's sight. Now do the Amalekites invade the true Israelites, that the Israelites might with speed be glorified. I need not, for want of understanding, to admonish you hereof, but, as a willing soldier in Christ, to exhort you so to run as you may gain the victory, and that speedily, with us. A man that is bid to

a glorious feast, wisheth his friend to go with him and to be partaker thereof. God doth call me (most unworthy) among other, to drink of the bride-cup of his Son; whereby we shall be made worthy, as many of our brethren have been before us, to sit at the right hand and at the left hand of Christ. Oh what unspeakable condition is that? May any worldly thing stay us from the desire thereof? Since we seek the kingdom of God, why do we not apprehend it, being so near offered unto us? Let us approach near unto God, and God will draw near unto us. God draw us after Him, that we may all run after the savour of His sweet ointments. Christ anoint us, that we may be supplied in these evil days to run lightly unto the glory of the Lord. Shame, imprisonment, loss of goods, and shedding of our blood, be the just price which we must willingly bestow for the same. Wherefore, dearly beloved in the Lord, let not the great charges keep you back from buying this glory; for the reward is ten thousand fold greater than the price. That you have married a wife, (whom God bless!) I cannot excuse you from this mart; but you must bring your wife for a usury to the Lord, whose pleasure is in godly yokefellows. I wish you to be as I am—except these horrible bonds, but yet most comfortable to the spirit, assuring us that we are made worthy, through Christ, of the kingdom for the which we suffer.

Praised be the Lord for the affliction which we suffer, and he give us strength to continue to the end. Commend me to Master Heath, and tell him that I would wish him, with me, to prove how apt he is to carry the cross of Christ. I pray for his continuance in Christ, as for mine own. Commend me to his wife and to Mistress Hall, certifying them that I am brought to the gates of hell, that I might never enter into the same, but be raised up from hell to heaven, through the word that sanctifieth us. Commend me to Master Elsing and his wife, and thank them that they remembered to provide me some ease in prison; and tell them that though my lord's coal-house be but very black, yet it is more to be desired of the faithful, than the queen's palace. God make her a joyful mother, and preserve them both to the comfort of God's people. Thus for this time farewell, dear brother. Written in post haste because of strait keeping.

This day I look to be called before the commissioners again. Pray, dear brother, for the Spirit of wisdom to remain with me. Commend me to your wife, and I thank you both for your tokens. Your token I have sent to your wife; and my token unto you, is my faithful heart with this letter. Commend me to all my friends; and tell them, I thank God, I am cheerful in Christ, wishing them to fear God more than man, and to learn to despise earnestly the vanities of this world; desiring you all to pray for me, that I may end my journey with fidelity. Amen.

John Philpot.

## To Master Robert Glover,

Prisoner in Coventry for the maintenance of God's Gospel.

The knowledge of God which hath enlightened your mind with the true religion of Christ, and now doth in the beginning of darkness shine in you to the commendation of your true faith, and to the strengthening of many weak brethren, remain with you to the end, through the mighty operation of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

It is a singular comfort to the afflicted flock of Christ, to behold such as have been ministers and professors of his truth in religion, to stand in the same, and that in the time of persecution, whenas<sup>1</sup> 1 when the same may not be abidden by<sup>2</sup> 2 adhered to before the face of the rich and mighty in this world, to be preached without present danger. So St. Paul willeth Timothy, both in season and out of season to be earnest in sowing the word. And praised be God that we here in prison for the testimony thereof, do hear of your diligence in this behalf, which cease not to do the office of an evangelist, although it be with danger of affliction. Such faithful ministers be to be honoured, that do submit their own heads to peril for the love of the Gospel. Such Christ will acknowledge and confess before his Father in heaven; and they are those which have bidden<sup>3</sup> 3 continued with him in temptations, and therefore shall eat and drink with him at his table in the kingdom of heaven. I thought it therefore my duty, at the motion<sup>4</sup> 4 request of this bearer, albeit I have no bodily acquaintance with you, to exhort you, as St. Paul willeth us to exhort one another as long as we are in this life, boldly to continue in this good and necessary work of the Lord: specially in these evil days, in the which Satan rageth against the church of Christ, and daily imprisoneth and robbeth the members thereof, for their faithful testimony; and be you assured, he will not leave you untouched, for above all other he seeketh to suppress the good ministers of the word, for they be such as have destroyed his kingdom. But you must not, for fear of his odious and tedious assaults, withdraw yourself from your vocation; but rather provoke him by your constant profession to do his worst, knowing that the same shall turn unto you to the best, even to the crown of your glory. There is none crowned, but such as hold out to the goal-end; and therefore our Saviour Christ saith in the Gospel, *Beatus qui perseverat usque in finem*. You run well: God is praised therein, and the afflicted church much comforted by so faithful a captain; run out therefore (as I doubt not you will), and fear nothing of that you shall suffer for your labour; for if you be faithful unto death, you shall assuredly have the reward of eternal life. Many go on well till they come to the pikes; and then they turn their backs and give over in the plain field, to the shame of Christ and His church, that

hath so faint-hearted soldiers in his host at the time of need, in the which his glory ought most manfully to be shewed.

Rom. 8. I doubt not but you have already cast the price of this your building of the house of God, that it is like to be no less than your life; for I believe (as Paul saith), that God hath appointed us in these latter days like sheep to the slaughter. Antichrist is come again, and he must make a feast to Beelzebub his father of many Christian bodies, for the restoring again of his kingdom; let us watch and pray, that the same day may not find us unready. The peace of God be with you, and remain with you for ever. Your loving brother in Christ, and in spirit your familiar friend, captive in the King's Bench,

John Philpot.

To my dearly beloved Sister in the Lord, Mistress Weath.

Heb. 11. The light of the Gospel of Christ, which hath enlightened you with the true understanding of faith, be daily increased in you, my dearly beloved sister, unto the perfect day of the Lord, through the mighty operation of his Spirit. Amen.—Whereas you have required of me a token at your departing, that might be a remembrance with you of my brotherly love towards you, I mused, of divers things, what I might commend unto you best; and among all other, I found none so certain a token either of the love of God toward us, or else of the love of us one to another, as to bear the cross together with Christ. To bear the cross, is to be partaker of the afflictions of Christ, which now he suffereth in his members, for the accomplishment of his body the church, which are we that believe in him sincerely—which is the surest token of God's love towards us that we can have in this world; for whom God loveth he chasteneth, and, as it is written, he chasteneth every son whom he receiveth. Wherefore, above all things, love the cross of Christ, under the which all the church of Christ in England now is; and be content to have your faith tried every day by some cross or other, as it pleaseth God to put on you: and if God putteth no grievous cross upon you, let your brethren's cross be your cross, which is a certain token of true brotherly love.

If the church in England had learned, with the Gospel, to have borne the cross of Christ, as all that be professors of the Gospel be called thereunto, they would not so lightly, at the commandment of man, have turned from the ways of salvation to their old vomit again contrary to their conscience; and all to avoid the cross, the merciful sign of God's love towards us. If the cross were not, the faithful could not be known. If the cross were not, God should not so manifestly appear to be our deliverer and comforter, as he doth shew himself in the midst thereof, unto all them

that put their trust in him. Therefore believe them verily to be in most happy estate, that be under the cross; and such as do utterly abhor the same, are cowards, and not fit soldiers for the Lord. We have all received the credit of faith from God in Christ, that we should beautify the same—or rather, God in the same. We have this treasure in brittle vessels; let us take heed <sup>1 Cor. 4.</sup> that the brittleness of the vessels shed not out our precious treasure on the earth, as, it is lamentable to see at this day, many have most unfaithfully done. Are they worthy of the heavenly kingdom, which here esteem more earth than heaven? Oh palpable infidelity! Will not God require the credit of faith, which he hath committed unto us? Yea, verily.

Is this the usury of faith, to love the world more than the Gospel, and to fear man more than God? If men, which count themselves stronger and worthier vessels, have thus unfaithfully dealt in the things of God, let the weakness of women be more firm in their faith to the glory of God, whose might appeareth in weakness. There is no exception of person before God; both man and woman be one in God; and that person in all sorts of people is acceptable to him, that striveth to do his will. Wherefore contend in these cross-days, which be the love-days of God towards us, to shew yourself faithful to him that calleth you, and to be ready to do his will according to true knowledge, and that under the cross. God hath given you a faithful guide, whom see you love with all humility, patience, and obedience, as it becometh a holy woman to be subject to her faithful head in the Lord; and comfort him in our common cross, and bid him cheerfully take up the one end and you will bear the other—a double string knit together. As you in your godly matrimony do represent the mystery of Christ and his church, so continue you lively members of faith in the same; and learn daily more and more to bear the cross of Christ, that others seeing your strength may be comforted, and be ashamed of their weakness in their Master's cause.

The faithful servant the Lord loveth, which bringeth his talent to his table with increase. Now is the time to increase to the Lord, and not to decrease; to multiply our faith under the cross, and not to diminish it. The ways of the just do increase as the <sup>Hos. 6.</sup> dawning of the day: embrace therefore the cross, as the rainbow <sup>Gen. 9.</sup> of God's merciful covenant; pray that we may together end our course therein with joy. Take my token in good worth, until we be made partakers of the glory of the cross.—Out of my lord of London's coal-house, the 11th of November.

Yours,

John Philpot.

To my brother John Careless,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

The grace of God the Father, through his dear Son Christ our Saviour, with perseverance in all godly verity, be with thee, my dear brother Careless, and with all my prison-fellows. Amen.

These were certain free-will men, arrogant, froward, and unquiet spirits.

Ah, my own love in Christ, I am sorry to hear of thy great trouble which these schismatics do daily put thee to. I would I were with thee, in part to relieve thy grief; but since that it hath pleased God otherwise, take my advice in this your conflict, and be patient whatsoever your adversaries can say or do against you. Know that you are appointed for the defence of the Gospel, for the which you (God be praised,) do suffer; yet you must understand that you are but a voice in the wilderness, and a planter, and that it is God which must give the increase. And therefore if there come not such fruit of your good labours as you would wish, be content, and know that a stony ground cannot fructify; yet shall not God forget your labour, but you shall reap as plenteously in the day of reward, as though it had increased after your expectation. Have patience, therefore, in your labour, and let not care eat out your heart. Commit the success to God; and cease not with charity to be earnest in the defence of the truth, against these arrogant and self-will blinded scatterers.

These sects are necessary, for the trial of our faith and for the beautifying thereof. Be not perverted with them that be perverse and intractable; they resist not you, they resist Christ, and be workers against their own salvation. Shew as much modesty and humility as you may possible: so shall your labour please God best, and your adversaries receive the more shame; and others, seeing your modest conversation amongst these contentious babblers, shall glorify God in his truth by you, and the more abhor them, as you see it hath come to pass in times past. Be content that Shimei do rail at David and cast stones awhile; be sure, his railing judgment will fall upon his own pate. Have always that notable rule of Christ's church before your eyes, which St. Paul writeth; that if anybody be contentious, neither we, neither the church of God, hath any such custom.

Desire all our brethren in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to keep the bond of peace; which is the unity of Christ's church, where be all the treasures of spiritual consolation in heavenly things. Let no root of bitterness spring up, which the devil with all diligence seeketh to thrust in amongst the children of God. Kiss one another with the kiss of unfeigned brotherly love; and take one another by the hand cheerfully, and say, Let us take up our cross together, and go to the Mount of Calvary, and there be willing to



suffer whatsoever it pleaseth God we shall. Hitherto we have not resisted to blood-shedding. Our blood must not be too dear for the Lord, and then his kingdom shall not be too dear for us. Thus exhort one another to offer yourselves a joyful sacrifice unto God ; for this is that pleasant sacrifice wherewith his wrath shall be pacified, which is now kindled most justly against us. Be thankful unto God, that it hath pleased him to make you worthy of this glorious affliction ; yea, and I pray you give thanks unto God for me, that it hath been His good will to take me, most filthy and unthankful sinner, to be one of this number. My joy of the love of God towards me in this behalf is such, that it maketh all my strait imprisonment to seem pleasure ; God be praised, I cannot be sorry though I would.

Oh how great is the love of God towards us ! Be merry, brethren, and rejoice continually in the Lord ; for the victory is ours, yea, heaven is ours, and all the glory thereof. Faint not, but run out, for we are even at an end. Be glad of nothing so much, as in the mortification of the old Adam ; murmur not, in no case, whatsoever necessity you be in. Communicate your necessities to me, and to others of his people, and God will make us to divide stakes. Be always praising God, talking, comforting, teaching, and exhorting in God, and he will not see you utterly destitute. I commend me to your faithful prayers all. And you, Careless, see that you be in my dungeon with me, as I am in spirit with you in the King's Bench, and with you all.

Thine own brother,

John Philpot.

### To Mistress Ann Hartipole,

Who has fallen from the sincerity of the Gospel, which she had before long known and professed, to the Pope and his idolatrous religion.

The grace of God and true light, wherewith he lighteneth the hearts of all the true and faithful believers, lovers, and followers of his holy Gospel, lighten your heart by the mighty operation of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

I have not hitherto been accustomed to write unto you in the matters of our common faith, which is now dangerously assaulted, especially for that otherwise, by corporal presence and mutual conference, we have had consolation in the same, as the time present did require. In the which I perceived your judgment and constancy to be so much, that I received, by your good and godly example, strength in the same ; as I have done even from the beginning, before I was called unto the light of the gospel, in the which you went before me, and ministered occasion to me to follow, at such time as that blessed woman Ann Askew (now a

glorious martyr in the fight of Jesus Christ,) was harboured in your house; so that I thought it superfluous and not needful to write thereof unto you, that of so long time have been instructed, and by so many learned books confirmed. But now, hearing that the old serpent our ancient enemy, which lieth in continual wait of our steps, hath bitten you by the heel and given you a foul fall, I cannot but be heartily sorry, and, as brotherly charity moveth me, testify the same unto you by writing, for that I may not presently otherwise open myself in this behalf.

Alas, sister, that so sincere profession should receive so gross an infection, to the dishonour of God and of His church! What meaneth it that you are so suddenly departed from Jerusalem unto Jericho, to be a companion of thieves and idolaters, to the utter overthrowing of that good which you have professed? for, as Luke 10. St. James teacheth us, he that offendeth in one is guilty in all; and to come to idolatry and strange worshipping of God, forbidden by his word, is of all transgressions the most detestable. Therefore I cannot cease to wonder how you could so soon be allured or drawn thereto. I had thought the love of the truth had been so grafted in your heart, that neither persecution, sword, fire, nor gallows might have brought this to pass, that at the voice of a handmaid in the first temptation, you should have denied Christ. For not to walk after the sincerity of His gospel indeed, is to deny Him; and none can be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils, which is the popish mass, and the malignant synagogue using the same.

Methinks I hear your excuse, pretending your conscience to be sound before GOD notwithstanding; and that your conscience will give you leave thus to do, with the common sort of dissemblers both with God and man: but I must tell you plain, sister, in God's cause, that your conscience, so affected, is a sickly and unsound conscience and craftily blinded; for before GOD there is no such conscience allowed, which alloweth your body to do that which it condemneth. We shall receive all according to that which we do in our bodies, whether it be good or evil; and it is commanded us as well to glorify GOD in our bodies as in our souls. We must shew our faith by our outward conversation; that men, seeing our good works, might glorify our Father which is in heaven. Will ye now with your presence go about to beautify that, which hitherto you have justly destroyed? What do you else in so doing, but notify yourself to be an infidel to the church of Christ, that will be content to associate yourself with her enemy, for the contentation of man? Hath ever any person of God so done, that was allowed therein? Be not deceived, good sister, with the persuasible words of man, neither be afraid of his threats. Follow the gospel of Christ according to true knowledge; and fear to do that, which by the same is

straitly forbidden you. Tempt not GOD any longer by this evil doing, for you can do nothing more heinous in his sight. Let this halting be healed up, and turn not from the right ways of the Lord. Be not ashamed of his Gospel, neither of the cross which is the badge of the true and unfeigned professions thereof, which you see now His faithful (praised be His name therefore!) are so well content and willing to bear: but rather, as you are called, take up your cross, and be assured thereby to enter into Christ's glory; for unless we suffer with Him, we shall not reign <sup>2 Tim. 2.</sup> with Him, and if we die not with Christ, we shall not live with Christ. The cross now is the ready way to heaven; therefore I wish you should choose to be afflicted with the people of God, rather than to live in the tabernacles of the wicked. Do not any more that which, of all things, ye have now most cause to repent; neither lay daily the foundation of repentance, but let this fall be a <sup>Heb. 6</sup> teaching unto you of the want of faith which is in you; and so become more fervent in prayer and godly exercises, that, with this new year, ye may become a new woman in a godly and new perfection: the which GOD, for His mercies' sake in Christ, work both in you and me to the end. Amen.

Written in haste, by your brother in captivity,

John Philpot.

### To a faithful Woman,

And late Wife to one of the Bishops, which gave their lives in the Lord's quarrel.

Remember, dear sister, that your life in this world is a continual warfare, to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil; in the which you are appointed, for the trial of your faith and love to God, to fight manfully to overcome: for the Spirit of God which is in you, is stronger than he which is in the world; and by this you may know that you are the child of God, even by the Spirit which striveth in you against the flesh and sin, and will not suffer sin to reign in you. This Spirit is obtained by often and daily reading and hearing the word of GOD, joined with faithful and hearty prayer; for diligent reading of God's word planteth the Holy Spirit in you, and earnest prayer increaseth the same. Read, therefore, the word studiously, and pray heartily that the same good gift of faith, which you have learned of your faithful husband and good bishop in the Lord, who hath gloriously yielded his life for the same, may be confirmed in you even unto death, that you may receive the same crown of glory, which he now hath; for precious is the death of the faithful in the Lord's sight. Therefore desire still to die to the Lord, and be glad to be poor both in body and spirit; and thus assure yourself, the kingdom of heaven is yours.

Your own in the Lord,

John Philpot.

## LETTERS OF MASTER JOHN BRADFORD,

A faithful minister and singular pillar of Christ's church: by whose great travails and diligence in preaching and planting the sincerity of the Gospel, by whose most godly and innocent life, and by whose long and painful imprisonments for the maintainance of the truth, the kingdom of God was not a little advanced; who also at last most valiantly and cheerfully gave his blood for the same, the 4th day of July, in the year of our Lord 1553.

## To all that profess the Gospel

And true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the city of London, John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now not only in prison but also excommunicated and condemned to be burned for the same true doctrine, wisheth mercy, grace and peace, with increase of all godly knowledge, from God the Father of mercy, through the merits of our alone and omnisufficient Redeemer Jesus Christ, by the operation of his Holy Spirit for ever. Amen.

My dearly beloved brethren in our Saviour Christ, although the time I have to live is very little (for hourly I look when I should be had hence, to be conveyed into Lancashire there to be burned, and to render my life, by the providence of God, where I first received it by the same providence); and although the charge<sup>1</sup> is great, to keep me from all things whereby I might signify anything to the world of my state; yet having, as now I have, pen and ink, through God's working, maugre<sup>2</sup> the head of Satan and his soldiers, I thought good to write a short confession of my faith, and thereto join a little exhortation unto you all, to live according to your profession.

<sup>1</sup> injunction

<sup>2</sup> in spite of

This my faith I would gladly particularly declare and expound to the confirmation and comfort of the simple; but, alas, by starts and stealth I write in manner that I write, and therefore I shall desire you all to take this brevity in good part.

First, for my faith: I do confess and pray all the whole congregation of Christ to bear witness with me of the same, that I do believe constantly, through the gift and goodness of God (for faith is God's only gift), all the twelve articles of the symbol or creed, commonly attributed to the collection of the apostles; not because of the creed itself, but because of the word of God, the which teacheth and confirmeth every article accordingly. This word of God, written by the prophets and apostles, left and contained in the canonical books of the holy Bible, I do believe to contain plentifully all things necessary to salvation; so that nothing, as necessary to salvation, ought to be added thereto: and therefore the church of Christ nor none of His congregation ought to be burdened with any other doctrine, than which hereout hath her foundation and ground.

In testimony of which faith, I render and give my life; being condemned as well for not acknowledging the Antichrist of Rome to be Christ's vicar-general, and supreme head of his catholic and universal church here and elsewhere upon earth, as for denying the horrible and idolatrous doctrine of transubstantiation, and Christ's real, corporal and carnal presence in his supper, under the forms and accidents of bread and wine. To believe Christ our Saviour to be the head of his church, and kings in their realms to be the supreme powers to whom every soul oweth obedience, and to believe that in the supper of Christ (which the sacrament of the altar, as the papists call it and use it, doth utterly overthrow,) is a true and a very presence of whole Christ God and man to the faith of the receiver (but not to the stander by and looker upon), as it is a true and a very presence of bread and wine to the senses of men; to believe this (I say) will not serve: and therefore as an heretic I am condemned, and shall be burned; whereof I ask God heartily mercy that I do no more rejoice than I do, having so great cause as to be an instrument wherein it may please my dear Lord and Saviour to suffer. For albeit my manifold sins, even since I came into prison, have deserved at the hands of God not only this temporal but also eternal fire in hell; much more then my former sinful life—which the Lord pardon for his Christ's sake, as I know he of his mercy hath done, and never will lay my iniquities to my charge to condemnation, so great is his goodness, praised therefore be his holy name; although (I say) my manifold and grievous late sins have deserved most justly all the tyranny that man or devil can do unto me (and therefore I confess that the Lord is just, and that his judgments be true and deserved on my behalf), yet the bishop and prelates do not persecute them in me, but Christ himself, his word, his truth and religion. And therefore I have great cause, yea, most great cause, to rejoice that ever I was born, and hitherto kept of the Lord, that by my death, which is deserved for my sins, it pleaseth the heavenly Father to glorify his name, to testify His truth, to confirm His verity, to oppugn<sup>1</sup> his adversaries. O good God and merciful Father, forgive me my great unthankfulness, especially herein.

And you, my dearly beloved, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, I humbly and heartily in his bowels and blood do now, for my last *Vale* and farewell in this present life, beseech you and every of you, that you will consider this work of the Lord accordingly. First, by me to be admonished to beware of hypocrisy and carnal security. Profess not the Gospel with tongue and lips only, but in heart and verity; frame and fashion your lives accordingly. Beware God's name be not evil spoken of, and the Gospel less regarded, by your conversation. God forgive me that I have not so heartily professed it as I should have done, but have

sought much myself therein. The Gospel is a new doctrine to the old man ; it is new wine, and therefore cannot be put in old bottles, without greater hurt than good to the bottles. If we will talk with the Lord, we must put off our shoes and carnal affections ; if we will hear the voice of the Lord, we must wash our garments and be holy ; if we will be Christ's disciples, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ. We cannot serve two masters ; if we seek Christ's kingdom, we must also seek for the righteousness thereof. To the petition of, Let thy kingdom come, we must join, Thy will be done, done, done on earth as it is in heaven. If we will not be doers of the word, but hearers of it, we sore deceive ourselves. If we hear the Gospel and love it not, we declare ourselves to be but fools and builders upon the sand. The Lord's Spirit hateth feigning ; deceitfulness the Lord abhorreth. If we come to him, we must beware we come not with a double heart ; for then it may chance that God will answer us according to the block which is in our heart, and so we shall deceive ourselves and others. To faith see that we couple a good conscience, lest we make a shipwreck. To the Lord we must come with fear and reverence. If we will be gospellers, we must be Christ's ; if we be Christ's, we must crucify our flesh, with the lust and concupiscences thereof. If we will be under grace, sin must not bear rule in us. We may not come to the Lord and draw nigh to him with our lips, and leave our hearts elsewhere, lest the Lord's wrath wax hot, and he take from us the good remaining ; in no case can the kingdom of Christ approach to them that repent not.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, let us repent and be heartily sorry that we have so carnally, so hypocritically, so covetously, so vain-gloriously professed the Gospel. For all these I confess of myself, to the glory of God and mine own confusion here, that he may cover mine offences in the day of judgment. Let the anger and plagues of God, most justly fallen upon us, be applied to every one of our deserts ; that from the bottom of our hearts every of us may say, It is I, Lord, that have sinned against thee ; it is mine hypocrisy, my vain-glory, my covetousness, uncleanness, carnality, security, idleness, unthankfulness, self-love, and such like, which have deserved the taking away of our good king, of thy word and true religion, of thy good ministers by exile, imprisonment and death ; it is my wickedness, that causeth success and increase of authority and peace to thine enemies. Oh, be merciful, be merciful unto us. Turn to us again, O Lord of hosts, and turn us unto thee. Correct us, but not in thy fury, lest we be consumed. In thy wrathful displeasure reprove us not, but in the midst of thine anger remember thy mercy ; for if thou wilt mark what is done amiss, who shall be able to abide it ? But with thee is mercifulness, that thou mightest be worshipped. Oh

then be merciful unto us, that we might truly worship thee. Help us, for the glory of thy name; be merciful unto our sins, for they are great. Oh heal us and help us for thine honour; let not the wicked people say, Where is their God, &c.

On this sort, my right dearly beloved, let us heartily bewail our sins, repent us of our former evil life, heartily and earnestly purpose to amend our lives in all things, continually watch in prayer, diligently and reverently attend, hear, and read the holy Scriptures, labour after our vocation to amend our brethren. Let us reprove the works of darkness; let us fly from all idolatry; let us abhor the Antichristian and Romish rotten service, detest the popish mass, forsake their Romish god, prepare ourselves to the cross, be obedient to all that be in authority, in all things that be not against God and his word; for then, answer with the apostles, It is more meet to obey God than man. Howbeit, never for anything resist, or rise against the magistrates; avenge not yourselves, but commit your cause to the Lord, to whom vengeance pertaineth, and he in his time will reward it. If ye feel in yourselves an hope and trust in God, that he will never tempt you above that he will make you able to bear, be assured the Lord will be true to you, and ye shall be able to bear all brunts. But if ye want this hope, fly and get you hence, rather than by your tarrying God's name should be dishonoured. In sum,<sup>1</sup> *in short* cast your care on the Lord, knowing for most certain that he is careful for you; with him are all the hairs of your head numbered, so that not one of them shall perish without his good pleasure and will; much more then nothing shall happen to your bodies which shall not be profitable, howsoever for a time it seems otherwise to your senses. Hang on the providence of God; not only when you have means to help you, but also when you have no means, yea, when all means be against you. Give him this honour, which of all other things he most chiefly requireth at your hands, namely, Believe that ye are his children through Christ; that he is your Father and God through him; that he loveth you, pardoneth you all your offences; that he is with you in trouble, and will be with you for ever. When ye fall, he will put under his hand, ye shall not lie still. Before ye call upon him he heareth you; out of evil he will finally bring you, and deliver you to his eternal kingdom.

Doubt not, my dearly beloved, hereof; doubt not, I say; this will God your Father do for you, in respect, not of yourselves, but in respect of Christ your captain, your pastor, your keeper, out of whose hands none shall be able to catch you. In him be quiet, and often consider your dignity; namely, how that ye be God's children, the saints of God, citizens of heaven, temples of the Holy Ghost, the thrones of God, members of Christ, and lords over all.

Therefore be ashamed to think, speak, or do anything that should be unseemly for God's children, God's saints, Christ's members, &c. Marvel not, though the devil and the world hate you; though ye be persecuted here—for the servant is not above his master. Covet not earthly riches, fear not the power of man, love not this world nor things that be in this world; but long for the Lord Jesus's coming, at which time your bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body. When he appeareth ye shall be like unto him; when your life thus shall be revealed, then shall ye appear with him in glory; in the mean season live in hope thereof. Let the life you lead be in the faith of the Son of God, for the just doth live by faith; which faith flieth from all evil, and followeth the word of God, as a lantern to her feet and a light to her steps. Her eyes be above where Christ is; she beholdeth not the things present, but rather things to come; she glorieth in afflictions; she knoweth that the afflictions of this life are not to be compared to the glory which God will reveal to us and in us. Of this glory God grant us here a lively taste; then shall we run after the scent it sendeth forth. It will make us valiant men to take to us the kingdom of God: whither the Lord of mercy bring us in his good time, through Christ our Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

My dearly beloved, I would gladly have given here my body to have been burned for the confirmation of the true doctrine I have taught here unto you; but that my country must have: therefore, I pray you, take in good part this signification of my good will towards every of you. Impute the want herein to time and trouble. Pardon me mine offensive and negligent behaviour, when I was amongst you. With me repent and labour to amend; continue in the truth which I have truly taught unto you by preaching, in all places where I have come—God's name therefore be praised; confess Christ when ye are called, whatsoever cometh thereof; and the God of peace be with us all. Amen.

Your brother in bonds for the Lord's sake,

John Bradford,



To all that love the Lord Jesus and His true doctrine,

Being in the University and Town of Cambridge, John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now not only prisoned but also condemned for the same true doctrine, wisheth grace, peace, and mercy, with increase of all godliness, from God the Father of all mercy, through the bloody passion of our lonely<sup>ly</sup> Saviour Jesus Christ, by the lively working of the Holy Spirit, for ever. Amen.

Although I look hourly when I should be had to the stake, (my right dearly beloved in the Lord,) and although the charge over me is great and strait, yet having by the providence of GOD secretly pen and ink, I could not but something signify unto you my solicitude which I have, for you and every of you in the Lord, though not as I would, yet as I may. Ye have often and openly heard the truth (especially in this matter wherein I am condemned,) disputed and preached, that it is needless to do any more, but only to put you in remembrance of the same; but hitherto ye have not heard it confirmed, and (as it were) sealed up, as now ye do, and shall do here by me; that is, by my death and burning. For albeit I have deserved (through my uncleanness, hypocrisy, avarice, vain-glory, idleness, unthankfulness, and carnality, whereof I accuse myself to my confusion before the world, that before God through Christ I might, as my assured hope is I shall, find mercy) eternal death and hell fire, much more then this affliction and fire prepared for me; yet, my dearly beloved, it is not these or any of these things, wherefore the prelates do persecute me, but God's verity and truth. Yea, even Christ himself is the only cause and thing wherefore I now am condemned, and shall be burned as an heretic: because I will not grant the Antichrist of Rome to be Christ's vicar-general and supreme head of his church here, and everywhere upon earth, by God's ordinance; and because I will not grant such corporal, real, and carnal presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament, as doth transubstantiate the substance of bread and wine, and is received of the wicked, yea, of dogs and mice.

Also I am excommunicated, and counted as a dead member of Christ's church, as a rotten branch, and therefore shall be cast into the fire. Therefore ye ought heartily to rejoice with me, and to give thanks for me, that God the eternal Father hath vouchsafed our mother to bring up any child, in whom it would please him to magnify his holy name, as he doth, and I hope for his mercy and truth's sake will do, in me and by me. Oh what such benefit upon earth can there be, as that that which deserved death by reason of my sins, should be diverted to a demonstration, a testification, and confirmation of God's verity and truth!

Thou, my mother the University, hast not only had the truth of God's word plainly manifested unto thee by reading, disputing, and preaching publicly and privately, but now (to make thee altogether excuseless, and as it were almost to sin against the Holy Ghost, if thou put to thy helping hand with the Romish rout to suppress the verity and set out the contrary,) thou hast my life and blood as a seal to confirm thee, if thou wilt be confirmed; or else to confound thee and bear witness against thee, if thou wilt take part with the prelates and clergy, which now fill up the measure of their fathers, which slew the prophets and apostles, that all righteous blood from Abel to Bradford shed upon the earth may be required at their hands.

Of this therefore I thought good before my death, as time and liberty would suffer me, for the love and duty I bear unto thee, to admonish thee, good mother, and my sister the town; that ye would call to mind from whence ye are fallen, and study to do the first works. Ye know, if you will, these matters of the Romish supremacy, and the Antichristian transubstantiation, whereby Christ's supper is overthrown, his priesthood evacuate, his sacrifice frustrate, the ministry of his word unplaced, repentance repelled, faith fainted, godliness extinguished, the mass maintained, idolatry supported, and all impiety cherished; ye know (I say) if you will, that these opinions are not only besides God's word, but even directly against it: and therefore to take part with them, is to take part against God, against whom you cannot prevail.

Therefore for the tender mercy of Christ, in his bowels and blood, I beseech you to take Christ's collyrium and eye-salve to anoint your eyes; that ye may see what ye do and have done, in admitting (as I hear ye have admitted, yea, alas, authorised and by consent confirmed) the Romish rotten rags, which once ye utterly expelled. Oh be not *canis reversus ad vomitum*, be not *sus lota reversa ad volutabrum cœni*. Beware lest old Satan enter in, with seven other spirits, and so the last shall be worse than the first. It had been better ye had never known the truth, than after knowledge to run from it. Ah, woe to this world and the things therein, which hath now so wrought with you. Oh that ever this dirt of the devil should daub up the eye of the realm; for thou (O mother) art, as it were, the eye of the realm. If thou be light and give shine, all the body shall fare the better; but if thou the light be darkness, alas, how great will the darkness be! What is man whose breath is in his nostrils, that thou shouldst thus be afraid of him? Oh what is honour and life here but plain bubbles? What is glory in this world but shame? Why art thou afraid to carry Christ's cross? Wilt thou come into his kingdom and not drink of his cup? Dost thou not know Rome to be Babylon? Dost thou not know, that, as the old Babylon had

the children of Judah in captivity, so hath this, true Judah, that is, the confessors of Christ? Dost thou not know, that, as destruction happened unto it, so shall it do unto this? And trowest thou that God will not deliver his people now, when the time is come, as he did then? Hath not God commanded his people to come out from her, and wilt thou give ensample to the whole realm to run into her? Hast thou forgot the woe that Christ threateneth to offence-givers? Wilt thou not remember, that it were better a millstone were hanged about thy neck, and thou thrown into the sea, than that thou shouldest offend the little ones? And, alas, how hast thou offended! Yea, how dost thou still offend! Wilt thou consider things according to the outward show? Was not the synagogue more seemly and like to the true church, than the simple flock of Christ's disciples? Hath not the whore of Babylon more costly array and rich apparel externally to set forth herself, than the homely housewife of Christ? Where is the beauty of the king's daughter, the church of Christ? Without, or within? Doth not David say, within? Oh remember, that, as they are happy which are not offended at Christ, so are they happy which are not offended at his poor church.

Can the pope and his prelates mean honestly, which make so much of the wife, and so little of the Husband? The church they magnify, but Christ they contemn. If this church were an honest woman (that is, Christ's wife), except they would make much of her husband Christ and his word, she would not be<sup>1</sup> made much of. When Christ and his apostles were upon earth, who was more like to be the true church? They, or the prelates, bishops, and synagogue? If a man should have followed custom, unity, antiquity, or the more part,<sup>2</sup> should not Christ and his company have been cast out of the doors? Therefore bade Christ, Search the Scriptures. And, good mother, shall the servant be above his master? Shall we look for other entertainment at the hands of the world, than Christ and his dear disciples found? Who was taken in Noah's time for the church? Poor Noah and his family, or others? Who was taken for God's church in Sodom? Lot, or others? And doth not Christ say, As it went then so shall it go now, towards the coming of the Son of man? What meaneth Christ when he saith, Iniquity shall have the upper hand? doth he not tell that charity shall wax cold? And who seeth not a wonderful great lack of charity, in those which would now be taken for Christ's church? All that fear God in this realm truly, can tell more of this than I can write.

Therefore, dear mother, receive some admonition of one of thy poor children, now going to be burned for the testimony of Jesus. Come again to God's truth; come out of Babylon; confess Christ and his true doctrine; repent that which is past; make amends, by declaring thy repentance by the fruits. Remember

<sup>1</sup> would not consent to be

<sup>2</sup> the majority

the readings and preachings of God's prophet and true preacher, Martin Bucer. Call to mind the threatenings of God, now something seen by thy children Leaver and others. Let the exile of Leaver, Pilkington, Grindal, Haddon, Horn, Scory, Ponet, &c. something awake thee. Let the imprisonment of thy dear sons, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer move thee. Consider the martyrdom of thy chickens, Rogers, Saunders, Taylor. And now cast not away the poor admonition of me, going to be burned also, and to receive the like crown of glory with my fellows. Take to heart God's calling by us. Be not as Pharaoh was, for then will it happen unto thee as it did unto him. What is that? Hardness of heart! And what then? Destruction eternally, both of body and soul!

Ah, therefore, good mother, awake, awake, repent, repent, bustle thyself and make haste to turn to the Lord; for else it shall be more easy for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for thee. Oh harden not your hearts. Oh stop not your ears to-day in hearing God's voice, though it be by me a most unworthy messenger. Oh fear the Lord, for his anger is begun to kindle. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the tree. Ye know I prophesied truly to you before the sweat<sup>1</sup> came, what would become if ye repented not your carnal gospelling; and now I tell you before I depart hence, that the ears of men will tingle to hear of the vengeance of God that will fall upon you all, both town and University, if ye repent not, if ye leave not your idolatry, if ye turn not speedily to the Lord, if ye still be ashamed of Christ's truth which ye know. O Pern, repent. O Thomson, repent. O ye doctors, bachelors, and masters, repent. O mayor, aldermen, and town-dwellers, repent, repent, repent, that ye may escape the near vengeance of the Lord. Rend your hearts, and come apace, calling on the Lord. Let us all say, Peccavimus, we have sinned, we have done wickedly, we have not hearkened to thy voice, O Lord. Deal not with us after our deserts, but be merciful to our iniquities, for they are great. Oh pardon us our offences. In thine anger remember thy mercy. Turn us unto thee, O Lord God of hosts, for the glory of thy name's sake. Spare us and be merciful unto us. Let not the wicked people say, Where is now their God? Oh, for thine own sake, for thy name's sake, deal mercifully with us. Turn thyself unto us, and us unto thee, and we shall praise thy name for ever.

If in this sort, my dearly beloved, in heart and mouth we come unto our Father, and prostrate ourselves before the throne of his grace, then surely, surely, we shall find mercy; then shall the Lord look merrily upon us, for his mercy's sake in Christ; then shall we hear him speak peace unto his people: for he is gracious and merciful, of great pity and compassion; he cannot be chiding for ever, his anger cannot last long to the penitent.

<sup>1</sup> the  
falling  
sickness.

Though we weep in the morning, yet at night we shall have our sorrow to cease : for he is exorable,<sup>1</sup> and hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner ; he rather would our conversion and turning. Oh <sup>1 easy to</sup> turn you now and convert, yet once again I humbly beseech you, <sup>he in-</sup> and then the kingdom of heaven shall draw nigh. The eye hath not <sup>treated</sup> seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive the joys prepared for us, if we repent, amend our lives, and heartily turn to the Lord. But if ye repent not, but be as ye were, and go on forwards with the wicked, following the fashion of the world, the Lord will lead you on with wicked doers ; ye shall perish in your wickedness ; your blood will be upon your own heads ; your part shall be with hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ; ye shall be cast from the face of the Lord for ever and ever ; eternal shame, sorrow, woe, and misery shall be both in body and soul to you, world without end.

Oh therefore, right dear to me in the Lord, turn you, turn you, repent you, repent you, amend, amend your lives, depart from evil, do good, follow peace and pursue it. Come out from Babylon, cast off the works of darkness, put on Christ, confess his truth, be not ashamed of his Gospel, prepare yourselves to the cross, drink of God's cup before it come to the dregs ; and then shall I, with you and for you, rejoice in the day of judgment—which is at hand, and therefore prepare yourselves thereto, I heartily beseech you. And thus I take my *Vale in æternum* with you in this present life, mine own dear hearts in the Lord. The Lord of mercy be with us all, and give us a joyful and sure meeting in his kingdom. Amen, amen.—Out of prison, the 11th of February, anno 1555.

Your own in the Lord for ever,

John Bradford.

To all those that profess the Name and true Religion  
of our Saviour Jesus Christ,

In Lancashire and Cheshire, especially abiding in Manehester and thereabouts, John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now not only in bonds but also condemned for the same true religion, wisheth mercy and grace, peace and increase of all godliness, from God the Father of all piety, through the deserts of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the working of the most mighty and lively Spirit the Comforter, for ever. Amen.

I hear it reported credibly (my dearly beloved in the Lord,) that my heavenly Father hath thought it good to provide, that, as I have preached his true Gospel and doctrine among you by word, so I shall testify and confirm the same by deed ; that is, I shall with you leave my life, which by his providence I first received

The enemies had appointed to burn him at Manches-ter, but the Lord al-tered their purpose.

there, (for in Manchester was I born,) for a seal to the doctrine I have taught with you and among you: so that if from henceforth you waver in the same you have none excuse at all. I know the enemies of Christ, which exercise this cruelty upon me, (I speak it in respect of mine offence, which is none to themwards,) think, by killing of me among you, to affray you and others, lest they should attempt to teach Christ truly or believe his doctrine hereafter: but I doubt not but that heavenly Father will by my death more confirm you in his truth for ever. And therefore I greatly rejoice to see Satan and his soldiers supplanted in their own sapience, which is plain foolishness among the wise indeed, that is, among such as have heard God's word, and do follow it; for they only are accounted wise of the wisdom of God our Saviour. Indeed, if I should simply consider my life, with that which it ought to have been, and as God in his law requireth, then could I not but cry as I do, *Justus es, Domine et omnia judicia tua vera: Righteous art thou, O Lord, and all thy judgments are true.* For I have much grieved thee, and transgressed thy holy precepts, not only before my professing the gospel, but since also, yea, even since my coming into prison. I do not excuse but accuse myself, before God and all his church, that I have grievously offended my Lord God; I have not lived his Gospel as I should have done; I have sought myself, and not simply and only his glory and my brethren's commodity; I have been too unthankful, secure, carnal, hypocritical, vain-glorious, &c. All which my evils the Lord of mercy pardon me for his Christ's sake, as I hope and certainly believe he hath done, for his great mercy in Christ our Redeemer. But when I consider the cause of my condemnation, I cannot but lament that I do no more rejoice than I do: for it is God's verity and truth; so that the condemnation is not a condemnation of Bradford simply, but rather a condemnation of Christ and his truth—Bradford is nothing else but an instrument, in whom Christ and his doctrine is condemned. And therefore, (my dearly beloved,) rejoice, rejoice, and give thanks with me and for me, that ever God did vouchsafe so great a benefit to our country, as to choose the most unworthy (I mean myself) to be one, in whom it would please him to suffer any kind of affliction, much more this violent kind of death which I perceive is prepared for me among you for his sake. All glory and praise be given unto God our Father, for his exceeding great mercy towards me, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But perchance ye will say unto me, What is the cause for the which you are condemned? we hear say that you deny all presence of Christ in his holy supper, and so make it a bare sign, and common bread, and nothing else. My dearly beloved, what is said of me and will be, I cannot tell. It is told me that Master Pendleton is gone down to preach with you, not as he hath recanted (for

ye all know how he hath preached contrary to that he was wont to preach afore I came among you), but to recant that which he hath recanted. How he will speak of me and report, before I come, when I am come, and when I am burned, I much pass not; <sup>I care not</sup> for he that is so uncertain, and will speak so often against himself, I cannot think he will speak well of me, except it make for his purpose and profit. But of this enough. Indeed the chief thing which I am condemned for as an heretic is, because I deny the sacrament of the altar (which is not Christ's supper, but a plain perverting of it, being used as the papists now use it,) to be a real, natural, and corporal presence of Christ's body and blood, under the forms and accidents of bread and wine: that is, because I deny transubstantiation, which is the darling of the devil, and daughter and heir to Antichrist's religion, whereby the mass is maintained, Christ's supper perverted, his sacrifice and cross imperfected, his priesthood destroyed, the ministry taken away, repentance repelled, and all true godliness abandoned. In the supper of our Lord, or sacrament of Christ's body and blood, I confess and believe that there is a true and very presence of whole Christ, God and man, to the faith of the receiver, but not of the stander-by or looker-on; as there is a very true presence of bread and wine to the senses of him that is partaker thereof. This faith, this doctrine, which consenteth with the word of God, and with the true testimony of Christ's church (which the popish church doth persecute), will I not forsake; and therefore am I condemned as an heretic, and shall be burned.

But, my dearly beloved, this truth (which I have taught, ye have received, I believed and do believe, and therein give my life,) I hope in God shall never be burned, bound, nor overcome, but shall triumph, have victory and be at liberty, maugre<sup>2</sup> the head of <sup>2 in spite of</sup> all God's adversaries. For there is no counsel against the Lord, nor no device of man can be able to defeat the verity, in any other than in such as be children of unbelief, which have no love to the truth, and therefore are given up to believe lies. From which plague the Lord of mercies deliver you and all this realm, my dear hearts in the Lord, I humbly beseech his mercy. Amen.

And to the end ye might be delivered from this plague (right dear to me in the Lord), I shall, for my farewell with you for ever in this present life, heartily desire you all, in the bowels and blood of our most merciful Saviour Jesus Christ, to attend unto those things, which now I shall shortly write unto you out of the Holy Scriptures of the Lord. Ye know an heavy plague (or rather plagues,) of God is fallen upon us, in taking away our good king, God's true religion, God's true prophets and ministers &c., and setting over us such as seek not the Lord after knowledge; whose endeavours God prospereth wonderfully, to the trial of many, that his people may both better know themselves, and be known. Now the cause hereof is our iniquities and grievous sins. We did not

know the time of our visitation ; we were unthankful unto God ; we contemned the Gospel, and carnally abused it to serve our hypocrisy, our vain-glory, our viciousness, avarice, idleness, security, &c. Long did the Lord linger and tarry to have shewed mercy upon us ; but we were ever the longer, the worse. Therefore most justly hath God dealt with us, and dealeth with us. Yea, yet we may see, that his justice is tempered with much mercy : whereto let us attribute that we are not utterly consumed ; for if the Lord should deal with us after our deserts (alas), how could we abide it ?

In his anger therefore seeing he doth remember his mercy, undeserved, yea, undesired on our behalf, let us take occasion the more speedily to go out to meet him—not with force and armies, for we are not so able to withstand him, much less to prevail against him—but to beseech him to be merciful unto us, and according to his wonted mercy to deal with us. Let us arise with David, and say, *Ne intres in iudicium cum servo tuo*, &c. Enter not into judgment, O Lord, with thy servant ; for in thy sight no flesh living shall be justified. Let us send ambassadors with the centurion, and say, Lord, we are not worthy to come ourselves unto thee, speak the word, and we shall have peace. Let us penitently, with the Publican, look down on the earth, knock our hard hearts to burst them, and cry out, O God, be merciful unto us wretched sinners. Let us, with the lost son, return and say, O Father, we have sinned against heaven and earth, and before thee ; we are unworthy to be called thy children. Let us (I say) do on this sort, that is, heartily repent us of our former evil life and unthankful gospelling past, convert and turn to God with our whole hearts, hoping in his great mercy through Christ, and heartily calling upon his holy name ; and then undoubtedly we shall find and feel otherwise than yet we feel, both inwardly and outwardly. Inwardly we shall feel peace of conscience between God and us, which peace passeth all understanding ; and outwardly we shall feel much mitigation of these miseries, if not an outward taking of them away.

Therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I your poorest brother, now departing to the Lord, for my *Vale in æternum* for this present life, pray you, beseech you, and even from the very bottom of my heart, for all the mercies of God in Christ shewed unto you, most earnestly beg and crave of you, out of prison, as often out of your pulpits I have done, that ye will repent you, leave your wicked and evil life, be sorry for your offences, and turn to the Lord ; whose arms are wide open to receive and embrace you ; whose stretched-out hand to strike to death stayeth that he might shew mercy upon you : for he is the Lord of mercy and God of all comfort ; he will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should return, convert, and amend ; he hath no pleasure in the destruction of men ; his long-suffering draweth to repentance, before the time of vengeance and the day of wrath, which is at hand, doth



come. Now is the axe laid to the root of the tree, utterly to destroy the impenitent. Now is the fire gone out before the face of the Lord, and who is able to quench it? Oh therefore repent you, repent you. It is enough to have lived as we have done. It is enough to have played the wanton gospellers, the proud protestants, hypocritical, and false christians, as (alas) we have done. Now the Lord speaketh unto us in mercy and grace: oh turn, before he speak in wrath. Yet is there mercy with the Lord, and plenteous redemption: yet hath he not forgotten to shew mercy to them that call upon him. Oh then call upon him while he may be found, for he is rich in mercy and plentiful to all them that call upon him: so that he that calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. If your sins be as red as scarlet, the Lord saith he will make them as white as snow. He hath sworn, and never will repent him thereof, that he will never remember our iniquities; but, as he is God faithful and true, so will he be our God, and we shall be his people. His law will he write in our hearts, and engraft it in our minds; and never will he have in mind our unrighteousness.

Therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, turn you, turn you to the Lord your Father, to the Lord your Saviour, to the Lord your Comforter. Oh why do you stop your ears and harden your hearts to-day, when you hear his voice by me your poorest brother? Oh forget not, how that the Lord hath shewed himself true, and me his true preacher, by bringing to pass these plagues which at my mouth, and by my preaching, ye often heard before they came: especially when I entreated<sup>1</sup> of Noah's flood, and when I preached of the 23rd chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, on St. Stephen's day, the last time I was with you. And now by me the same Lord sendeth you word (dear countrymen), that if ye will go on forwards in your impenitence, carnality, hypocrisy, idolatry, covetousness, swearing, gluttony, drunkenness, whoredom, &c. wherewith (alas, alas,) our country floweth; if (I say) ye will not turn and leave off, seeing me now burned among you, to assure you on all sides how God seeketh you, and is sorry to do you hurt, to plague you, to destroy you, to take vengeance upon you; oh, your blood will be upon your own heads. Ye have been warned and warned again, by me in preaching, by me in burning.

As I said therefore, I say again (my dear hearts and darlings in the Lord), turn you, turn you, repent you, repent you, cease from doing evil, study to do well, away with idolatry, flee the Romish god and service, leave off from swearing, cut off carnality, abandon avarice, drive away drunkenness, flee from fornication and flattery, from murder and malice, destroy deceitfulness, and cast away all the works of darkness; put on piety and godliness, serve God after his word and not after custom, use your tongues to glorify God by prayer, thanksgiving, and confession of his truth, &c. Be spiritual, and by the Spirit mortify carnal affections; be sober,

holy, true, loving, gentle, merciful; and then shall the Lord's wrath cease, not for this your doing's sake, but for his mercies' sake. Go to therefore (good countrymen), take this counsel of the Lord, by me now sent unto you; take it as the Lord's counsel (I say) and not as mine, that in the day of judgment I may rejoice with you and for you: the which thing I heartily desire, and not to be a witness against you. My blood will cry for vengeance; as against the papists, God's enemies (whom I beseech God, if it be his good will, heartily to forgive, yea even them which put me to death, and are the causes thereof, for they know not what they do); so will my blood cry for vengeance against you (my dearly beloved in the Lord), if ye repent not, amend not, and turn not unto the Lord. Turn unto the Lord, yet once more I heartily beseech thee, thou Manchester, thou Bolton, Bury, Wigan, Liverpool, Ashton-under-line, Mottram, Stockport, Winsley, Eccles, Preston, Middleton, Radcliff, and thou city of Westchester, where I have truly taught and preached the word of God. Turn, I say unto you all, and to all the inhabitants thereabouts, unto the Lord our God, and he will turn unto you. He will say unto his angel, it is enough, put up thy sword. The which thing that he will do, I humbly beseech his goodness, for the precious blood's sake of his dear Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Ah, good brethren, take in good part these my last words unto every one of you. Pardon me mine offences and negligence in behaviour among you. The Lord of mercy pardon us all our offences, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Out of prison, ready to come to you, the 2nd of February, anno 1555.

John Bradford.

**To the faithful, and such as profess the true doctrine  
of our Saviour Jesus Christ,**

Dwelling at Walden and thereabouts, John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now in bonds, and condemned for the same true doctrine, wisheth grace, mercy, and peace, with the increase of all godliness, in knowledge and living, from God the Father of all comfort, through the deserts of our alone and full Redeemer Jesus Christ, by the mighty working of the most Holy Spirit the Comforter, for ever. Amen.

When I remember how that, by the providence and grace of God, I have been a man by whom it hath pleased him, through my ministry, to call you to repentance and amendment of life something effectually (as it seemed), and to sow among you his true doctrine and religion; lest that by my affliction, and the storms now risen to try the faithful, and to conform them like to the image of the Son of GOD, into whose company we are called, ye

might be faint-hearted, I could not but out of prison secretly (for my keepers may not know that I have pen and ink,) to write unto you a signification of the desire I have, that you should not only be more confirmed in the doctrine I have taught among you, which (I take on my death as I shall answer at the day of doom,) I am persuaded to be God's assured, infallible and plain truth, but also should after your vocation avouch the same by confession, profession, and living. I have not taught you (my dearly beloved in the Lord,) fables, tales, or untruth, but I have taught you the verity; as now by my blood gladly (praised therefore be God!) I shall seal up the same. Indeed, to confess the truth unto you and to all the church of Christ, I do not think of myself but that I have most justly deserved not only this kind, but also all kinds of death, and that eternally, for mine hypocrisy, vain-glory, uncleanness, self-love, covetousness, idleness, unthankfulness, and carnal professing of God's holy Gospel, living therein not so purely, lovingly, and painfully as I should have done: the Lord of mercy, for the blood of Christ, pardon me; as I hope, yea I certainly believe, he hath done, for his holy name's sake, through Christ.

But, my dearly beloved, ye and all the whole world may see and easily perceive, that the prelates persecute in me another thing than mine iniquities—even Christ himself, Christ's verity and truth; because I cannot, dare not, nor will not confess transubstantiation, and how that wicked men, yea mice and dogs, eating the sacrament (which they term *of the altar*, thereby overthrowing Christ's holy supper utterly), do eat Christ's natural and real body, born of the Virgin Mary. To believe and confess as God's word teacheth, the primitive church believed, and all the catholic and good holy fathers taught for 500 years at the least after Christ—that in the supper of the Lord (which the mass overthroweth, as it doth Christ's priesthood, sacrifice, death and passion, the ministry of his word, true faith, repentance and all godliness,) whole Christ God and man is present by grace to the faith of the receivers, but not of the standers-by and lookers-on, as bread and wine is to their senses—will not serve; and therefore I am condemned, and shall be burned out of hand, as an heretic. Wherefore I thank my Lord God heartily, that will and doth vouch me worthy to be an instrument, in whom he himself would suffer. For, ye see, my affliction and death is not simply because I have deserved no less (but much more) at his hands and justice; but rather because I confess his verity and truth, and am not afraid (through his gift) so to do, that ye also might be confirmed in his truth.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, I heartily do pray you, and so many as unfeignedly love me in God, to give with me and for me most hearty thanks to our heavenly Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, for this his exceeding great mercy towards me and

you also, that your faith waver not for the doctrine I have taught and ye have received. For what can ye desire more, to assure your consciences of the verity taught by your preachers, than their own lives? Go to, therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, waver not in Christ's religion, truly taught you and set forth in King Edward's days. Never shall the enemies be able to burn it, to prison it and keep it in bonds. Us they may prison, they may bind and burn, as they do and will do so long as shall please the Lord; but our cause, religion, and doctrine which we confess, they shall never be able to vanquish and put away. Their idolatry and popish religion shall never be built in the consciences of men that love the truth. As for those that love not God's truth, that have no pleasure to walk in the ways of the Lord, in those, I say, the devil shall prevail; for God will give them strong illusion, to believe lies. Therefore, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, I humbly beseech you and pray you, in the bowels and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, now going to the death for the testimony of Jesus, (as oftentimes I have done, before this present, out of the pulpit,) that ye would love the Lord's truth; love it, I say, to live it, and frame your lives thereafter. Alas, ye know the cause of all these plagues fallen upon us, and of the success which God's adversaries have daily, is for our not living God's word; ye know how that we are gospellers in lips and not in life; we are carnal, full of concupiscence, idle, unthankful, unclean, covetous, arrogant, dissemblers, crafty, subtle, malicious, false, backbiters, &c. and even gluttoned with God's word; yea, we loathed it, as did the Israelites the manna in the wilderness; and therefore as to them the Lord's wrath waxed hot, so doth it unto us: so that there is no remedy but that (for it is better late to turn than never to turn,) we confess our faults even from the bottom of our hearts, and with hearty repentance, which God work in us all for his mercy's sake, we run unto the Lord our God, which is exorable,<sup>1</sup> merciful, and sorry for the evil poured out upon us; and cry out unto him with Daniel, saying, We have sinned, we have sinned grievously, O Lord God, against thy majesty. We have heaped iniquity upon iniquity, the measure of our transgressions floweth over, so that just is thy wrath and vengeance fallen upon us; for we are very miserable, we have contemned thy long-suffering, we have not hearkened to thy voice when thou hast called us by thy preachers; we hardened our hearts, and therefore now deserve that thou shouldst send thy curse hereupon to harden our hearts also, that we should henceforth have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts and understand not, lest we should be converted and saved. Oh be merciful unto us; spare us, good Lord, and all thy people whom thou hast dearly bought. Let not thine enemies <sup>something</sup> ~~rather~~ and always against thee, for then will they be now risen to try down and behold the pitiful complaints of the image of the Son of

<sup>1</sup> easy to  
be en-  
treated

poor ; let the sorrowful sighings of the simple come in thy sight, and be not angry with us for ever. Turn us, O Lord God of hosts, unto thee, and turn thee unto us ; that thou mayest be justified in thy sweet sentences, and overcome when thou art judged—as now thou art of our adversaries ; for they say, Where is their God ? Can God deliver them now ? Can their gospel serve them ? O Lord, how long ? For the glory of thy name, and for thy honour's sake, in the bowels and blood of Jesus Christ, we humbly beseech thee, come and help us, for we are very miserable. On this sort, I say, dearly beloved, let us publicly and privately bewail our sins ; but so that hereto we join ceasing from wilfulness and sin of purpose, for else the Lord heareth not our prayers, as David saith. And in St. John it is written, The impenitent sinners God heareth not. Now impenitent are they which purpose not to amend their lives : as for example, not only those which follow still their pleasures in covetousness, uncleanness, carnality ; but those also which, for fear or favour of man, do against their conscience consent to the Romish rags, and resort to the rotten religion, communicating in service and ceremonies with the papists, thereby declaring themselves to love more the world than God, to fear more man than Christ, to dread more the loss of temporal things than of eternal ; in whom it is evident the love of God abideth not ; for he that loveth the world, hath not God's love abiding in him, saith the evangelist.

Therefore, my dear hearts and dear again in the Lord, remember what ye have professed, Christ's religion and name, and the renouncing of the devil, sin and the world. Remember, that before ye learned A B C, your lesson was Christ's cross. Forget not, that Christ will have no disciples, but such as will promise to deny themselves, to take up their cross (mark, they must take it up!) and follow him, and not the multitude, custom and use. Consider, for God's sake, that if we gather not with Christ, we scatter abroad. What should it profit a man, to win the whole world and lose his own soul ? We must not forget that this life is a wilderness, and not a paradise. Here is not our home. We are now in warfare ; we must needs fight, or else be taken prisoners. Of all things we have in this life, we shall carry nothing with us. If Christ be our captain, we must follow him as soldiers. If we keep company with him in affliction, we shall be sure of his society in glory. If we forsake not him, he will never forsake us. If we confess him, he will confess us ; but if we deny him, he will deny us. If we be ashamed of him, he will be ashamed of us. Wherefore, as he forsook Father, heaven, and all things to come to us ; so let us forsake all things to come to him, being sure and most certain that we shall not lose thereby. Your children shall find and feel it double, yea, treble, whatsoever ye lose for the Lord's sake ; and ye shall find and feel peace of

conscience and friendship with God, which is more worth than all the goods of the world.

My dearly beloved, therefore for the Lord's sake consider these things, which I now write unto you of love, for my *Vale* and last farewell for ever in this present life. Turn to the Lord, repent ye your evil and unthankful life, declare repentance by the fruits, take time while you have it, come to the Lord while he calleth you, run into his lap while his arms be open to embrace you; seek him while he may be found, call upon him while time is convenient; forsake and fly from all evil, both in religion and in the rest of your life and conversation; let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and praise God in the day of his visitation. Oh come again, come again, ye strange children, and I will receive you, saith the Lord. Convert and turn to me, and I will turn unto you. Why will ye needs perish? As sure as I live (sweareth the Lord), I will not your death; turn therefore unto me. Can a woman forget the child of her womb? If she should, yet will not I forget you, saith the Lord your God. I am he, I am he which putteth away your sins for mine own sake. Oh then, dear friends, turn, I say, unto your dearest Father. Cast not these his sweet and loving words to the ground and at your tail, for the Lord watcheth on his word to perform it: which is in two sorts;—to them that lay it up in their hearts and believe it, will he pay all and eternal joy and comfort; but to them that cast it at their backs and wilfully forget it, to them, I say, will he pour out indignation and eternal shame. Wherefore I heartily yet once more beseech and pray you and every of you, not to contemn this poor and simple exhortation, which now out of prison I make unto you, or rather the Lord by me. Loth would I be to be a witness against you in the last day, as of truth I must be if ye repent not, if ye love not God's gospel, yea, if ye live it not. Therefore, to conclude, repent, love God's gospel, live it in all your conversation: so shall God's name be praised, his plagues mitigated, his people comforted, and his enemies ashamed. Grant all this, thou gracious Lord God, to every of us, for thy dear Son's sake our Saviour Jesus Christ: to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be eternal glory for ever and ever. Amen. The 12th of February, 1555.

By the bondman of the Lord, your afflicted poor brother,  
John Bradford.

To the Honourable Lord Russell,

Now Earl of Bedford, being then in trouble for the verity of God's Gospel.

The everlasting and most gracious God and Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, bless your good lordship with all manner of heavenly blessings, in the same Christ, our only comfort and hope. Amen.

Praised be God our Father, which hath vouched you worthy, as of faith in His Christ, so of his cross for the same. Magnified be his holy name, who, as he hath delivered you from one cross, so he hath made you willing (I trust) and ready to bear another, when he shall see his time to lay it upon you : for these are the most singular gifts of God, given, as to few, so to none else but to those few which are most dear in his sight. Faith is reckoned, and worthily, among the greatest gifts of God; yea, it is the greatest itself that we enjoy; for by it, as we be justified and made God's children, so are we temples and possessors of the Holy Spirit, yea, of Christ also, (Eph. iv.) and of the Father himself. (John xiv.) By faith we drive the devil away (1 Pet. 5.) we overcome the world, (1 John 5) and are already citizens of heaven, and fellows with God's dear saints. But who is able to reckon the riches, that this faith bringeth with her unto the soul she sitteth upon? No man nor angel. And therefore, as I said, of all God's gifts, she may be set in the top, and have the uppermost seat. The which thing if men considered, (in that she cometh alonely<sup>1</sup> from God's own mercy-seat, by the hearing, not<sup>1</sup> of mass or mattins, dirges or such draff, but of the word of God in such a tongue as we can and do understand,) as they would be diligent and take great heed for doing or seeing any thing which might cast her down, (for then they fall also,) so would they with no less care read and hear God's holy word, joining thereto most earnest and often prayer, as well for the more and better understanding, as for the loving, living and confessing of the same, maugre<sup>2</sup> the head of the devil, the world, our flesh, reason, goods, possessions, carnal friends, wife, children, and very life<sup>2</sup> here, if they should pull us back to hearken to their voice and counsel, for more quiet, sure, and longer use of them.

Now, notwithstanding this excellency of faith, in that we read the apostle to match therewith, (yea, as it were, to prefer) suffering persecution for Christ's sake, (Phil. i.,) I trow no man will be so fond as to think otherwise, but that I and all God's children have cause to glorify and praise God, which hath vouched you worthy so great a blessing. For though the reason or wisdom of the world think of the cross according to their reach and

Ps. 75. according to their present sense, and therefore flieth from it as from a most great ignominy and shame ; yet God's scholars have learned otherwise to think of the cross—that it is the frame-house in the which God frameth his children like to his Son Christ, the furnace that fineth God's gold, the highway to heaven, the suit and livery that God's servants are served withal, the earnest and beginning of all consolation and glory. For they (I mean God's scholars, as your lordship is, I trust,) do enter into God's sanctuary, lest their feet slip. They look not, as beasts do, on things present only, but on things to come ; and so have they as present to faith, the judgment and glorious company of Christ, like as the wicked have now their worldly wealth, wherein they wallow and will wallow till they tumble headlong into hell, where are torments too terrible and endless. Now they follow the fiend as the bear doth the train of honey and the sow the swillings, till they be brought into the slaughter-house ; and then they know that their prosperity hath brought them to perdition. Then cry they, Woe, woe, we went the wrong way ; we counted these men (I mean such as you be, that suffer for God's sake loss of goods, friends and life, whom they shall see endued with rich robes of righteousness, crowns of most pure precious gold, and palms of conquest, in the goodly glorious palace of the Lamb, where is eternal life, felicity, &c.)—we counted, will they then say, these men but fools and madmen. We take their conditions to be but curiosity, &c. But then will it be too late ; then the time will be turned ; laughing shall be turned into weeping, and weeping into rejoicing. Read Wisdom, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Therefore, as before I have said, great cause have I to thank God, which hath vouched you worthy of this most bountiful blessing : much more then you have cause, my good lord, so to be, I mean thankful. For look upon your vocation, I pray you, and tell me how many noblemen, earls' sons, lords, knights, and men of estimation hath God in this realm of England dealt thus withal ? I dare say, you think not that you have deserved this. Only God's mercy in his Christ hath wrought this on you, as he did in Jeremy's time on Abimelech, in Ahab's time on Obadiah, in Christ's time on Joseph of Arimathea, in the apostles' time on Sergius Paulus, and the Queen of Candace's chamberlain. Only now be thankful and continue, continue, continue, my good lord, continue to confess Christ. Be not ashamed of him before men, for then will not he be ashamed of you. Now will he try you ; stick fast unto him, and he will stick fast by you ; he will be with you in trouble and deliver you. But then must you cry unto him, for so it precedeth ; He cried unto me and I heard ; I was with him in trouble, &c. Remember Lot's wife, which looked back. Remember Francis Spira. Remember that none is crowned, but he that striveth lawfully. Remember that all you have is at



Christ's commandment.<sup>1</sup> Remember, he lost more for you than <sup>1 com-</sup> you can lose for him. Remember, you lose not that which is <sup>mand</sup> lost for his sake, for you shall find much more here and elsewhere. Remember, you shall die, and when, where, and how, you cannot tell. Remember, the death of sinners is most terrible. Remember, the death of God's saints is precious in his sight. Remember, the multitude goeth the wide way, which windeth to woe. Remember, the strait gate which leadeth to glory hath but few travellers. Remember, Christ biddeth you strive to enter in thereat. Remember, he that trusteth in the Lord shall receive strength to stand against all the assaults of his enemies. Be certain, all the hairs of your head are numbered. Be certain, your good Father hath appointed bounds, over the which the devil dare not look. Commit yourself to him; he is, hath been, and will be your keeper; cast your care on him, and he will care for you. Let Christ be your scope and mark to prick<sup>2</sup> at; let <sup>2 aim</sup> him be your pattern to work by; let him be your ensample to follow; give him, as your heart, so your hand—as your mind so your tongue—as your faith, so your feet; and let his word be your candle to go before you in all matters of religion. Blessed is he that walketh not to these popish prayers, nor standeth at <sup>Psa. 1.</sup> them, nor sitteth at them. Glorify God in both soul and body. <sup>2 Cor. 6.</sup> He that gathereth not with Christ scattereth abroad. Use prayer; look for God's help, which is at hand to them that ask and hope thereafter assuredly. In which prayer I heartily desire your lordship to remember us, who, as we are going with you right gladly (God therefore be praised), so we look to go before you, hoping that you will follow, if God so will—according to your daily prayer, Thy will be done on earth, &c. The good Spirit of God always guide your lordship unto the end. Amen.

Your lordship's own for ever,

John Bradford.

### Another Letter to the Lord Russell.

The eternal mercies of God, in his dear Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, be more and more felt and heartily perceived of you, my good lord, to your endless joy and comfort. Amen.

Because your lordship looketh not for thanks of me, for God's benefits ministered by you, and in few words I cannot duly declare that I would do, I will omit the same; praying God our dear Father in the day of his retribution to remember it, and in the mean season to assist, counsel, and comfort you, as his child for ever, in all things. I doubt not but that you have that childly opinion, yea, persuasion of his goodness in Christ towards you; than which blessing, my good lord, none is greater given to man

upon earth. For assuredly he that hath it, is the very child of God, elect before all time in Christ Jesus our Lord, and therefore shall enjoy everlasting felicity ; although he be here afflicted and tossed in trouble and temptation to his trial, that when he is found faithful he may receive the crown of glory. The only thing that discerneth the child of God from the wicked, is this faith, trust, and hope in God's goodness through Christ ; the which I trust you have—God increase it in you, and make you thankful. Certainly such as enjoy it be happy ; if they be happy, (and that happiness is not, where any thing is to be desired,) they cannot but for ever be most assured of perseverance to salvation ; for if they fall, the Lord putteth under his hand, that they shall not perish ; they are beloved of Christ, which loveth them to the very end. God, for his mercy's sake in Christ, open more and more your eyes to see this his sweetness in Christ, to make you secure in him, and awake the flesh from her security, to be vigilant and heedful how you may most behave yourself in thankful obedience to God, and careful help and service to his people ; that all your whole life may tend to this, how by example and otherwise you may do good to others, and still confirm his true service and religion by your constancy. Wherein if you continue to the end, you shall receive an incorruptible crown of immortal and unspeakable glory. But if, for because of God's tarrying, which is only to prove you, you relent, (which God forbid!) thinking it enough in heart to serve God, and in body to do as may make most to your commodity temporally, as many do ; then undoubtedly your standing hitherto (wherefore<sup>1</sup> God's holy name be praised!) shall make much more for the papistical kingdom and glory thereof, than if you had never done as you have done. Whereof, my good lord, be not weary nor unthankful ; for with the godly, and in the church of God, you are and shall be had as a worthy member of Christ, worthy of double honour, because God of his goodness hath vouched you worthy without your deserts. In the one, that is, for lands and possessions, you have companions many ; but in the other, my good lord, you are A per se A<sup>2</sup> with us—to our comfort and joy unspeakable, so long as you continue (as I trust you will do to the end), and to our most heavy sorrow, which God forbid, if you should relent in any point.

<sup>1</sup> for  
which

<sup>2</sup> A by  
itself A,  
i. e. soli-  
tary or  
singular

Therefore I beseech your lordship, in the bowels and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to persevere and continue to the end. He that hath not tempted you hitherto above your strength, will continue so to the end. If for a time he hide his face from you, yet he doth it but for a moment, to make you the more heartily to cry to him ; and surely he will hear you, not only when you are in crying, but also while you are in thinking how to cry ; he is with you in trouble, and will indeed deliver you. The longer he

tarrieth, the more pleasantly and comfortably will he appear. Only believe and look for his help, and you shall have peace—such peace as the world knoweth not, nor can know: the which God give us a true feeling of, and then we shall not be grieved with afflictions, but rather rejoice in them, because they are but exercises and trials of faith, to the increase of faith and patience, with many godly virtues, &c.

As concerning the number and charges of us here (which this day I heard your lordship desired to understand), this is so much as I know; that we are four in number together, whose names this bearer shall tell you. The charges of the least is twelve shillings a week. There are five others whose charges be not so great, but as they will themselves; I mean, they pay daily as they take, and that to the uttermost: these were never ministers. I trust there is no urgent need in any of us all, and, I think, least in myself through God my Father's providence, the which I have and do daily wonderfully feel—his name therefore be praised. Other things I would write; but because they may be more safely told by this bringer, I have omitted the same for that purpose. God of his goodness ever be with you, and keep your lordship to the very end, as his dear child. Amen, amen.

Your humble to command,

John Bradford.

### To Master Warcup, and his Wife, Mistress Wilkinson,

And other of his godly friends with their families.

The same peace our Saviour Christ left with his people, which is not without war with the world, Almighty God work plentifully in your hearts, now and for ever. Amen.

The time, I perceive, is come, wherein the Lord's ground will be known. I mean, it will now shortly appear, who have received God's Gospel into their hearts indeed, to the taking of good root therein; for such will not for a little heat or sun-burning wither, but stiffly will stand and grow on, maugre<sup>1</sup> the malice of all burning showers and tempests. And forasmuch as (my beloved in the Lord) I am persuaded of you, that ye be indeed the children of God, God's good ground, which groweth and will grow on (by God's grace), bringing forth fruit to God's glory after your vocations, as occasion shall be offered, burn the sun never so hot; therefore I cannot but so signify unto you, and heartily pray you and every one of you, accordingly to go on forwards after your Master Christ, not sticking at the foul way and stormy weather which you are come into and are like so to do; of this being most certain, that the end of your journey shall be pleasant and joyful,

<sup>1</sup> in spite  
of

in such a perpetual rest and blissfulness, as cannot but swallow up the showers that ye now feel and are soused in—if ye often set it before your eyes, after Paul's counsel in the latter end of the 4th and beginning of the 5th of the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians. Read it, I pray you, and remember it often, as a restorative to refresh you, lest ye faint in the way. And besides this, set before you also, that though the weather be foul, and storms grow apace, yet go not ye alone; but your other brothers and sisters pad the same path, as St. Peter telleth us, and therefore company should cause you to be the more courageous and cheerful. But if ye had no company at all to go presently with you, I pray you tell me if, even from the beginning, the best of God's friends have found any fairer weather and way to the place whither ye are going (I mean heaven), than ye now find and are like to do: except ye will with the worldlings, which have their portion in this life, tarry still by the way till the storms be overpast; and then either night will so approach that ye cannot travel, either<sup>1</sup> the doors will be sparred<sup>2</sup> before ye come, and so you shall lodge without in wonderful evil lodgings. Read Apoc. 22. Begin at Abel, and come from him to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph the Patriarch, Moses, David, Daniel, and all the saints in the Old Testament; and tell me whether ever any of them found any fairer way than ye now find. If the Old Testament will not serve, I pray you come to the New; and begin with Mary and Joseph, and come from them to Zachariah, Elizabeth, John Baptist, and every one of the Apostles and Evangelists; and search whether they all found any other way into the City we travel towards, than by many tribulations.

1 or

2 barred

Besides these, we should call to remembrance the primitive church. Lord God! ye should see so many to have given cheerfully their bodies to most grievous torments, rather than they would be stopped in their journey; and there is no day in the year but (I dare say) a million was the fewest that with great joy lost their homes here, but in the City they went unto have found other manner of homes, than man's mind is able to conceive. But if none of all these were, if ye had no company now to go with you, as ye have me your poor brother and bondman of the Lord, with many other I trust in God; if ye had none other of the fathers, patriarchs, good kings, prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, martyrs, and other holy saints and children of God, that in their journey to heavenward found as ye now find, and are like to find, if ye go on forward as I trust ye will: yet ye have your master and your captain Jesus Christ, the dear darling and only begotten and beloved Son of God, in whom was all the Father's pleasure, joy and delectation; ye have him to go before you, no fairer way but much fouler, into this our city of Jerusalem. I need not (I trust) to rehearse what manner of way he found. Begin at his birth, and till ye come to his burial; ye shall find that every foot and stride

of his journey, was no better, but much worse then yours now is. Wherefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, be not so dainty as to look for that at God's hands your dear Father, which the fathers, patriarchs, prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, martyrs, saints, and his own Son Jesus Christ, did not find. Hitherto we have had fair way, I trow, and fair weather also: now, because we have loitered by the way, and not made the speed we should have done, our loving Lord and sweet Father hath overcast the weather and stirred up storms and tempests, that we might with more haste run out our race before night come, and the doors be sparred.<sup>1</sup> The devil standeth now at every inn-door in his city and country of this world, crying unto us to tarry and lodge in this or that place, till the storms be overpast: not that he would not have us wet to the skin, but that the time might overpass us to our utter destruction. Therefore beware of his enticements: cast not your eyes on things that be present, how this man doth and how that man doth; but cast your eyes on the gleve<sup>2</sup> ye run at, or else ye will lose the game. Ye know that he which runneth at the gleve,<sup>3</sup> doth not look on other that stand by and go this way or that way, but altogether he looketh on the gleve,<sup>2</sup> and on them that run with him, that those which be behind overtake him not, and that he may overtake them which be before: even so should we do—leave off looking on those which will not run the race to heaven's bliss by the path of persecution with us, and cast our eyes on the end of our race, and on them that go before us, that we may overtake them, and on them which come after us, that we may provoke them to come the faster after. He that shooteth will not cast his eyes, in his shooting, on them that stand by or ride by the ways (I trow), but rather on the mark he shooteth at, for else he were like to win the wrong way: even so, my dearly beloved, let your eyes be set on the mark ye shoot at, even Christ Jesus, who for the joy he set before him, did joyfully carry his cross, contemning the shame, and therefore he now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God. Let us follow him, for this did he that we should not be faint-hearted. For we may be most assured, that if we suffer with him, we shall undoubtedly reign with him: but if we deny him, surely he will deny us; for he that is ashamed of me (saith Christ) and of my Gospel in this faithless generation, I will be ashamed of him before the angels of God in heaven. Oh how heavy a sentence is this, to all such as know the mass to be an abominable idol, full of idolatry, blasphemy, and sacrilege against God and his Christ (as undoubtedly it is); and yet for fear of men, for loss of life or goods, yea, some for advantage and gain, will honest<sup>3</sup> it with their presence, dissembling both with God and man, as their own heart and conscience doth accuse them! Better it were that such had never known the truth, than thus wittingly, and for the fear or favour

1 barred

2 perhaps  
goal  
Phil. 3.

Heb. 12.

2 Tim. 3.

Matt. 12.

3 honour

Esa. 2. of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, to dissemble it, or rather  
 2 Peter 2. (as indeed it is) to deny it. The end of such is like to be worse  
 than their beginning. Such had need to take heed of the two  
 Heb. 6. 10. terrible places to the Hebrews in the 6th and 10th chapters, lest  
 by so doing they fall therein.

Let them beware they play not wily-beguile themselves, as some  
 do, I fear me, which go to Mass, and because they worship not,  
 nor kneel not, nor knock not as others do, but sit still in their  
 pews, therefore they think they rather do good to others than  
 hurt. But (alas) if these men would look into their own con-  
 sciences, there should they see that they are very dissemblers; and  
 in seeking to deceive others (for by this means the magistrates  
 think them of their sort,) they deceive themselves. They think at  
 the elevation<sup>1</sup> time, all men's eyes are set upon them to mark how  
 they do. They think, others hearing of such men going to Mass,  
 do see or enquire of their behaviour there. Oh, if there were in

1 i. e. of  
 the host

those men that are so present, either love to God, or to their  
 brethren, then would they, for the one or both, openly take God's  
 part, and admonish the people of their idolatry: they fear man,  
 more than him which hath power to cast both soul and body into  
 1 Kings 18. hell-fire. They halt on both knees: they serve two masters.

Matt. 10.

1 Kings 18.

Apoc. 3.

God have mercy upon such, and open their eyes with his eye-salve,  
 that they may see that they which take not part with God, are  
 against God, and that they which gather not with Christ, do  
 scatter abroad. Oh that they would read what St. John saith  
 Apoc. 21. will be done to the fearful. The counsel given to the church of  
 Apoc. 3. Laodicea is good counsel for such.

Apoc. 21.

Apoc. 3.

2 Tim 1.

Rom. 1.

I Cor. 10.

Phi. 1.

1 Peter 3.

Matt. 5.

But, to come again (dearly beloved), be not ashamed of God's  
 Gospel. It is the power of God to salvation, to all those that do  
 believe it. Be therefore partakers of the afflictions, as God shall  
 make you able; knowing for certain, that he will never tempt you  
 further than he will make you able to bear. And think it no  
 small grace of God to suffer persecution for God's truth, for the  
 Spirit of God resteth upon you, and ye are happy, as one day ye  
 shall see. Read 2 Thessalonians 1., and Hebrews 12. As the  
 fire hurteth not gold but maketh it finer, so shall ye be more  
 pure by suffering with Christ; 1 Peter 1. The flail and wind  
 hurteth not the wheat, but cleanseth it from the chaff. And ye  
 (dearly beloved) are God's wheat: fear not therefore the flail,  
 fear not the fanning wind, fear not the mill-stone, fear not the  
 oven; for all these make you more meet for the Lord's own tooth.  
 Soap, though it be black, soileth not the cloth, but rather at the  
 length maketh it more clean: so doth the black cross help us to  
 more whiteness, if God strike with his battledore. Because ye  
 are God's sheep, prepare yourselves to the slaughter; always  
 knowing, that in the sight of the Lord our death shall be precious.  
 The souls under the altar look for us to fill up their number:

Rom 8.

happy are we if God have so appointed us. Howsoever it be, dearly beloved, cast yourselves wholly upon the Lord; with whom all the hairs of your heads are numbered, so that not one of them shall perish. Will we, nill we, we must drink God's cup if he have appointed it for us. Drink it willingly then, and at the first when it is full; lest peradventure, if we linger, we shall drink at length of the dregs with the wicked, if at the beginning we drink not with his children: for with them his judgment be-  
1 Peter 5.  
Ma tt. 10  
Psa. 75.  
1 Peter 4.

Submit yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of the Lord. No man shall touch you without his knowledge. When they touch you therefore, know it is to your weal: GOD thereby will work to make you like unto Christ here, that ye may be also like unto him elsewhere. Acknowledge your unthankfulness and sin; and bless God, that correcteth you in the world, because ye shall not be daunted with the world. Otherwise might he correct us, than in making us to suffer for righteousness' sake: but this he doth because we are not of the world. Call upon his name through Christ for his help, as he commandeth us. Believe that he is merciful to you, heareth you, and helpeth you: I am with him in trouble, and will deliver him, saith he. Know that God hath appointed bounds, over the which the devil, and all the world, shall not pass. If all things seem to be against you, yet say with Job, If he will kill me I will hope in him. Read the 91st Psalm, and pray for me your poor brother and fellow-sufferer for God's Gospel's sake; his name therefore be praised, and of his mercy he make me and you worthy to suffer with good conscience for his name's sake. Die once we must; and when, we know not: happy are they whom God giveth to pay nature's debt—I mean, to die, for his sake. Here is not our home, therefore let us accordingly consider things, always having before our eyes heavenly Jerusalem, (Hebrews 12. Apo. 21, 22.) the way thither to be by persecutions: the dear friends of God, how they have gone it after the example of our Saviour Jesus Christ; whose footsteps let us follow, even to the very gallows, if God so will, not doubting but that as he within three days rose again immortal, even so we shall do in our time—that is, when the trump shall blow, and the angel shall shout, and the Son of man shall appear in the clouds with innumerable saints and angels, in majesty and great glory; then shall the dead arise, and we shall be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord, and so be always with him. Comfort yourselves with these words, and pray for me for God's sake. E carcere,  
 19th November, 1553.

John Bradford.

To Sir James Hales, Knight,

Then prisoner in the Counter in Bread Street.

The God of mercy, and Father of all comfort, plentifully pour out upon you and in you his mercy, and with his consolations comfort and strengthen you to the end, for his and our Christ's sake. Amen.

Although, right worshipful Sir, many causes might move me to be content with crying for you to your God and my God, that he would give you grace to persevere well, as he hath right notably begun, to the great glory of his name, and comfort of all such as fear him—as, lack of learning, of familiarity, yea acquaintance (for I think I am unknown to you both by face and name), and other such like things; yet I cannot content myself, but presume something to scribble unto you. Not that I think my scribbling can do you good, but that I might hereby declare my *συμπαθειαν* and compassion, love, and affection I bear towards your mastership; which is contented, yea desirous, with us poor misers,<sup>1</sup> to confess Christ's Gospel in these perilous times and days of trial. O Lord God, how good art thou, which dost thus glean out grapes—I mean, children for thyself, and brethren for Christ! Look, good Master Hales, on your vocation; not many judges, not many knights, not many landed men, not many rich men and wealthy to live as you are, hath God chosen to suffer for his sake, as he hath now done you. Certainly I dare say, you think not so of yourself, as though God were bound to prefer you, or had need of you; but rather attribute this, as all good things, unto his free mercy in Christ. Again I dare say, you, being a wise man, judge of things wisely: that is, concerning this your cross, you judge of it not after the world and people, which is *magnus erroris magister*; nor after the judgment of reason and worldly wisdom, which is foolishness to faith; nor after the present sense, to the which *non videtur gaudii sed molestiæ*, as Paul writeth; but after the word of God, which teacheth your cross to be, in respect of yourself between God and you, God's chastising and your Father's correction, nurture, school, trial, pathway to heaven, glory and felicity, and the furnace to consume the dross and mortify the relics of old Adam which yet remain; yea even the frame-house to fashion you like to the dearest saints of God here, yea, to Christ the Son of God, that elsewhere you might be like unto him.

Now concerning your cross, in respect of the world between the world and you, God's word teacheth it to be a testimonial of God's truth, of his providence, of his power, of his justice, of his wisdom, of his anger against sin, of his goodness, of his judgment, of your faith and religion: so that by it you are to the

<sup>1</sup> wretched

Heb. 12.



world a witness of God; one of his tests, that he is true, he ruleth all things, he is just, wise, and at the length will judge the world and cast the wicked into perdition, but the godly he will take and receive into his eternal habitation. I know you judge of things after faith's fetch and the effects or ends of things, and so you see *æternum pondus gloriæ*, which this cross shall bring <sup>2 Cor. 4.</sup> unto you, *dum non spectas ea quæ videntur, sed ea quæ non videntur*. Let the worldlings weigh things and look upon the affairs of men with their worldly and corporal eyes, as did many in subscription of the king's last will, and therefore they did that for the which they beshrewed<sup>1</sup> themselves; but let us look on things with other manner of eyes, as (God be praised!) you did, in <sup>1 re-</sup>not doing that which you were desired and driven at<sup>2</sup> to have <sup>proached</sup> done. You then beheld things not as a man, but as a man of <sup>2 urged</sup>God; and so you do now in religion, at the least hitherto you have done; and that you might do so still, I humbly beseech and pray you, say with David, *Defecerunt oculi mei in eloquium tuum; quando consolaberis me?* <sup>Psa. 119.</sup> Though you be as *uter in fumo* (for I hear you want health), yet *ne obliviscaris justificationes Dei*: but cry out, *Quot sunt dies servi tui? quando facies de persequentibus me iudicium?* And be certain *quod Dominus veniens veniet et non tardabit. Si moram fecerit, expecta illum*: for he is but <sup>Hab. 2.</sup>ad momentum in ira sua, et vita in voluntate ejus. <sup>Psa. 36.</sup>Ad vesperam demorabitur fletus, et ad matutinum lætitia. Follow therefore <sup>Esa. 26.</sup>Esaias' counsel: *Abscondere ad modicum, ad momentum, donec pertranseat indignatio ejus*; which is not *indignatio* indeed, but to our sense, and therefore in the 27th chapter of Esaias God saith <sup>Esa. 27.</sup>of his church and people, that, as he keepeth night and day, so non est indignatio mihi, saith he. The mother sometimes beateth the child, but yet her heart melteth upon it even in the very beating; and therefore she casteth the rod into the fire, and calleth the child, giveth it an apple, and dandleth it most motherly. And to say the truth, the love of mothers to their children is but a trace to train us to behold the love of God towards us: and therefore saith he, <sup>Esa. 49.</sup>Can a mother forget the child of her womb? (as who say, No:) but if she should so do, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord of hosts. Ah, comfortable saying! I will not forget thee, saith the Lord. Indeed the children of God think oftentimes that God hath forgotten them; and therefore <sup>Psa. 26.</sup>they cry, *Ne abscondas faciem tuam a me, &c. Ne derelinquas me, Domine, &c.* <sup>Psa. 76, 118.</sup>Whereas in very truth it is not so, but to their <sup>37, 26.</sup>present sense; and therefore David said, *Ego dixi in excessu meo, Projectus sum a facie tua.* <sup>Psa. 31.</sup>But was it so? Nay, verily. Read his psalm and you shall see. So writeth he also in other places very often, especially in the person of Christ, as when he saith, *Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me?* He saith not, *Ut quid derelinquis* or *derelinques* me, but, *Ut quid dereliquisti* me?

1 when

where<sup>1</sup> indeed God had not left him, but that it was so to his sense, and that this psalm telleth full well, which psalm I pray you now and then read—it is the xxiind; and thereto join the xxxth, and the cxvith, with divers others. The same we read in the prophet Esaias, in his xlth chapter, where he reproveth Israel for saying, God had forgotten them. Nunquid nescis? saith he, an non audisti? &c. Qui sperant in Domino mutabunt fortitudinem. And in his livth chapter, Noli timere, &c. Ad punctum enim in modico dereliqui te, et in miserationibus magnis congregabo te. In momento indignationis abscondi faciem meam parumper a te, et in misericordia sempiterna misertus sum tui, dixit redemptor tuus Dominus. Nam istud erit mihi sicut aquæ Noe. Ut enim juravi ne porro aquæ Noe pertransirent terram, sic juravi ut non irascar tibi et non increpem te. Montes enim commovebuntur et colles contremiscent, misericordia autem mea non recedet a te, et fœdus pacis meæ non movebitur, dixit miserator tuus Dominus.

Mic. 7.

But the Scriptures are full of such sweet places to them that will portare iram Domini, et expectare salutem et auxilium ejus. As of all temptations this is the greatest, that God hath forgotten or will not help us through the pikes, as they say; so of all services of God, this liketh he best—to hope assuredly on him and for his help always, which is adjutor in tribulationibus, and doth more gloriously shew his power by such as be weak and feel themselves so. For quo infirmiores sumus, eo sumus in illo robustiores. Sic oculi Domini be on them that tremble and fear.

1 Cor. 11.

Psa. 144.

Voluntatem eorum faciet: he is with them in their trouble; he will deliver them; antequam clamaverint exaudit eos, as all the Scriptures teach us: to the reading whereof, and hearty prayer, I heartily commend you; beseeching Almighty God, that of his eternal mercies he would make perfect the good he hath begun in you, and strengthen you to the end, that you might have no less hope, but much more of his help to your comfort now against your enemies, than already he hath given you against N. for not subscribing to the king's will. Be certain, be certain, good Master Hales, that all the hairs of your head your dear Father hath numbered, so that one of them shall not perish: your name is written in the book of life. Therefore upon God cast all your care, which will comfort you with his eternal consolations, and make you able to go through the fire, if need be; which is nothing to be compared to the fire whereinto our enemies shall fall and lie for ever: from the which the Lord deliver us, though it be through temporal fire, which must be construed according to the end and profit that cometh after it; so shall it then not much dear<sup>2</sup> us to suffer it, for our Master Christ's cause—the which the Lord grant for his mercy's sake. Amen.—From the King's Bench,

2 concern

Your humble

John Bradford.

### To his Mother,

A godly matron dwelling in Manchester; and to his brethren and sisters, and other of his friends there.

Our dear and sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, whose prisoner at this present (praised be his name therefore!) I am, preserve and keep you, my good mother, with my brothers and sisters, my father John Traves, Thomas Sorrocold, Laurence and James Bradshaw, with their wives and families, &c. now and for ever. Amen.

I am at this present in prison, sure enough for starting,<sup>1</sup> to confirm that I have preached unto you: as I am ready, I thank God, with my life and blood to seal the same, if God vouch me worthy of that honour. For, good mother and brethren, it is a most special benefit of God to suffer for his name's sake and Gospel, as now I do: I heartily thank him for it, and am sure that with him I shall be partaker of his glory, as Paul saith; If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him. <sup>2 Tim. 2.</sup> Therefore be not faint-hearted, but rather rejoice, at the least for my sake, which now am in the right and high way to heaven: for by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. <sup>Acts 14.</sup> Now will God make known his children. When the wind doth not blow, then cannot a man know the wheat from the chaff; but when the blast cometh, then flieth away the chaff, but the wheat remaineth; and is so far from being hurt, that by the wind it is more cleansed from the chaff, and known to be wheat. Gold, when it is cast into the fire, is the more precious: so are God's children, by the cross of affliction. Always God beginneth his judgment at his house. Christ and the apostles were in most misery in the land of Jewry, but yet the whole land smarted for it after; so now, God's children are first chastised in this world, that they should not be damned with the world—for surely great plagues of God hang over this realm. Ye all know, there was never more knowledge of God, and less godly living and true serving of God. It was counted a foolish thing to serve God truly, and earnest prayer was not passed upon.<sup>2</sup> Preaching was but a pastime. <sup>2 valued</sup> The communion was counted too common. Fasting, to subdue the flesh, was far out of use. Alms was almost nothing. Malice, covetousness, and uncleanness, was common every where, with swearing, drunkenness, and idleness. God therefore now is come, as you have heard me preach; and because he will not damn us with the world, he beginneth to punish us—as me for my carnal living. For as for my preaching, I am most certain it is and was God's truth, and I trust to give my life for it by God's grace: but because I lived not the gospel truly but outwardly, therefore doth

he thus punish me; nay rather, in punishing bless me. And indeed I thank him more of this prison, than of any parlour, yea, than of any pleasure that ever I had: for in it I find God my most sweet good God always. The flesh is punished, first, to admonish us now heartily to live as we profess; secondly, to certify the wicked of their just damnation, if they repent not.

Perchance you are infirmed and weakened of that which I have preached, because God doth not defend it, as you think, but suffereth the old popish doctrine to come again and prevail; but you must know, good mother, that God by this doth prove and try his children and people, whether they will unfeignedly and simply hang on him and his word. So did he with the Israelites; bringing them into a desert, after their coming out of Egypt, where (I mean the wilderness) was want of all things in comparison of that which they had in Egypt. Christ, when he came into this world, brought no worldly wealth nor quietness with him, but rather war; The world, saith he, shall rejoice, but ye shall mourn and weep, but your weeping shall be turned into joy: and therefore happy are they that mourn and weep, for they shall be comforted. They are marked then with God's mark in their foreheads, and not with the beast's mark—I mean the pope's shaven crown, who now with his shavelings rejoice; but woe unto them, for they shall be cast down, they shall weep and mourn. The rich glutton had here his joy, and Lazarus sorrow; but afterwards the time was changed. The end of carnal joy is sorrow. Now let the whoremonger joy, with the drunkard, swearer, covetous, malicious, and blind buzzard Sir John: for the mass will not bite them, neither make them to blush, as preaching would. Now may they do what they will, come devils to the church and go devils home, for no man must find fault. And they are glad of this: now have they their heart's desire, as the Sodomites had when Lot was gone—but what followed? Forsooth, when they cried Peace, all shall be well, then came God's vengeance, fire and brimstone from heaven, and burnt up every mother's child; even so, dear mother, will it do to our papists.

Wherefore fear God: stick to his word, though all the world would swerve from it. Die you must once; and when, or how, you cannot tell. Die therefore with Christ, suffer for serving him truly, and after his word: for sure may we be, that, of all deaths, it is most to be desired to die for God's sake. This is the most safe kind of dying: we cannot doubt but that we shall go to heaven, if we die for his name's sake. And that you shall die for his name's sake, God's word will warrant you, if you stick to that which GOD by me hath taught you. You shall see that I speak as I think: for, by God's grace, I will drink before you of this cup, if I be put to it. I doubt not but God will give me his grace, and strengthen me thereunto: pray that he would, and that

I refuse it not. I am at a point,<sup>1</sup> even when my Lord God will, to come to him. Death nor life, prison nor pleasure, I trust in God, shall be able to separate me from my Lord God and his Gospel. In peace, when no persecution was, then were you content and glad to hear me: then did you believe me—and will you not do so now, seeing I speak that which I trust, by God's grace, if need be, to verify with my life? Good mother, I write before God to you, as I have preached before him. It is God's truth I have taught; it is that same infallible word, whereof he hath said, Heaven and earth shall pass, but my word shall not pass. The mass, and such baggage as the false worshippers of God and enemies of Christ's cross (the papists, I say) have brought in again, to poison the church of God withal, displeases God highly, and is abominable in his sight. Happy may he be, which of conscience suffereth loss of life or goods in disallowing it. Come not at it. If God be God, follow him; if the mass be God, let them that will see it, hear, or be present at it, go to the devil with it. What is there as God ordained? His Supper was ordained to be received of us in the memorial of his death, for the confirmation of our faith that his body was broken for us, and his blood shed for pardon of our sins; but in the mass there is no receiving, but the priest keepeth all to himself alone. Christ saith, Take, eat; No, saith the priest, gape, peep. There is a sacrificing, yea, killing of Christ again, as much as they may. There is idolatry in worshipping the outward sign of bread and wine. There is all in Latin; you cannot tell what he saith. To conclude, there is nothing as God ordained; wherefore, my good mother, come not at it.

*1 my  
mind is  
made up*

'Oh,' will some say, 'it will hinder you<sup>2</sup> if you refuse to come to mass and to do as others do.' But God will further you, be you assured, as you shall one day find; who hath promised, to them that suffer hindrance or loss of any thing in this world, his great blessing here, and in the world to come life everlasting. 'You shall be counted an heretic;' but not of others than of heretics, whose praise is a dispraise. 'You are not able to reason against the priests;' but God will, that<sup>3</sup> all they shall not be able to withstand you. 'Nobody will do so but you only:' indeed, no matter, for few enter into the narrow gate which bringeth to salvation. Howbeit, you shall have with you, I doubt not, father Traves, and others my brothers and sisters, to go with you therein: but if they will not, I, your son in God, I trust, shall not leave you an inch, but go before you; pray that I may, and give thanks for me. Rejoice in my suffering, for it is for your sakes, to confirm the truth I have taught.—Howsoever you do, beware this letter come not abroad, but unto father Traves's hands; for if it should be known that I have pen and ink in the prison, then would it be worse with me. Therefore to yourselves keep this letter, commending me to God and his mercy in Christ Jesus,

*2 be for  
your dis-  
advan-  
tage*

*Matt. 19.*

*3 so that*

who make me worthy, for his name's sake, to give my life for his gospel and church sake.—Out of the Tower of London, the 6th day of October, 1553.

My name I write not; for causes—you know it well enough; like the letter never the worse. Commend me to all our good brethren and sisters in the Lord. Howsoever you do, be obedient to the higher powers; that is, in no point either in hand or tongue rebel, but rather, if they command that which with good conscience you cannot obey, lay your head on the block, and suffer whatsoever they shall do or say. By patience possess your souls.

*1 true*

To my very<sup>1</sup> friend in the Lord,

Dr. Hill, Physician.

The God of mercy and Father of all comfort, at this present and for ever, engraft in your heart the sense of his mercy in Christ, and the continuance of his consolation; which cannot but enable you to carry with joy, whatsoever cross he shall lay upon you. Amen.

Hitherto I could have no such liberty as to write unto you, as I think you know; but now, in that through God's providence I have no such restraint, I cannot but something write, as well to purge me of the suspicion of unthankfulness towards you, as also to signify my carefulness for you in these perilous days, lest you should wax cold in God's cause, (which God forbid!) or suffer the light of the Lord, once kindled in your heart, to be quenched, and so become as you were before; after the example of the world, and of many others, which would have been<sup>2</sup> accounted otherwise in our days, and yet still beguile themselves, still would be so accounted, although by their outward life they declare the contrary—in that they think it enough to keep the heart pure, notwithstanding that the outward man doth curry favour. In which doing, as they deny God to be jealous—and therefore requireth he the whole man, as well body as soul, being both created, as to immortality and society with him, so redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and now sanctified by the Holy Spirit to be the temple of God, and member of his Son; as, I say, by their parting stake<sup>3</sup> to give God the heart and the world the body, they deny God to be jealous, (for else they would give him both, as the wife will do to her husband, whether he be jealous or no, if she be honest,) so they play the dissemblers with the church of God, by their fact offending the godly, whom either they provoke to fall with them, or make more careless and conscienceless if they be fallen, and occasioning the wicked and obstinate to triumph against God, and the more vehemently to prosecute their

*2 wished to be*

*3 i.e. commending*

malice against such as will not defile themselves in body or soul with the Romish rags, now revived amongst us. Because of this— I mean lest you, my dear master and brother in the Lord, should do as many of our gossellers, or rather gospel spillers, do, for fear of man whose breath is in his nostrils, and hath power but of the body, not fearing the Lord which hath power both of soul and body, and that not only temporally but also eternally; I could not but write something unto you, as well because duty deserveth it (for many benefits I have received of God by your hands, for the which he reward you, for I cannot), as also because charity and love compelleth me. Not that I think you have any need (for as I may rather learn of you, so I doubt not but you have hitherto kept yourself upright from halting), but that I might both quiet my conscience calling upon me hereabout,<sup>1</sup> and signify unto you by something my carefulness for your soul, as painfully and often you have done for my body.

Esa. 2.

<sup>1</sup> on this subject

Therefore I pray you call to mind, that there be but two masters, two kinds of people, two ways, and two mansion-places. The masters be Christ and Satan; the people be servitors to either of these; the ways be strait and wide; the mansions be heaven and hell. Again: consider, that this world is the place of trial of God's people and the devil's servants; for as the one will follow his master whatsoever cometh of it, so will the other. For a time, it is hard to discern who pertaineth to God and who to the devil; as, in the calm and peace, who is a good shipman and warrior, and who is not. But as when the storm ariseth the expert mariner is known, as in war the good soldier is seen, so in affliction and the cross, easily God's children are known from Satan's servants: for then, as the good servant will follow his master, so will the godly follow their captain, come what come will; whereas the wicked and hypocrites will bid adieu, and desire less of Christ's acquaintance. For which cause the cross is called a probation and trial, because it trieth who will go with GOD, and who will forsake him. As now in England, we see how small a company Christ hath, in comparison of Satan's soldiers. Let no man deceive himself; for he that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. No man can serve two masters; the Lord abhorreth double hearts; the lukewarm, that is, such as are both hot and cold, he spitteth out of his mouth. None that halt on both knees, doth God take for his servants. The way of Christ is the strait way; and so strait, that, as few find it, and few walk in it, so no man can halt in it, but needs must go upright; for as the straitness will suffer no reeling to this side or that side, so if any man halt, he is like to fall off the bridge into the pit of eternal perdition. Strive therefore, good master doctor, now you have found it, to enter into it; and if you should be called or pulled back, look not on this side or that side, or behind you as

Lot's wife did, but strait forwards on the end; which set before you (though it be to come) as even now present: like as you do, and will<sup>1</sup> your patients to do, in purgations and other your ministrations—to consider the effect that will ensue; wherethrough<sup>2</sup> the bitterness and loathsomeness of the purgation is so overcome, and the painfulness, in abiding the working of that<sup>3</sup> is ministered, is so eased, that it maketh the patient willingly and joyfully to receive that<sup>3</sup> is to be received, although it be never so unpleasant. So, I say, set before you the end of this strait way; and then, doubtless, as Paul saith, *æternum pondus gloriæ pariet*, whilst you look not on the thing seen, for that is temporal, but on the thing which is not seen, which is eternal. So doth the husbandman in ploughing and tilling set before him the harvest time; so doth the fisher consider the draught of his net, rather than the casting in; so doth the merchant, the returns of his merchandise; and so should we in these stormy days set before us, not the loss of our goods, liberty, and very life, but the reaping-time, the coming of our Saviour Christ to judgment, the fire that shall burn the wicked and disobedient to God's Gospel, the blast of the trump, the exceeding glory prepared for us in heaven eternally, such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive. The more we lose here, the greater joy shall we have there. The more we suffer, the greater triumph. For corruptible dross, we shall find incorruptible treasures; for gold, glory; for silver, solace without end; for riches, robes royal; for earthly houses, eternal palaces, mirth without measure, pleasure without pain, felicity endless: summâ,<sup>4</sup> we shall have God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Oh happy place! oh that this day would come! Then shall the end of the wicked be lamentable; then shall they receive the just reward of God's vengeance; then shall they cry Woe, woe, that ever they did as they have done. Read Wisdom 2, 3, 4, 5. Read Matthew 25. Read 1 Corinthians 15., 2 Corinthians 5, and by faith (which GOD increase in us!) consider the things there set forth. And for your comfort, read Hebrews 11, to see what faith hath done; always considering the way to heaven to be by many tribulations, and that all they which will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. You know this is our alphabet: He that will be my disciple, saith Christ, must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me; not this bishop, nor that doctor, nor this emperor, nor that king, but *me*, saith Christ; for he that loveth father, mother, wife, children, or very life, better than me, is not worthy of me. Remember that the same Lord saith, He that will save his life shall lose it. Comfort yourself with this, that as the devils had no power over the porkers, or over Job's goods, without God's leave, so shall they have none over you. Remember also that all the hairs of your head are numbered with GOD. The

<sup>1</sup> desire  
<sup>2</sup> wherethrough  
by

<sup>3</sup> that  
which

<sup>4</sup> in short

Matt. 8.



devil may make one believe he will drown him, as the sea in his surges threateneth to the land; but, as the Lord hath appointed bounds for the one, over the which he cannot pass, so hath he done for the other.

On God therefore cast your care; love him, serve him after his word, fear him, trust in him, hope at his hand for all help, and always pray, looking for the cross; and whensoever it cometh, be assured, the Lord, as he is faithful, so he will never tempt you further than he will make you able to bear, but in the midst of the temptation will make such an evasion<sup>1</sup> as shall be most to his glory, and your eternal comfort. God, for his mercy in Christ, with his Holy Spirit endue you, comfort you, under the wings of his mercy shadow you, and as his dear child guide you for evermore. To whose merciful tuition<sup>2</sup> as I do with my hearty prayer commit you, so I doubt not but you pray for me also, and so I beseech you to do still. My brother P. telleth me you would have the last part of St. Hierome's works, to have the use thereof for a fortnight. I cannot for these three days well forbear<sup>3</sup> it, but yet on Thursday next I will send it you, if God let<sup>4</sup> me not; and use me, and that I have, as your own. The Lord, for his mercy in Christ, direct our ways to his glory. Amen.

Out of prison, by yours to command,

John Bradford,

To Mistress M. B.,

A godly Gentlewoman; comforting her in that common heaviness and godly sorrow, which the feeling and sense of sin worketh in God's children.

I humbly and heartily pray the ever-living good God and Father of mercy, to bless and keep your heart and mind in the knowledge and love of his truth, and of his Christ, through the inspiration and working of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Although I have no doubt but that you prosper and go forwards daily in the way of godliness, more and more drawing towards perfection, and have no need of anything that I can write, yet because my desire is that you might be more fervent and persevere to the end, I could not but write something unto you; beseeching you both often and diligently to call unto your mind, as a mean to stir you hereunto, yea, as a thing which God most straitly requireth you to believe, that you are beloved of God, and that he is your dear Father in, through, and for Christ and his death's sake. This love and tender kindness of God towards us in Christ is abundantly herein declared, in that he hath (to<sup>5</sup> that godly<sup>6</sup> work of creation of this world,) made us after his image,

redeemed us being lost, called us into his church, sealed us with his mark and sign—manual of baptism, kept and conserved us all the days of our life, fed, nourished, defended, and most fatherly chastised us, and now hath kindled in our hearts the sparkles of his fear, faith, love, and knowledge of his Christ and truth: and therefore we lament, because we lament no more our unthankfulness, our frailness, our diffidence and wavering, in things wherein we should be most certain. All these things we should use as means to confirm our faith of this, that God is our God and Father, and to assure us that he loveth us as our father in Christ; to this end, I say, we should use the things before touched; especially, in that<sup>1</sup> of all things God requireth this faith and persuasion of his fatherly goodness, as his chiefest service. For before he ask any thing of us, he saith, I am the Lord thy God—giving himself, and then all he hath, to us, to be our own. And this he doth in respect of himself, of his own mercy and truth, and not in respect of us, for then were grace no grace. In consideration whereof, when he saith, Thou shalt have none other gods but me, thou shalt love me with all thy heart, &c.; though of duty we are bound to accomplish all that he requireth, and are culpable and guilty if we do not the same, yet he requireth not these things further of us, than to make us more in love and more certain of this his covenant, that he is our Lord and God. In certainty whereof, as he hath given this whole world to serve to our need and commodity,<sup>2</sup> so hath he given his Son Christ Jesus, and, in Christ, himself, to be a pledge and gage; whereof the Holy Ghost doth now and then give us some taste and sweet smell, to our eternal joy.

<sup>1</sup> since

<sup>2</sup> convenience

Therefore, as I said, because God is your father in Christ, and requireth of you straitly to believe it, give yourself to obedience, although you do it not with such feeling as you desire. First must faith go before, and then feeling will follow. If our imperfection, frailty, and many evils should be occasions whereby Satan would have us to doubt, as much as we can let us abhor that suggestion, as of all others most pernicious—for so indeed it is. For when we stand in a doubt whether God be our father, we cannot be thankful to GOD, we cannot heartily pray, or think any thing we do acceptable to God, we cannot love our neighbours and give over ourselves to care for them and do for them as we should do; and therefore Satan is most subtle hereabouts, knowing full well, that, if we doubt of God's fatherly eternal mercies towards us through Christ, we cannot please God, or do any thing as we should do to man. Continually casteth he into our memories our imperfection, frailty, faults and offences; that we should doubt of God's mercy and favour towards us. Therefore, my good sister, we must not be sluggish herein; but as Satan laboreth to loosen our faith, so must we labour to fasten it, by

thinking on the promises and covenant of God in Christ's blood—namely, that God is our God, with all that ever he hath: which covenant dependeth and hangeth upon God's own goodness, mercy, and truth only, and not on our obedience or worthiness in any point; for then should we never be certain. Indeed, God requireth of us obedience and worthiness, but not that thereby we might be his children and he our father; but, because he is our father, and we his children, through his own goodness in Christ, therefore requireth he faith and obedience. Now if we want<sup>1</sup> this obedience and worthiness which he requireth, should we doubt whether he be our father? Nay, that were to make our obedience and worthiness the cause; and so to put Christ out of place, for whose sake God is our father. But rather, because he is our father, and we feel ourselves to want such things as he requireth, we should be stirred up to a shamefacedness and blushing, because we are not as we should be; and thereupon should we take occasion to go to our Father in prayer, on this manner; Dear Father, thou of thine own mercy in Christ hast chosen me to be thy child, and therefore thou wouldest I should be brought into thy church, and faithful company of thy children, wherein thou hast kept me hitherto—thy name therefore be praised! Now I see myself to want faith, hope, love, &c. which thy children have, and thou requirest of me; wherethrough<sup>2</sup> the devil would have me to doubt, yea, utterly to despair of thy fatherly goodness, favour, and mercy. Therefore I come to thee, as to my merciful father through thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and pray thee to help me. Good Lord, help me, and give me faith, hope, love, &c.; and grant that thy Holy Spirit may be with me for ever, and more and more to assure me that thou art my father; that this merciful covenant thou madest with me, in respect of thy grace in Christ, and for Christ, and not in respect of any my worthiness, is always true to me, &c.

On this sort, I say, you must pray and use your cogitations, when Satan would have you to doubt of salvation. He doth all he can to prevail herein: do you all you can to prevail herein against him. Though you feel not as you would, yet doubt not; but hope beyond all hope, as Abraham did. Faith always, as I said, goeth before feeling. As certain as God is almighty, as certain as God is merciful, as certain as God is true, as certain as Christ was crucified, is risen, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, as certain as this is God's commandment, *I am the Lord thy God*, so certain ought you to be that God is your father. As you are bound to have none other gods but him, so are you no less bound to believe that God is your God. What profit should it be to you to believe this to be true, *I am the Lord thy God*, to others, if you should not believe that this is true to yourself? The devil believeth on this sort. And whatsoever it be that would

move you to doubt of this, whether God be your God through Christ, that same cometh undoubtedly of the devil. Wherefore did GOD make you, but because he loved you? Might not he have made you blind, dumb, deaf, lame, frantic, &c.? Might not he have made you a Jew, a Turk, a papist, &c.? And why hath he not done so? merely because he loved you. And why did he love you? What was there in you to move him to love you? Surely nothing moved him to love you, and therefore to make you, and so hitherto to keep you, but his own goodness in Christ. <sup>1</sup> Now then in that<sup>1</sup> his goodness in Christ still remaineth as much as it was, (that is, even as great as himself, for it cannot be lessened,) how should it be but that he is your God and father? Believe this, believe this, my good sister: for God is no changeling; them whom he loveth, he loveth to the end.

Cast therefore yourself wholly upon him; and think, without at all wavering, that you are God's child, that you are a citizen of heaven, that you are the daughter of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, &c. If hereof you be assured, as you ought to be, then shall your conscience be quieted; then shall you lament more and more, that you want many things which God loveth; then shall you labour to be holy in soul and body; then shall you go about that God's glory may shine in you, in all your words and works; then shall you not be afraid what man can do unto you; then shall you have such wisdom to answer your adversaries, as shall serve to their shame and your comfort; then shall you be certain that no man can touch one hair of your head, further than shall please your good father to your everlasting joy; then shall you be most certain that God, as your good father, will be more careful for your children, and make better provision for them, if all you have were gone, than you can; then shall you (being assured, I say, of God's favour towards you,) give over yourself wholly to help and care for others that be in need; then shall you condemn this life, and desire to be at home with your good and sweet father; then shall you labour to mortify all things that would spot either soul or body. All these things spring out of this certain persuasion and faith that God is our father, and we are his children by Christ Jesus. All things should help our faith herein: but Satan goeth about in all things to hinder us. Therefore let us use earnest and hearty prayer. Let us often remember this covenant, *I am the Lord thy God*; let us look upon <sup>2</sup> Christ and his precious blood, shed for the oblation<sup>2</sup> and confirmation of this covenant. Let us remember all the free promises of the gospel. Let us set before us God's benefits generally, in making this world, in ruling it, in governing it, in calling and keeping his church, &c. Let us set before us God's benefits particularly, how he hath made us creatures after his image; how he hath made us of perfect limbs, form, beauty, memory, &c.;

<sup>1</sup> since<sup>2</sup> sealing

how he hath made us Christians, and given us a right judgment in his religion; how he hath, ever since we were born, blessed, kept, nourished, and defended us; how he hath often beaten, chastised, and fatherly corrected us; how he hath spared us, and doth now spare us, giving us time, space, place, grace. This if you do, and use earnest prayer, and so fly from all things which might wound your conscience, giving yourself to diligence in your vocation, you shall find at the length (that which God grant to me with you!) a sure certainty of salvation, without all such doubt as may trouble the peace of conscience, to your eternal joy and comfort. Amen, amen.

Yours to use in Christ,

John Bradford.

**Another Letter, full of godly comfort,**

Written to the same person.

The good Spirit of God, which guideth his children, be with you, my good sister in the Lord, for ever. Amen.

Although, as I to you, so you unto me, in person are unknown, yet to him whom we desire to please, we are, not only in persons, but also in hearts, known and thoroughly seen. And therefore as for his sake you would (by them you sent,) of me be perceived<sup>1</sup> how that in God you bear to me a good will: so, that I to you might be seen in God to bear you the like, I send to you these few words in writing; wishing that in all your doings and speech, yea, even in your very thoughts, you would labour to feel that they are all present and open before the sight of GOD, be they good or bad. This cogitation often had in mind, and prayer made to God for the working of his Spirit, thereby (as a mean) you shall at the length feel more comfort and commodity, than any man can know, but such as be exercised therein. Howbeit this is to be added; that, in thinking yourself, and all that you have and do, to be in the sight of God—this (I say) is to be added; that you think his sight is the sight, not only of a Lord, but rather of a Father, which tendereth<sup>2</sup> more your infirmities, than you can tender the infirmities of any your children. Yea, when in yourself you see a motherly affection to your little one that is weak, let the same be unto you a trace to train you to see the unspeakable kind affection of God your Father towards you. And therefore, upon the consideration of your infirmities and natural evils, which continually cleave unto us, take occasion to go to God as your Father through Christ; and before his merciful heart lay open your infirmities and evils, and desire of pardon and help, after his good will and pleasure; but in his time, and not when you will; and by what means he

*1 i. e. you wished me to know*

*2 kindly regardeth*

Esa. 49.

will, not that way that you would : in the mean season, hang on hope of his fatherly goodness, and surely you shall never be ashamed. For if a woman, that is natural, cannot finally forget the child of her womb, be sure God, which is a father supernatural, cannot nor will not forget you. Yea, if a woman could be so forgetful, yet God himself saith, he will not be so. This opinion, yea rather, certain persuasion of God your Father through Christ, see that you cherish, and by all means ; as well by diligent consideration of his benefits, as of his loving corrections, whether they be inward or outward : see that you nourish [it], knowing for certain, that, as the devil goeth about nothing so much as to bring you in a doubt whether you be God's children or no, so whatsoever shall move you to admit that dubitation, be assured the same to come from the devil. If you feel in yourself not only the want of good things, but also plenty of evil, do not therefore doubt whether you be God's child in Christ or no. For if for your goodness' or illness' sake, which you feel or feel not, you should believe or doubt, then should you make Christ Jesus, for whose sake only God is your Father, either nothing, or else but a half Christ. But rather take occasion of your wants in good, and of your plenty in evil, to go to God as to your Father, and to pray him that, inasmuch as he commandeth you to believe that he is your God and Father, so he would give you his good Spirit, that you might feel the same, and live as his child to his glory : and cease not, upon such prayers, to look for comfort in God's good time, still hoping the best, and rejecting all dubitation, and so all evil works, words, and cogitations, as the Lord shall enable you by his good Spirit and grace ; which I beseech him to give unto you, my good sister, for ever. And further I pray you, that as he hath made you to be a helper unto your husband, so you would endeavour yourself therein to shew the same, as well in soul as body : and beg grace of God that your endeavours may be effectual, to both your comforts in Christ. Amen.

John Bradford.

**To my beloved in the Lord, W. P.**

Grace and peace from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear brother, God most justly hath cast me now into a dungeon, but much better than I deserve ; wherein I see no man but my keeper, nor can see any except they come to me. Something in the earth my lodging is : which is an example and memorial of my earthly affections (which God I trust will mortify) ; and of my sepulchre, whereunto I trust my Lord God will bring me in peace in his good time. In the mean season, he give me patience, lively

hope, and his good Spirit. I pray you, pray for me ; for the prayer of the godly, if it be effectual, worketh much with God. I thank God, my common disease doth less trouble me now, than when I was abroad ; which doth teach me the merciful providence of God towards me. Commend me to Mistress Wilkinson, whom we pray God to strengthen in his truth and grace unto the end. Use true and hearty prayer, and you shall perceive God at length will declare himself to see, where now many think he sleepeth.

This disease was a rheum with a feebleness of stomach, wherewith he was much troubled while he was at liberty.

Out of the Tower, by the Lord's prisoner,

John Bradford.

To Mistress F. W.,

A faithful woman, and fearing God ; whom he exhorteth to be patient under the cross, and not to fear death.

My dearly beloved, I beseech our merciful Father to comfort your heavy and pensive heart with his own consolations in Christ, as I am assured he will in his good time ; which with patience look for, good sister, after the example of Job, Elias, Abraham, and all the dear saints of God, which are set forth unto us for patterns of patience : God grant us well to cut our cloth after them ; for God is the same God now, and the end will shew that he is a merciful Lord, and full of compassion. My dear sister, you shall unfeignedly feel it at the length, though presently it seemeth otherwise unto your sense : you shall, after you be a little exercised herein, find a quiet fruit of righteousness ; the God of grace, which hath called you unto his eternal glory, confirming and strengthening you, being some deal afflicted with your brethren and sisters that be in the world ; for alone you suffer not, as I trust you know.

James 5.

Heb. 12.

1 Peter 5.

It comforted me to read in your letters, that no displeasure of father, mother, husband, children, &c. doth move you to be ruled after the counsel of the world ; and therefore you will me not to be afraid for you. Oh, my beloved, what thanks should I give to our God and dear Father, for this his exceeding kindness towards you ! His name be magnified for you for ever : his mercy be more and more multiplied unto you, in you, and upon you, for ever and ever. Amen. God make me thankful herefore. But you add, that the fear of death doth now and then move you a little. Howbeit you say, that, as I have counselled you, you will strive thereagainst. My good Joyce, I take you at your word ; keep promise, I pray you ; that is, strive against it : and I promise you in the name of the Lord, that you shall have the victory, which I would wish you to set before your eyes also, and so shall the terror of death trouble you the less. Soldiers, going to war, set not before their eyes simply the stripe, but rather the victory :

1 desire

and, my good sister, will not you herein follow them? In your travail with child, doth not the hope of the babe to be delivered mitigate the malady? Doth not the sick, in taking bitter and loathsome physic, set before him the commodity<sup>1</sup> which will ensue? And, my dear sister, will not you by these be something informed? Consider what this life is: consider what death is: consider what is prepared for you after death. Concerning this life, you know that it is full of misery, vanity, and woe: it is a plain exile, and hath nothing in it permanent. It is therefore compared to a vapour, to a smoke, to a shadow, yea, to a warfare, a wilderness, a vale of wretchedness, wherein we are compassed on every side with most fierce and fearful enemies: and should we desire to dwell here? Should we lust to live in this loathsome and laborious life? Should we wish to tarry in this wretchedness? Should we have pleasure to remain in this perilous state? Daniel's den is not so dreadful, as is this dungeon we dwell in.

Concerning death to them that be (as I know you are) God's dear children, my tenderly beloved sister, what other thing is it than the dispatcher of all displeasure, the end of all travail, the door of desires, the gate of gladness, the port of paradise, the haven of heaven, the rail of rest and quietness, the entrance to felicity, the beginning of all blissfulness? It is the very bed of down (and therefore well compared to a sleep), for the doleful bodies of God's people to rest in, out of the which they shall rise and awake, most fresh and lusty, to life everlasting. It is a passage to the Father, a chariot to heaven, the Lord's messenger, a leader unto Christ, a going to our home, a deliverance from bondage and prison, a dimission from war, a security from all sorrows, and a manumission from all misery. So that the very heathen did in some places cause the days of their death to be celebrated with mirth, melody, and minstrels: and should we be dismayed at it? should we be afraid of it? should we tremble to hear of it? Should such a friend as it is, be unwelcome? Should the foulness of his face fear<sup>2</sup> us from his good conditions<sup>2</sup>? Should the hardness of his husk hinder us from his sweet kernel? Should the roughness of the tide tie us to the bank and shore, there to be drowned, rather than the desire of our home drive us to go aboard? Should the hardness of the saddle set us on our feet to perish by the way, rather than to leap up and endure the same a little, and so to be where we would be?

Concerning that which is prepared for you after death, if I should go about to express it, the more I should so do, the further I should be from it. For the eye hath not seen, neither the ear hath heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive in any point, the joy, mirth, melody, pleasure, power, wealth, riches, honour, beauty, fellowship, dainties, odours, glory, wisdom, knowledge, treasures, security, peace, quietness, and eternal felicity, which

<sup>1</sup> *advantage*

<sup>2</sup> *frighten*  
<sup>2</sup> *excellences*



you shall have and enjoy world without end, with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with the Angels, Archangels, with the Patriarchs and Prophets, with the Apostles and Evangelists, with the Martyrs and Confessors, and with all the saints of God, in the palace of the Lord in heaven, the kingdom of God, the glory of the Father. Oh, woe to the blindness of our eyes that see not this. Woe to the hardness of our hearts that feel not this. Woe to the deafness of our ears that hear not this, in such sort as we should do: wherethrough we might be so far from fearing death, that rather we should wish it, crying with Simeon, Now let thy servant depart in peace; with Paul, I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ; with David, When shall I come and appear before thee? and again, Oh woe is me, that my habitation is thus prolonged, &c. But alas, dear sister, great is our unbelief. Full faint is our faith, or else night and day tears should be our bread and drink, whilst it is said unto us, Where is your GOD? It is a token of little love to God, to be loth to go unto him when he calleth. If my dearest friend, of a special favour and tender good will, should send a horse for me to come unto him, should I be displeas'd thereat? yea should I not be willing and glad to come unto him? And alas, yet if death, the Lord's palfrey, the Lord's messenger, should come, I think I should not be so ready, but be fearful—as you foresee yourself to be. Wherethrough I doubt not but you take occasion to lament the weakness of your faith, and, seeing your need, to prepare for remedy against the time of need, and to beg of GOD his aid, strength, and comfort against that pinch; which undoubtedly you shall have, and find his promise true, that in an acceptable time he heard your prayer. Such as I am, have no such foresight of death, and therefore are less presently dismayed: which will turn to our greater grief in the plunge; save that, for my part, I hope he will never tempt me further than he will make me able to bear. Into his hands I offer myself, beseeching him for his Christ's sake to keep me soul and body to his kingdom and glory, and to lead me, order me, and dispose me as he will in all things, in all places, and for ever; that at the length I may come whither I will, that is, into his own blessed presence and fruition of immortality, with you and his saints. Amen. Thus much I thought good to write unto you for this present, to occasion you the less to fear death, which either needeth not or booteth not: and therefore even reasonable men, much more spiritual men, labour to strive against the fear of that which they can by no means avoid. But of this hereafter I trust mouth to mouth to speak with you. Now, as to my soul, I pray and wish unto you, my most dear sister in the Lord; whose grace guide you, and his mercy embrace you on every side, for ever. Amen.

Yours,

John Bradford.

Psa. 120.

Psa. 42.

To my good friend in God, Master Humphrey Hales.

As to my dear friend, I wish unto you, gentle master Hales, health of soul and body, to God's glory and your everlasting comfort. Amen.

Although it be commonly spoken, and as commonly verified, that *seldom seen is soon forgotten*; yet it is not so commonly seen or experienced among them, whose friendship is in God the Father through Christ, (as ours is,) but in those whose friendship is begun in respect of some earthly commodity.<sup>1</sup> And therefore lest I should incur this suspicion at your hands, which have so many ways deserved the contrary, I thought it my duty to refresh (if it need refreshing) the amity in God begun betwixt us, which I doubt not shall continue so long as we live, or else I would be sorry. In consideration whereof, both mindful of my promise made unto you, and careful for your safety, I have caused a place to be provided for your wife's deliverance, where she may so quietly and safely remain, that for the avoiding of the perils and dangers of these days I see none more convenient: I mean it in Hadley at Doctor Taylor's house, where I trust there is no peril to youward, nor to any that feareth or regardeth any peril that thereby may happen. And herein of very love and good will I am the more familiar and bold to admonish you; not as distrusting you (God forbid, for I think of you as of a very child of God), but as one careful for you, lest you should at length through the common infirmity of our frail flesh, and the manifold offences given of the world, do exteriorly as the world doth, to save your sleeve and maim your arm for ever: as those do, which, for the saving of their goods, jeopard goods of body and soul in the peril of eternal damnation. If I suspected any such thing in you, gentle master Hales, I then would go about to tell you what this life is—a smoke, a shadow, a vapour, &c.; what the glory of this life is—grass, hay; yea how full of misery it is, and hath more aloes than honey; Job 9. If I suspected anything<sup>2</sup> your conscience, I would then set before you on the one part the judgment of Christ, which shall be most assuredly the terrible sentence to them which are ashamed to confess his Gospel—the eternal woe and misery which they shall be cast into, that will not obey his Gospel here; and on the other part, the most pleasant shout of the Angel to summon all men to come before our captain and brother Christ, the collecting and catching of us up in the clouds to meet our master, the eternal joy and felicity which we shall receive that here confess him, here suffer with him, here lose any thing for his sake. If I did in any point so much as think that you would defile your body in the Antichristian service now used, then would I go about to set forth these things, briefly spoken, more at large. But as I said before I say again, because

<sup>1</sup> *advantage*

<sup>2</sup> *at all*

I am as well persuaded of you, my dearly beloved brother, as of any in your profession and state, I cannot but pray God to make perfect the good which he hath begun in you, and desire you, as you have begun in God, so to go forward. As your example hath done good to many, so cast not all down with a type.<sup>1</sup> an up-set Terrible is that woe which Christ threateneth, to them by whom offences do come. You know that the way to salvation is straiter than men make it. You know the soul is to be considered above all things. Happy is the loss of that bodily life, liberty, and goods, by the which a spiritual life, freedom, and felicity is purchased. What should it profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his own soul? Who would desire a two-years' merry life for an eternal sorrow? as these mass-gospellers do, which yet are uncertain of two-years' life, and God knoweth what wounds their consciences have. Hard is it to recover health to the conscience: and because I am careful for it to youwards, as to mine own brother and dear friend, therefore I write thus.

We are in God's power, and not in the power of our enemies: he it is that hath all our hairs numbered: before he say Amen, no man shall once touch you. Into his hands commit yourself: cast your care on him, have a care to please him, and then he will care to keep you. You know the oath the Athenienses did make: *Pugnabo pro sacris, et solus et cum aliis*; I will fight for the defence of religion, both alone and with others. Which saying of the heathen will be to our condemnation, if for his holy word and Gospel's sake we dare not adventure the loss of that he hath lent us, keepeth for us, and can when he will take away from us, or us from it. If worldly men dare jeopard a joint<sup>2</sup> with God, rather than they would lose worldly things (as experience teacheth), 2 an encounter certainly it should be much to our shame, which in baptism have vowed and solemnly sworn to forsake the world, if we dare not jeopard a joint<sup>2</sup> with man, rather than we would lose a good conscience and spiritual treasures. He that will not have God's blessing, it shall be taken from him, saith David.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, beware: you are now the temple of the Holy Ghost; defile it not, for the Lord's sake, but keep it pure, not only from all uncleanness of the spirit, but also of the flesh, (2 Cor. 7.) as I trust you will: and cry upon your Father for his strength and aid; which I beseech him of his mercy always to give unto you, my own good friend, even as I desire to myself. If in any thing I could help you, you may be as assured thereof as of your brother. My prayer to God night and day you shall have, that for his holy name's sake he would bless you in all things and keep you, with my good sister your wife, unto the very end, as his dear elect children. Amen, amen. From my lodging, you know where, this 5th of August.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

John Bradford.

Another Letter to Master Humphrey Hales and his Wife.

The ever living and merciful God, our dear father through Christ, be with you both, my most dearly and entirely beloved in the Lord, now and for ever.

I cannot forbear but signify unto you both, that my heart is careful and heavy for the cross which is come upon you; by the heavy and fearful judgment of God fallen upon your father justly, for his denying of God, for fear of men, and love of these things which he hath left behind him unto you and others. God grant his face be so imprinted in the hearts of all men, especially of you both, that his fall may be unto you, I will not say a rising (for yet I trust ye are not fallen), but an establishing in the verity of God; whereof whoso is ashamed, shall at length feel such shame, as I beseech God keep us all from. Happy are they that mark the judgments of God upon other, to come and increase in repentance, (Luke xiii.) to fear God's wrath and judgment, which is always like himself, if we follow the steps of them on whom he taketh punishment. I need not to tell you the cause of this that hath happened unto your father, if it be as I with sorrow have heard. For you know well enough, that, till he forsook God, gave ear to the serpent's counsel, began to mamber of<sup>t</sup> the truth, and to frame himself outwardly to do that which his conscience reproved inwardly (for that which he mingled with the love of God, I mean the love of the world, cannot be in any man without the expulsion of God's love), till then, I say, God did not depart and leave him to himself, to the example of you and me and all others, that we should fear even ourselves and our own hands more than man and all the powers of the world, if we therefore should do any thing which should wound our conscience. The conscience, I tell you, is soon wounded, yea, sooner than we be aware of. The devil useth all kind of deceit, to blind us from seeing that which might wound it; but when the stripe is given, then either shutteth he still up our eyes with contempt to our hardening, or else openeth them to bring us to utter despairing. In your father, as ye may see that latter, so in many worldly gospellers you may, if you will, see the other. God might deal with all such, as he hath done now with your father: but because the time of his judgment is not yet come, his wisdom hath thought good to set your father forth as an example to all men; as he did in the first world Cain, in the second world Ham, in the third age Korah, &c., in Christ's time Judas, in the apostles' time Ananias, &c.; although none will heartily consider it, but such as be God's children indeed.

But here, in comparing your father thus, my dearly and unfeignedly beloved in the Lord, I must pray you not to be offended,

or think that I do determinately judge (to God I leave all judgment); but, because the fruit to us declareth no less, to the admonishment of us all, I trust ye will accordingly consider my collation.<sup>1</sup> For your parts, as I think godly of you both, that indeed ye are both the children of God, so, I pray you, comfort yourselves as David did; though his son Absalom perished so desperately, and though his father-in-law Ahitophel, father to Bathsheba, as the Hebrews write, perished so miserably. Ye know Jonathan was not the worse because his father slew himself, nor Bathsheba because of her father Ahitophel: they both were the children of God; and so I am assured, as man can be, that ye are. As they used God's judgments upon their parents, so do ye—to fear God and love God the more, and to fly from those things which in your father ye did see displeased God. Oh that I were with you but one half hour: not only with you to lament, but also, as God should lend me his grace, to comfort you; who by this judgment doth tempt<sup>2</sup> your patience and faith, to the comfort of <sup>2 try</sup> you both, as you shall find, I am assured. My dear hearts in the Lord, if I could by any means comfort you, certainly, if my life lay on it, I think you should forthwith perceive it: but because I can do no more than I can, therefore as I can I do; that is, as to write, so to send this messenger my good friend and brother with the same, to learn certainly the truth herein, and the condition of your estate. My other letter was made before I knew of this matter. I pray God this, which by report I understand, be otherwise; but God's good will be done, who give us patience and comfort in him. To whom I commend you both, even as heartily as any friends I have in this life of your estate.—From my lodging, you know where, this 8th of August, Anno Domini 1554.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

John Bradford.

### To certain of his faithful friends in God,

Exhorting them to be joyful under the cross, as a token of God's singular favour towards them.

God, our dear and most merciful father through Christ, be with you, my good brother and sister, as with his children for ever; and in all things so guide you with his Holy Spirit, the leader of his people, as may be to his glory, and your own everlasting joy and comfort in him. Amen.

Because I have oftentimes received from either of you comfort corporally, (for the which I beseech the Lord, as to make me thankful, so to recompence you both now and eternally,) I cannot but go about (Lord help hereto, for thy mercies' sake!) to write

something for your comfort spiritually. My dearly beloved, look not upon these days, and the afflictions of the same here with us, simply as they seem unto you, that is, as dismal days, and days of God's vengeance; but rather as lucky days, and days of God's fatherly kindness, towards you and such as ye be, that is, towards such as repent their sins and evil life past, and earnestly purpose to amend, walking not after the will of the world, as the most part of men do for the preservation of their self—which, will they nill they, they shall leave sooner or later, and to whom, or how it shall be used, they know not. Indeed, to such as walk in their wickedness and wind<sup>1</sup> on with the world, this time is a time of wrath and vengeance; and their beginning of sorrow is but now, because they contemn the physic of their father, which by these purging times and cleansing days would work their weal, which they will not: and because they will not have God's blessing, which both ways he hath offered unto them, by prosperity and adversity, therefore it shall be kept far enough from them; as when the sick man will<sup>2</sup> no kind of physic at the hands of the physician, he is left alone, and so the malady increaseth, and destroyeth him at the length. To such men indeed these days are and should be doleful days, days of woe and weeping, because their damnation draweth nigh. But unto such as be penitent, and are desirous to live after the Lord's will, (amongst whom I do not only count you, but, as far as man may judge, I know ye are,) unto such, I say, this time is and should be comfortable. For first now, your father chastiseth you and me for our sins: for the which if he would have destroyed us, then would he have let us alone, and left us to ourselves, in nothing to take to heart his fatherly visitation; which here it pleaseth him to work presently, because elsewhere he will not remember our transgressions; as Paul writeth, He chastiseth us in the world, lest with the world we should perish.

<sup>1</sup> *wend,*  
*go*

<sup>2</sup> *will*  
*have*

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 21.

Therefore, my dear hearts, call to mind your sins; to lament them, and to ask mercy for them in his sight; and withal undoubtedly believe to obtain pardon and assured forgiveness of the same: for twice the Lord punisheth not for one thing. So that, I say, first we have cause to rejoice for these days: because our Father suffereth us not to lie in Jezebel's bed, sleeping in our sins and security, but, as mindful on us, doth correct us as his children; whereby we may be certain that we be no bastards but children, for he chastiseth every child whom he receiveth. So that they which are not partakers of his chastising, or that contemn it, declare themselves to be bastards and not children, as I know ye are, which, as ye are chastised, so do ye take it to heart accordingly; and therefore be glad, my dear hearts, as folks knowing certainly, even by this visitation of the Lord, that ye are his dear elect children, whose faults your father doth visit with the rod of

correction, but his mercy will he never take away from you. Psa. 89.  
Amen.

Secondly, ye have cause to rejoyce for these days, because they are days of trial; wherein not only ye yourselves shall better know yourselves, but also the world shall know that ye be none of his, but the Lord's darlings. Before these days came, Lord GOD, how many thought of themselves they had been in God's bosom, and so were taken and would be taken of the world: but now we see whose they are; for to whom we obey, his servants we are. If we obey the world (which God forbid, and hitherto ye have not done it), then are we the world's: but if we obey GOD, then are we God's; which thing (I mean that ye are God's) these days have declared both to you, to me, and to all other that know you, better than ever we knew it. Therefore ye have no cause to sorrow, but rather to sing, in seeing yourselves to be God's babes, and in seeing that all God's children do so count you. What though the world repine thereat? What though he kick? What though he seek to trouble and molest you? My dear hearts, he doth but his kind;<sup>1</sup> he cannot love the Lord which liveth not the Lord; he cannot brook the child that hateth the father; he cannot mind the servant that careth not for the master. If ye were of the world, the world would love you; ye should dwell quietly, there would be no grief, no molestation. If the devil dwelt in you, which the Lord forbid! he would not stir up his knights to besiege your house, to snatch at your goods, or suffer his fiends to enter into your hogs. But because Christ dwelleth in you, as he doth by faith, therefore stirreth he up his first-begotten son the world, to seek how to disquiet you, to rob you, to spoil you, to destroy you. And perchance your dear Father, to try and to make known unto you, and to the world, that ye are destinate to another dwelling than here on earth, to another city than man's eyes hath seen at any time, hath given or will give power to Satan and to the world, to take from you the things which he hath lent you, and by taking them away, to try your fidelity, obedience, and love towards him, (for ye may not love them above him); as, by giving that ye have and keeping it, he hath declared his love towards you. Satan perchance telleth GOD, as he did of Job, that ye love God for your goods' sake. What now then if the Lord, to try you with Job, shall give him power on your goods and body accordingly? should ye be dismayed? Should ye despair? Should ye be faint-hearted? Should ye not rather rejoyce, as did the apostles, that they were counted worthy to suffer anything for the Lord's sake? Oh forget not the end that happened to Job: for as it happened to him, so shall it happen unto you; for God is the same God and cannot long forget to shew mercy to them that look and long for it, as I know ye do, and I pray you do so still—for the Lord loveth you, and never can nor will forget

<sup>1</sup> after  
his na-  
ture

to shew and pour out his mercy upon you. After a little while that he hath afflicted and tried you, saith Peter, he will visit, comfort, and confirm you. As to Jacob, wrestling with the angel, at the length morning came and the sun arose; so, dear hearts, doubtless it will happen unto you. Howbeit, do ye as Job and Jacob did—that is, order and dispose your things that God hath lent you as ye may, and whilst ye have time. Who knoweth whether God hath given you power thus long even to that end?

Go to therefore, dispose your goods, prepare yourselves to trial; that either ye may stand to itlike God's champions, or else, if ye feel such infirmity in yourselves that ye be not able, give place to violence, and go where ye may with free and safe conscience serve the Lord. Think not this counsel to come by chance or fortune, but to come from the Lord; other oracles we may not look for now. As God told Joseph in a dream by an angel that he should fly; so, if ye feel such infirmity in yourselves as should turn to God's dishonour and you own destruction withal, know that at this present I am as God's angel to admonish you to take time whilst ye have it, and to see that in no case God's name by you might be dishonoured. Joseph might have objected the omission of his vocation, as perchance ye will do; but, dear hearts, let vocations and all things else give place to God's name and the sanctifying thereof. This I speak, not as though I would not have you rather to tarry and to stand to it: but I speak it in respect of your infirmity; which if ye feel to be so great in you that ye are not certain of this hope, that God will never tempt you above your ability, fly and get you hence, and know that thereby God will have you tried, to yourselves and to others. For by this you shall know how to take this world, and your home here as no home, but that ye look for another: and so give occasion to others, less to love this world, and perchance to some to doubt of their religion; wherein though they be earnest, yet would not they lose so much as ye do for your religion, which ye confirm to me and others, by your giving place to violence.

Last of all, ye have cause to rejoyce over these days, because they be days of conformation; in the which and by the which God our father maketh us like to Christ's image here, that we may be like to him elsewhere. For if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him; if we be buried with him, we shall rise with him; if we company with him in afflictions, we shall rejoyce with him in glory; if we sow with him in tears, we shall reap with him in gladness; if we confess him before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven; if we take his part, he will take ours; if we lose ought for his name's sake, he will give us all things for his truth's sake: so that we ought to rejoyce and be glad, for it is not given to every one to suffer loss of country, life, goods, house, &c. for the Lord's sake. What can God the Father do



more unto us, than to call us into camp with his Son? What may Christ our Saviour do more for us, than to make us his warriors? What can the Holy Ghost do to us above this, to mark us with the cognizance<sup>1</sup> of the Lord of Hosts? This cognizance<sup>1</sup> of the Lord standeth not in forked caps, tippets, shaven crowns or such other baggage and antichristian pelf; but in suffering for the Lord's sake. The world shall hate you, saith Christ. Lo, there is the cognizance<sup>1</sup> and badge of God's children—*The world shall hate you.* Rejoice, therefore, my dearly beloved, rejoice that God doth thus vouchsafe to begin to conform you and make you like to Christ. By the trial of these days ye are occasioned more to repent, more to pray, more to contemn this world, more to desire life everlasting, more to be holy; for holy is the end wherefore GOD doth afflict us, and so come to God's company. Which thing because we cannot do as long as this body is as it is, therefore by the door of death we must enter with Christ into eternal life, and immortality of soul and body; which God of his mercy send shortly, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

John Bradford.

To my own dear Brother, Master Lawrence Saunders,

Prisoner in the Marshalsea.

God's sweet peace in Christ be with you, my good brother in the Lord Jesus, and with all your concaptives. Amen.

I was letted<sup>2</sup> this morning from musing on that which I was purposed to have thought on, by reason of you; against whom I saw myself guilty of negligence, even in this point that I would not write—I should say, that I had not written, unto you as yet: therefore out of hand in manner<sup>3</sup> I prepared myself to purge myself hereof. Not that I will go about to excuse my fault, for that were more to load me; but, by asking both God and you pardon, to get it no more laid to my charge. Now then, as I was thus purposing and partly doing, cometh there one with a letter from you; for the which as I have cause to thank God and you (howbeit not so that you should think I give not the whole to God), so I see myself more blame-worthy for thus long holding my peace. Howbeit, good brother, in this I have given a demonstration to you; to behold my negligence in all other things, and especially in praying for you and for the church of God; which, for my sins and hypocrisy (hypocrisy indeed even in this writing; God deliver me from it!) have deserved to be punished. Just is God, for we have deserved all kinds of plagues at his hands; but yet merciful is he, that will on this wise chastise us with this world, ne cum mundo condemnemur. He might otherwise have punished us; I mean, he

<sup>1</sup> armorial bearings

<sup>2</sup> hindered

<sup>3</sup> as it were

might have for other causes cast us in prison, me especially, than for his gospel and word's sake. Praised therefore be his name, which voucheth us worthy this honour. Ah, good God, forgive us our sins, and work by this thy fatherly correction on us, on me especially, effectually to love thee and thy Christ: and with joyfulness unto the end to carry thy cross, through thick and thin. Always set before our eyes, not this gallows on earth if we still stick to thee, but the gallows in hell if we deny thee, or swerve from that we have professed. Ah, good brother, if I could always have GOD, his majesty, mercy, heaven, hell, &c. before mine eyes, then should I *obdurare*,<sup>1</sup> as Paul writeth of Moses, Heb. xi.; *Obduravit, inquit, perinde quasi vidisset eum qui est invisibilis.* Pray for me, as I know you do, and give thanks also: for in Domino spero, non nutabo. Si ambulavero per vallem umbræ mortis non timebo; quia tu, Domine, mecumes. Amen. I think we shall be shortly called forth: for now legem habent, et secundum legem, &c.; otherwise will they not reason with us: and I think their sheet anchor will be, to have us to subscribe. The which thing if we do, though with this condition, 'so far as the thing subscribed to, repugneth not against God's word,' yet this will be offensive. Therefore let us *vadere plane* and so *sane*; I mean, let us all confess that we are no changelings, but *reipsa*<sup>2</sup> are the same we were in religion; and therefore cannot subscribe, except we will dissemble both with God, ourselves, and the world. *Hæc tibi scribo, frater mi charissime in Domino. Jam legam tuam epistolam.* Ah, brother, that I had *practicam tecum scientiam in Vite illa quam pingis: roga Dominum ut ita vere sentiam.* Amen. God make me thankful for you. *Salutant te omnes concaptivi, et gratias Domino pro te agunt: idem tu facies pro nobis, et ores ut, &c.*

Your brother in the Lord Jesus, to live and die with you,

John Bradford.

### Another Letter to Master Lawrence Saunders.

My good brother, I beseech our good God and gracious Father always to continue his gracious favour and love towards us; and by us, as by instruments of his grace, to work his glory and confusion of his adversaries. *Ex ore infantium et lactentium fundet laudem, ad destruendum inimicum, &c.* Amen.

I have perused your letters to myself, and have read them to others. For answer whereof, if I should write what Doctor Taylor and Master Philpot do think, then must I say that they think the salt sent unto us by your friend is unseasonable. And indeed I think they both will declare it heartily, if they should come before them. As for me, if you would know what I think, my good and

1 hold on

Psa. 23.

2 really

John 15.

This friend moved them to subscribe to the papists articles with this condition, so far as they were not against God's word, being indeed clean contrary to it; and yet shortly after he valiantly suffered death for refusing.

most dear brother Lawrence, because I am so sinful and so con-  
 spurcate<sup>1</sup> (the Lord knoweth I lie not) with many grievous sins <sup>1 defiled</sup>  
 (which yet I hope are washed away sanguine Christi nostri), I nei-  
 ther can nor would be consulted withal, but as a cipher in Agrime.  
 Howbeit, to tell you how and what I mind,<sup>2</sup> take this for a <sup>2 intend</sup>  
 sum. I pray God in no case I may seek myself; and indeed  
 (I thank God therefore,) I purpose it not. Quod reliquum est  
 Domino Deo meo committo: et spero in illum, quod ipse faciet  
 juxta hoc, Jacta in Dominum curam, &c. Omni cura vestra  
 conjecta in illum, &c. Revela Domino viam tuam et spera &c.  
 Sperantem in Domino misericordia circumdabit. I did not nor do  
 not know, but by your letters, quod cras we shall come coram nobis.  
 Mine own heart, stick still to Dabitur vobis: fidelis enim est  
 Dominus, dabit in tentatione eventum quo possimus sufferre. Novit  
 Dominus pios e tentatione, &c. O utinam pius ego essem! Novit  
 Dominus in die tribulationis sperantes in se, &c. Nahum 1. I can-  
 not think that they will offer any kind of indifferent or mean<sup>2</sup> con-  
 ditions. For if we will not adorare bestiam, we never shall be  
 delivered but against their will, think I. God our Father and  
 gracious Lord make perfect the good he hath begun in us. Faciet,  
 mi frater, charissime frater, quem in intimis visceribus habeo ad  
 convivendum et commoriendum. O si tecum essem! Pray for  
 me, mine own heart-root in the Lord.

For ever your own,

John Bradford.

**A Letter which he wrote to a faithful Woman,  
 in her heaviness and trouble :**

Most comfortable for all those that are afflicted and broken-hearted  
 for their sins.

Ah, my dearly beloved, and most dearly beloved in the Lord,  
 how pensive is my heart presently for you, by reason of the fearful  
 judgment of our God, which even now I heard for truth by  
 Richard Proud? God our good Father, for his great mercy's sake  
 in Christ, have mercy upon us; and so with his eternal consolation  
 comfort you, my dear heart, as I desire in my most need to be of  
 him comforted. Amen.

The cause why, since the receipt of your letter, I have not sent  
 unto you, this bringer can tell you: yea, if I had not heard for  
 truth of this heavy chance, as yet you had not thus soon heard  
 from me. For I began of late a piece of work for your comfort,  
 whereof I send you now but a part, because my heart is heavy for  
 your sake, and I cannot be quiet till I hear how you do in this  
 cross. Wherein, my dear sister, I beseech you to be of good  
 comfort; and to be no more discouraged, than was David of

Absalom's death, the good Jonathan of his father Saul's fearful end, Adam of Cain, Noah of Ham, Jacob of Reuben, and the godly Bathsheba of the terrible end of her father, or at the least her grandfather's death, Ahitophel. Not that I utterly condemn and judge your father; for I leave it to God: but because the fact of itself declareth God's secret and fearful judgment and justice towards him and all men, and his great mercy towards us, admonishing all the world how that he is to be dreaded and feared, and Satan not to sleep; and us his children especially, how weak and miserable we be of ourselves, and how happy we are in him, which have him to be our Father, protector and keeper, and shall have for evermore, so that no evil shall touch us, further than shall make to our Father's glory and to our everlasting commodity.<sup>1</sup> And therefore let this judgment of God be an occasion to stir us up more carefully to walk before GOD, and unfeignedly to cast our whole care upon our dear Father, which never can nor will leave us; for his calling and gifts be such, that he can never repent him of them. Romans 11. Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end: none of his chosen can perish. Of which number I know you are, my dearly beloved sister: God encrease the faith thereof daily more and more in you: he give unto you to hang wholly on him, and on his providence and protection. For whoso dwelleth under that secret thing and help of the Lord, he shall be cock-sure for evermore: he that dwelleth, I say; for if we be flitters and not dwellers, (as was Lot a flitter from Zoar, where GOD promised him protection if he had dwelled there still,) we shall remove to our loss, as he did into the mountains. Genesis 19. Dwell therefore, that is, trust, and that finally unto the end, in the Lord (my dear sister), and you shall be as Mount Sion. As mountains compass Jerusalem, so doth the Lord all his people. How then can he forget you, which are as the apple of his eye, for his dear Son's sake? Ah, dear heart, that I were now but one half-hour with you, to be a Simon to help to carry your cross with you! GOD send you some good Simon to be with you and help you. I will be a Simon absent, to carry, as I can learn, your cross, which you have promised not to hide from me. Oh that GOD would heartily touch your husband's heart, so that he would get him beyond the seas, although by that means I should never more corporally see you (as indeed I fear it, I fear it); but God's good will be done. I have written to him: God, for his mercy's sake, turn it to your and his good. Amen.

But, to come again to that from whence I am digressed, whereunto you occasion me also by your letters, complaining to me of the blindness of your mind, and of the trouble you feel through talk with some: my dearly beloved, GOD make you thankful for that which he hath given unto you, he open your eyes to see what and how great benefits you have received, that you may be

<sup>1</sup> *advantage*

Psa. 90. 21.

less covetous, or rather impatient, for so (I fear me) it should be called, and more thankful. Have not you received at his hands sight to see your blindness, and thereto a desirous and seeking heart to see where he lieth in the mid-day, as his dear spouse speaketh of herself in the Canticles? Oh Joyce, my good Joyce, what a gift is this! Many have some sight, but none this sobbing and sighing, none this seeking which you have (I know), but such as he hath married unto him in his mercies. You are not content to kiss his feet with the Magdalene, but you would be kissed even with the kiss of his mouth. Cantides 1. You would see his face with Moses, forgetting how he biddeth us seek his face, (Psalm 27) yea, and that for ever. (Psalm 105). Which signifieth no such sight as you desire, to be in this present life, which would see GOD now face to face, whereas he cannot be seen but covered under something; yea sometimes, in that which is (as you would say) clean contrary to God—as, to see his mercy in his anger. In bringing us to hell, faith seeth him bring us to heaven: in darkness it beholdeth brightness: in hiding his face from us, it beholdeth his merry countenance. How did Job see God, but (as you would say) under Satan's cloke? For who cast the fire from heaven upon his goods? Who overthrew his house, and stirred up men to take away his cattle, but Satan? And yet Job pierced through all these, and saw God's work, saying, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, &c. In reading of the Psalms, how often do you see that David, in the shadow of death, saw God's sweet love? And so, my dearly beloved, I see that you, in your darkness and dimness, by faith do see clarity and brightness: by faith (I say), because faith is of things absent, of things hoped for, of things which I appeal to your conscience whether you desire not. And can you desire any thing which you know not? And is there of heavenly things any other true knowledge than by faith?

Therefore, my dear heart, be thankful, for (before God I write it) you have great cause. Ah, my Joyce, how happy is the state wherein you are! Verily you are even in the blessed state of God's children: for they mourn, and do not you so? and that not for worldly weal, but for spiritual riches, faith, hope, charity, &c. Do you not hunger and thirst for righteousness? And, I pray Matt. 5. you, saith not Christ who cannot lie, that happy are such? How should GOD wipe away the tears from your eyes in heaven, if now on earth you shed no tears? How could heaven be a place of rest, if on earth you did find it? How could you desire to be at home, if in your journey you found no grief? How could you so often call upon God, and talk with him, as I know you do, if your enemy should sleep all day long? How should you elsewhere be made like unto Christ, I mean in joy, if in sorrow you sobbed not with him? If you will have joy and felicity, you must first needs feel sorrow and misery. If you will go to heaven, you must sail

by hell. If you will embrace Christ in his robes, you must not think scorn of him in his rags. If you will sit at Christ's table in his kingdom, you must first abide with him in his temptations. If you will drink of his cup of glory, forsake not his cup of ignominy. Can the head corner-stone be rejected, and the other more base stones in God's building be in this world set by<sup>1</sup>? You are one of his lively stones: be content therefore to be hewn and snagged at, that you might be made the more meet to be joined to your fellows, which suffer with you Satan's snatches, the world's wounds, contempt<sup>2</sup> of conscience, and frets of the flesh, where-through they are enforced to cry, Oh wretches that we are, who shall deliver us? You are of God's corn; fear not therefore the flail, the fan, mill-stone, nor oven. You are one of Christ's lambs; look therefore to be fleeced, haled at, and even slain. If you were a market-sheep, you should go in more fat and grassy pasture. If you were for the fair, you should be stalled, and want no weal: but because you are for God's own occupying, therefore you must pasture on the bare common, abiding the storms and tempests that will fall.

Happy and twice happy are you, my dear sister, that GOD now haleth you whither you would not, that you might come whither you would. Suffer a little, and be still. Let Satan rage against you, let the world cry out, let your conscience accuse you, let the law load you and press you down: yet shall they not prevail; for Christ is Emmanuel, that is, God with us. If God be with us, who can be against us? The Lord is with you: your Father cannot forget you: your spouse loveth you. If the waves and surges arise, cry with Peter, Lord I perish; and he will put out his hand and help you. Cast out your anchor of hope, and it will not cease, for all the stormy surges, till it take hold on the rock of God's truth and mercy. Think not that he which hath given you so many things corporally, as inductions<sup>3</sup> of spiritual and heavenly mercies, and that without your deserts or desire, can deny you any spiritual comfort desiring it. For if he give to desire, he will give you to have and enjoy the thing desired. The desire to have, and the going about to ask, ought to certify your conscience that they be his earnest of the thing which, you asking, he will give you: yea, before you ask and whilst you are about to ask he will grant the same, as Esay saith, to his glory and your eternal consolation. He that spared not his own Son for you, will not nor cannot think any thing too good for you, my heartily beloved. If he had not chosen you, (as most certainly he hath,) he would not have so called you: he would never have justified you: he would never have so glorified you with his gracious gifts, which I know—praised be his name therefore! He would never have so exercised your faith with temptations, as he hath done and doth, if (I say) he had not chosen you. If he have chosen you

1 valued

2 he means rebuke Rom. 7.

John 21.

Matt. 14.

3 pledges

Phil. 2.

Esa. 65.

(as doubtless, dear heart, he hath done in Christ; for in you I have seen his earnest, and before me and to me you could not deny it, I know both where and when)—if, I say, he have chosen you, then neither can you nor shall you ever perish. For if you fall, he putteth under his hand: you shall not lie still: so careful is Christ your keeper over you. Never was mother so mindful over her child, as he is over you. And hath not he always been so? Speak, woman: when did he finally forget you? And will he now, trow you, in your most need do otherwise, you calling upon him and desiring to please him? Ah, my Joyce, think you God to be mutable? Is he a changeling? Doth he not love to the end them whom he loveth? Are not his gifts and calling such that he cannot repent him of them? For else were he no GOD. Rom. 11. If you should perish, then wanted he power: for I am certain his will towards you is not to be doubted of. Hath not the Spirit, which is the Spirit of truth, told you so? And will you now hearken with Eve to the lying spirit which would have you, not to despair (no, he goeth more craftily to work; howbeit to that end, if you should give ear unto it, which God forbid!) but to doubt, and stand in a mammering;<sup>1</sup> and so should you never truly love God, but serve him of a servile fear, lest he should cast you off for your unworthiness and unthankfulness: as though your thankfulness or worthiness were any causes with God, why he hath chosen you, or will finally keep you. Ah, mine own dear heart, Christ only, Christ only, and his mercy and truth! In him and for him is the cause of your election. This Christ, this mercy, this truth of God remaineth for ever, is certain for ever: and so is your election certain for ever, for ever, for ever; I say, for ever. If an angel from heaven should tell you contrary, accursed be he, accursed be he. Your thankfulness and worthiness are fruits and effects of your election, they are no causes. These fruits and effects shall be so much more fruitful and effectual, by how much you waver not. *1*carping,  
*hesita-*  
*ting*

Therefore, my dearly beloved, arise, and remember from whence you are fallen. You have a shepherd which neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. No man nor devil can pull you out of his hands. Psa. 121. Night and day he commandeth his angels to keep you. Have you forgotten what I read to you out of the Psalm, The Lord is my shepherd, I can want nothing? Do you not know that God sparred<sup>2</sup> Noah in the Ark on the outside, so that he could not get out? So hath he done to you, my good sister, so hath he done to you. Ten thousand shall fall on your right hand, and twenty on your left hand; yet no evil shall touch you. Say boldly therefore, Psa. 91. Many a time from my youth up they have fought against me, but they have not prevailed: no, nor never shall prevail, for the Lord is round about his people. And who are the people of GOD, but such as hope in him? Happy are they that hope in the Lord: and you are one of those, my dear heart; for I am assured you have Psa. 120.

hoped in the Lord. I have your words to shew most manifestly, and I know they were written unfeignedly. I need not to say, that even before God you have simply<sup>1</sup> confessed to me, and that oftentimes no less. And once if you had this hope, as you doubtless had it, though now you feel it not, yet shall you feel it again: for the anger of the Lord lasteth but a moment, but his mercy lasteth for ever. Tell me, my dear heart, who hath so weakened you? Surely not a persuasion which came from him that called you. For why should you waver? Why should you waver and be so heavy hearted? Whom look you on? On yourself? On your worthiness? On your thankfulness? On that which God requireth of you, as faith, hope, love, fear, joy, &c? Then can you not but waver indeed, for what have you as God requireth? Believe you, hope you, love you, &c. as much as you should do? No, no, nor never can in this life. Ah, my dearly beloved, have you so soon forgotten that which ever should be had in memory, namely, that when you would and should be certain and quiet in conscience, then should your faith burst throughout<sup>2</sup> all things, not only that you have in you, or else are in heaven, earth, or hell, until it come to Christ crucified, and the eternal sweet mercies and goodness of God in Christ? Here, here is the resting place: here is your spouse's bed: creep into it, and in your arms of faith embrace him: bewail your weakness, your unworthiness, your diffidence, &c. and you shall see he will turn to you. What said I, you shall *see*? Nay, I should have said you shall *feel* he will turn to you. You know that Moses, when he went into the mount to talk with God, he entered into a dark cloud; and Elias had his face covered when God passed by. Both these dear friends of God heard God, but they saw him not: but you would be preferred before them. See now, my dear heart, how covetous you are. Ah, be thankful, be thankful. But God be praised, that your covetousness is Moses' covetousness. Well, with him you shall be satisfied. But when? Forsooth, when he shall appear. Here is not the time of seeing, but, as it were, in a glass. Isaac was deceived, because he was not content with hearing only.

Therefore, to make an end of these many words, wherewith I fear me I do but trouble you from better exercise: inasmuch as you are indeed the child of God, elect in Christ before the beginning of all times; inasmuch as you are given to the custody of Christ, as one of God's most precious jewels; inasmuch as Christ is faithful, and thereto hath all power, so that you shall never perish nor one hair of your head shall not be lost; I beseech you, I pray you, I desire you, I crave at your hands with all my very heart, I ask of you with hand, pen, tongue, and mind, in Christ, through Christ, for Christ, for his name, blood, mercies, power, and truth's sake, my most entirely beloved sister, that you admit no doubting of God's final mercies towards you, howsoever you feel yourself

<sup>1</sup> sincerely

Gal. 5.

<sup>2</sup> through

Psa. 17.



But complain to God, and crave of him, as of your tender and dear Father, all things : and in that time which shall be most opportune, you shall find and feel far above that your heart or the heart of any creature can conceive, to your eternal joy. Amen, amen, amen. The good Spirit of God always keep us as his dear children : he comfort you, as I desire to be comforted, my dearly beloved, for evermore. Amen. I break up thus abruptly, because our common prayer-time calleth me. The peace of Christ dwell in both our hearts for ever. Amen.

As for the report of W. P., if it be as you hear, you must prepare to bear it. It is written on heaven's door, *Do well, and bear evil*. Be content therefore to hear whatsoever the enemy shall imagine to blot you withal. God's Holy Spirit always comfort and keep you. Amen, amen. This 8th of August ; by him that in the Lord desireth to you as well, and as much felicity, as to his own heart.

John Bradford.

To my loving brethren, B. and C.,

With their Wives and whole Families.

I beseech the ever-living God to give to you, all my good brethren and sisters, the comfort of his Holy Spirit, and the continual feeling of his mercy in Christ our Lord, now and for ever. Amen.

The world, my brethren, at this present seemeth to have the upper hand ; iniquity overfloweth, the truth and verity seemeth to be suppressed, and they which take part therewith are unjustly entreated. The cause of all this is God's anger, and mercy : his anger, because we have grievously sinned against him ; his mercy, because he here punisheth us, and as a Father nurtureth us. We have been unthankful for his word, we have contemned his kindness, we have been negligent in prayer, we have been too carnal, covetous, licentious, &c. We have not hastened too heavenward, but rather too hellward : we were fallen almost into an open contempt of God and all his good ordinances : so that of his justice he could not long forbear, but make us to feel his anger ; as now he hath done, in taking his word and true service from us, and permitting Satan to serve us with Antichristian religion, and that in such sort, that if we will not yield to it and seem to allow it in deed and outward fact, our bodies are like to be laid in prison. and our goods given we cannot tell to whom. This should we look upon as a sign of God's anger procured by our sins ; which, my good brethren, every one of us should now call to our memories oftentimes so particularly as we can, that we might

heartily lament them, repent them, hate them, ask earnestly mercy for them, and submit ourselves to bear in this life any kind of punishment which God will lay upon us for them. Thus should we do, in consideration of God's anger in this time. Now his mercy in this time of wrath is seen, and should be seen of us (my dearly beloved), in this, that God doth vouchsafe to punish us in this present life. If he should not have punished us, do not ye think that we would have continued in the evils we were in? Yea verily, we would have been worse, and have gone forwards in hardening our hearts, by impenitency, and negligence towards God and true godliness; and then if death had come, should not we have perished, both soul and body, into eternal fire and perdition? Alas, what misery should we have fallen into, if God should have suffered us to have gone forward in our evils? No greater a sign of damnation there is, than to lie in evil and sin unpunished of God: as now the Papists, my dearly beloved, are cast into Jezebel's bed of security, which of all plagues is the most grievous plague that can be. They are bastards and not sons, for they are not under God's rod of correction. A great mercy it is therefore that God doth punish us; for if he loved us not, he would not punish us. Now doth he chastise us, that we should not be damned with the world. Now doth he nurture us, because he favoureth us. Now may we think ourselves to be God's household and children, because he beginneth his chastising at us. Now calleth he us to remember our sins past. Wherefore? That we might repent and ask mercy. And why? That he might forgive us, pardon us, justify us, and make us his children; and so begin to make us here like unto Christ, that we might be like unto him elsewhere, even in heaven, where already we are set by faith with Christ, and at his coming in very deed shall enjoy his presence; when our sinful and vile bodies shall be made like to Christ's glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to make all things subject to himself.

Therefore, my brethren, let us in respect hereof, not lament, but laud God; not be sorry, but be merry; not weep, but rejoice and be glad that God doth vouchsafe to offer us his cross, thereby to come to him to endless joys and comforts. For if we suffer, we shall reign. If we confess him before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven. If we be not ashamed of his Gospel now, he will not be ashamed of us in the last day; but will be glorified in us, crowning us with crowns of glory and endless felicity. For blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Be glad, saith Peter, for the Spirit of God resteth upon you. After that ye are a little while afflicted, God will comfort, strengthen, and confirm you. And therefore, my good brethren, be not discouraged for cross, for prison, or loss of goods; for the confession of Christ's

A poc. 3.

Heb. 12.

1 Cor. 11.

1 Peter 4.

Rom. 8.

Phil. 3.

Rom. 8.

2 Tim. 3.

Matt. 10.

Matt. 5.

1 Peter 4.

1 Peter 5.

Gospel and truth, which ye have believed, and lively was taught among you in the days of our late good and most holy prince King Edward.

This is most certain : if ye lose any thing for Christ's sake, and Matt. 19. for contemning the antichristian service set up again among us ; as ye, for your parts, even in prison shall find God's great and rich mercies, far passing all worldly wealth, so shall your wives and children in this present life find and feel God's providence, more plentifully than tongue can tell ; for he will shew merciful kindness on thousands of them that love him. The good man's seed shall not go a begging his bread. Ye are good men, so many as suffer for Christ's sake. I trust ye all, my dearly beloved, will consider this gear<sup>1</sup> with yourselves, and in the cross 1 matter see God's mercy, which is more sweet, and more to be set by, than life itself ; much more then, than any muck or pelf of this world. This mercy of God should make you merry and cheerful : for the afflictions of this life are not to be compared to the joys of the Rom. 8. life prepared for you. Ye know, the way to heaven is not the wide way of the world, which windeth to the devil ; but it is a Matt. 7. strait way, which few walk in : for few live godly in Christ 2 Tim. 3. Jesus ; few regard the life to come, few remember the day of 2 Cor. 5. judgment ; few remember how Christ will deny them before his Matt. 1 Father, that do deny him here ; few consider that Christ will be ashamed of them in the last day, which are ashamed now of his truth and true service ; few cast their accounts what will be laid to their charge in the day of vengeance ; few regard the condemnation of their own consciences, in doing that which inwardly Rom. 14. they disallow ; few love God better than their goods. But I trust yet, ye are of these few, my dearly beloved ; I trust ye be of the little flock which shall inherit the kingdom of heaven ; I trust ye Luke 12. are the mourners and lamenters which shall be comforted. with comforts which never shall be taken from you, if ye now repent your former evils, if now ye strive against the evils that are in you, if now ye continue to call upon God, if now ye defile not your bodies with any idolatrous service, used in the anti-christian churches, if ye molest not the good Spirit of God, which Ephes. 4 is given you as a gage<sup>2</sup> of eternal redemption, a counsellor and 2 earnest master to lead you into all truth : which good Spirit I beseech the Father of mercy to give us all, for his dear Son's sake, Jesus Acts 20. Christ our Lord ; to whom I commend you all, and to the word of his grace, which is able to help you all, and save you all, that believe it, follow it, and serve God thereafter. And of this I would ye were all certain, that all the hairs of your heads are Matt. 6. numbered, so that not one of them shall perish ; neither shall any Job 1. man or devil be able to attempt any thing, much less to do any Psa. 104. thing to you, or any of you, before your heavenly Father which loveth you most tenderly shall give them leave ; and when he

Psa. 13.

1 Peter 5.

hath given them leave, they shall go no further than he will, nor keep you in trouble any longer than he will. Therefore cast on him all your care, for he is careful for you: only study to please him, and to keep your consciences clean, and your bodies pure from the idolatrous service, which now every where is used, and God will marvellously and mercifully defend and comfort you: which thing he do, for his name's sake in Christ our Lord. Amen.

John Bradford.

### To my good Lady Vane.

The true sense and sweet feeling of God's eternal mercies, in Christ Jesus, be ever more and more lively wrought in your heart by the Holy Ghost. Amen.

I most heartily thank you, good madam, for your comfortable letters: and whereas you would be advertised what were best to be done on your behalf concerning your three questions, the truth is, that the questions are never well seen nor answered, until the thing whereof they arise be well considered; I mean, until it be seen how great an evil the thing is. If it be once indeed in your heart perceived, upon probable and pithy places gathered out of God's book, that there was never thing upon the earth so great and so much an adversary to God's true service, to Christ's death, passion, priesthood, sacrifice, and kingdom, to the ministry of God's word and sacraments, to the church of God, to repentance, faith, and all true godliness of life, as that is whereof the questions arise (as most assuredly it is indeed), then cannot a christian heart but so much the more abhor it, and all things that in any point might seem to allow it or any thing pertaining to the same, by how much it hath the name of God's service. Again, your ladyship doth know, that as all is to be discommended and avoided, which is followed or fled from in respect of ourselves, in respect of avoiding Christ's cross; so the end of all our doings should be to Godward, to his glory, to our neighbours, to edification and good example—whereof none can be given in allowing any of the three questions by you propounded. But because this which I write now is brief, and needeth the more consideration or explication; as I doubt not of the one in you, so from me by God's grace you shall receive the other shortly. For I have already written a little book of it, which I will send unto you, in the which you shall have your questions fully answered and satisfied, and therefore I omit to write any more hereabouts presently: beseeching God our good Father to guide you, as his dear child, with his Spirit of wisdom, power, and comfort unto eternal life; that you may be strong, and rejoyce in him, and with his church, to carry Christ's cross if he shall so think it need, 1 Peter 1: which is a thing to be desired, wished, and embraced, if we looked on things

These questions were concerning the mass, wherein she desired his judgment.

He meaneth his book which he calleth the hurt of hearing masses.

after the judgment of God's word, and tried them by that touchstone. If you be accustomed to think on the brevity, vanity, and misery of this life, and on the eternity, truth and felicity of everlasting life; if you look on things after their ends, and not after their present appearance only; if you use yourself to set God's presence, power, and mercy, always before your eyes, to see them as God by every creature would you should; I doubt not but you shall find such strength and comfort in the Lord, as you shall not be shaken with all the power of Satan. God's mercy in Christ be with you, and his good Spirit guide you, for ever. Amen.

### Another Letter to the Lady Vane.

As to mine own soul, I wish to your Ladyship grace and mercy, from God our dear Father, in Christ our Lord and Saviour.

I thank God, that something he hath eased you, and mitigated his fatherly correction in us both: I would to God he had done so much in the behalf of the grief of the body to you, as he hath done to me. For, as for the soul, I trust you feel that which I pray God encrease in you, (I mean his fatherly love,) and grant that I may with you feel the same, in such degree as may please him—I will not say, as you feel, lest I should seem to ask too much at one time. God doth often much more plentifully visit, with the sense of his mercy, them that humble themselves under his mighty hand, and are sore exercised, as you long have been, than others, which to the face of the world have a more show and appearance. Therefore I wish as I do: and that, not only for mine own commodity,<sup>1</sup> but also that I might occasion you to the consideration of the goodness of God, which I by your letters do well

<sup>1</sup> *advan-  
tage*

esp; which is indeed the high way whereby, as God increaseth his gifts, so sheweth he more lively his salvation. Psalms 50, 108.

I have received God's blessing from you: the which I have partly distributed unto my three fellow prisoners, Master Farrer, Master Taylor, Master Philpot; and the residue I will bestow upon four poor souls which are imprisoned in the common gaol for religion also. As for mine own part, if I had had need, I would have served my turn also. But because I had not, nor (I thank God) have not, I have been and will be your almoner, in such sort as I have already advertised you. God reward you, and give you to find it spiritually and corporally. Because otherwise I cannot talk with you, therefore on this sort, as occasion and opportunity will serve, I am ready to shew my good will, and desire of your help and furtherance in the Lord to everlasting life; whereunto GOD bring us shortly, for his mercies' sake. Amen. Good madam, be thankful to God, as I hope you be; be earnest in prayer, continue in reading and hearing God's word; and if God's further

cross come, as therein God doth serve his providence (for else it shall not come unto you), so be certain, the same shall turn to your eternal joy and comfort. Amen.

John Bradford.

### To the Lady Vane.

The everlasting and most merciful God, which is the Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, increase in your ladyship the knowledge and love of his truth, with the gift of perseverance to continue therein to the end. Amen.

Albeit at this present I have no convenient leisure to write as should be seemly to send to your personage, yet considering your gentle good will for God's cause towards me, I thought I might be the more bold to write something, although not in such sort as I would, and perchance on your behalf might be looked for. I doubt not but that your ladyship considereth often with yourself, that you are the child of God, and a citizen of heaven by Christ; in whom God the Father, before the world was made, hath chosen you, of his own mere mercy, and not of your deserts, done or to be done. That you should with thankfulness call this to mind often, thereby to excite and stir up yourself to the love of God in his sight, and to all holiness of life in the sight of man, many things should move and occasion you justly: as, that you were born of Christian parents, that the name of God was called upon you in baptism, which is a sacrament of regeneration and adoption into<sup>1</sup> the children of God, with all other benefits which hitherto you have received. Among which, surely, your ladyship should not think the least, even the crosses that God hath hitherto exercised you withal: as, the loss of your good husband, lands, and other worldly commodities,<sup>2</sup> &c. But above all, next to Christ crucified, this is most thankfully to be considered; that God, as he hath given you patience (I trust) in your trouble, so in these dangerous days he hath given you a desire to know him, and to help them which for his sake be in trouble: for this I gather and evidently see, by your twice sending to me, which am not otherwise known to you but by name. I pray God I may be heartily thankful to him for you, and so dispose your benefits as you desire. My best I will do, by God's grace: but enough of this.

My desire is, good madam, (although I have no doubt, as I said, but that you be diligent herein,) that you would often call to mind your state before God—I mean, how that you be his child through Christ; and this I would you did for divers causes. First, that you might be quiet in conscience before him in this troublesome world, as we never can be until this be something settled. Secondly, that you might be careful to appear in his

1 to be

2 advantages

sight, and in the sight of man, as one of God's children. Thirdly, that you might in all troubles boldly, by prayer through Christ, go to him, and call him by the name of Father, with hope of his help always to your comfort. Fourthly, that you might not be dismayed if trouble come unto you, as it cannot be but more or less it must needs come: for the world loveth none, but such as be his; the devil can never suffer the children of God to be quiet. I will not speak of our mortal and familiar enemy the flesh, which ceaseth not to fight against the Spirit. But God your father, being heartily called upon, in and through Christ, as he will with his Holy Spirit help you, so will he give you the victory at the length, to your singular comfort: which I pray God you may daily more and more feel. Amen.—From the King's Bench, in haste, as appeareth.

Your ladyship's own in Christ to command,

John Bradford.

To my dear friends and brethren R. and C.,

With their Wives and Families.

The comfort of Christ, felt commonly of his children in their cross for his sake, the ever-living God work in both your hearts, my good brethren, and in the hearts of both your yoke-fellows, especially of good Mary, my good sister in the Lord. Amen.

If I had not something heard of the hazard which you are in for the gospel's sake, if you continue the profession and confession thereof, (as I trust you do and will do, and that unto the end, God enabling you, as he will doubtless for his mercies' sake, if you hope in him; for this bindeth him, as David in Christ's person witnesseth, Our fathers hoped in thee and thou deliverdst them, &c. Psa. xxii.) yet by conjectures I could not but suppose, though not so certainly, the time of suffering and probation to be at hand. For now is the power of darkness fully come upon this realm, most justly, for our sins, and abusing the light lent us of the Lord, to the setting forth of ourselves more than of God's glory; that as well we might be brought into the better knowledge of our evils, and so heartily repent, (which God grant us to do!) as also we might have more feeling and sense of our sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, by the humbling and dejecting of us, thereby to make us, as more desirous of him, so him more sweet and pleasant unto us: the which thing the good Spirit of God work sensibly in all our hearts, for God's holy name's sake. For this cause I thought it my duty, being now where I have some liberty to write, (the Lord be praised!) and hearing of you as I hear, to do that which I should have done if I had heard nothing at all: that is, to desire

you to be of good cheer and comfort in the Lord, although in the world you see cause rather to the contrary; and to go on forwards in the way of God whereunto you are entered, considering that the same cannot but so much more and more wax strait to the outward man, by how much you draw nearer the end of it. Even as in the travail of a woman, the nearer she draweth to her delivery, the more her pains increase; so it goeth with us in the Lord's way, the nearer we draw to our deliverance by death to eternal felicity. Example whereof we have, I will not say in the

John 2 . holy prophets and apostles of God, which when they were young girded themselves and went in manner whither they would, but when they waxed old, they went girded of others, whither they would not, concerning the outward man: but rather and most lively in our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose life and way was much more painful to him towards the end, than it was at the beginning. And no marvel: for Satan can something abide a man to begin well and set forwards; but rather than he should go on to the end, he will vomit his gorge and cast floods to overflow him, before he will suffer that to come to pass. Therefore, as we should not be dismayed now at this world, as though some strange thing were happened unto us, in that it is but as it was wont to be to the godly; in that the devil declareth himself after his old wont; in that we have professed no less but to forsake the world and the devil as God's very enemy; in that we learned no less at the first when we came to God's school, than to deny ourselves and to take up our cross and follow our Master, which leadeth us none other way than he himself hath gone before us: as, I say, we should not be dismayed, so we should with patience and joy go forwards, if we set before us as present the time to come, like as the wife in her travail doth the deliverance of her child, and as the saints of God did, but especially our Saviour and pattern

Heb. 12. Jesus Christ; for the apostle saith, He set before him the joy and glory to come, and therefore contemned the shame and sorrow of the cross; so if we did, we should find at the length as they found. For whom would it grieve, which hath a long journey to go, to go through a piece of foul way, if he knew that after that the way should be most pleasant, yea, the journey should be ended, and he at his resting place most happy? Who will be afraid or loth to leave a little pelf for a little time, if he knew he should shortly after receive most plentiful riches? Who will be unwilling for a little while to forsake his wife, children, or friends, &c. when he knoweth he shall shortly after be associated unto them inseparably, even after his own heart's desire? Who will be sorry to forsake this life, which cannot but be most certain of eternal life? Who loveth the shadow better than the body? Who can love this life, but they that regard not the life to come? Who can desire the dross of this world, but such as be ignorant of



the treasures of the everlasting joy in heaven? I mean, who is afraid to die, but such as hope not to live eternally? Christ hath promised pleasure, riches, joy, felicity, and all good things, to them that for his sake lose any thing, or suffer any sorrow. Matt. 9. And is he not true? How can he but be true? for guile was never found in his mouth. Alas, then, why are we so slack and slow, yea, hard of heart to believe him, promising us thus plentifully eternal blissfulness; and are so ready to believe the world, promising us many things and paying us nothing? If we will curry favour now, and halt on both knees—if so, then it promiseth us peace, quietness, and many things else. But how doth it pay this gear? Or if it pay it, with what quietness of conscience? 1 these things Or if so, how long, I pray you? Do not we see before our eyes men to die shamefully, I mean as rebels and other malefactors, which refuse to die for God's cause? What way is so sure a way to heaven, as to suffer in Christ's cause? If there be any way on horseback to heaven, surely this is the way. By many troubles, Acts 14. saith the apostle, we must enter into heaven. All that will live 2 Tim. 3. godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. For the world cannot love them that are of GOD; the devil cannot love his enemies; the world will love none but his own; but you are Christ's, therefore look for no love here. Should we look for fire to quench our thirst? And as soon shall God's true servants find peace and favour in Antichrist's regiment. Therefore, my dearly beloved, be stout in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on you his armour; stand in the liberty of Christ which you have learned; rejoice that you may be counted worthy to suffer any thing for God's cause—to all men this is not given. Your reward is great in heaven, though in earth you find nothing. The journey is almost past; you are almost in the haven, hale on apace, I beseech you, and merely hoist up your sails. Cast yourself on Christ, who careth for you. Keep company with him now still to the end: he is faithful and will never leave you, nor tempt you further than he will make you able to bear; yea, in the midst of the temptation he will make an outscape. Now pray unto him heartily, be thankful of his dignation,<sup>2</sup> rejoice in hope of the health you shall receive, and be mindful of us which are in the vanguard, 2 counting you worthy and by God's grace trust in Christ to be made able to break the ice before you, that you following may find the way more easy. God grant it may so be. Amen, amen.

Out of prison, by your brother in Christ,

John Bradford.

To *Mistress Wilkinson.*

Almighty God our most loving Father increase in your heart, my good mother and dear mistress in the Lord, his true knowledge and love in Christ, to the encouraging and comforting of your faith in these stormy days ; as necessary unto us, so profitable, if we persist unto the end—which thing God grant to us ! Amen.

My right dearly beloved, I know not what other thing to write unto you, than to desire you to be thankful unto the Lord, in that, amongst the not many of your calling and state, it pleaseth him to give you his rare blessing ; I mean, to keep you from all the filth wherewith our country is horribly defiled. This blessing assuredly is rare, as you see. But now if he shall bless you with another blessing which is more rare, I mean to call you forth as a martyr, and as a witness against this filth, I hope you will become double thankful. For a greater token commonly we have not, to judge of our election and salvation, next to Christ and faith in him, than the cross : especially when it is so glorious, as on this sort to suffer any thing, but chiefly loss of this life, which indeed is never found till it be so lost ; except the grain of wheat fall and be dead, it remaineth fruitless. You know how that he which was rapt into the third heaven, and did know what he wrote, doth say, that as the corn liveth not except it be dead and cast into the earth, so truly our bodies. And therefore the cross should so

<sup>1</sup> *frighten* little fear<sup>1</sup> us, that even death itself should altogether be desired of us, as the tailor which putteth off our rags, and arrayeth us with the royal robes of immortality, incorruption, and glory. Great

<sup>Rom. 8.</sup> shame it should be for us, that all the whole creatures of God should desire, yea, groan in their kind for our liberty, and we ourselves to loth it : as doubtless we do, if, for the cross, yea, for death

<sup>2</sup> *hinder* itself, we with joy swallow not up all sorrow that might let<sup>2</sup> us from following the Lord's calling, and obeying the Lord's providence ; whereby doubtless all crosses and death itself doth come, and not by hap or chance. In consideration whereof, right dear mother, in that this providence stretcheth itself so unto us and for us, that even the hairs of our heads are numbered with GOD, not one of them to fall to our hurt ; surely we declare ourselves very faint in faith, if we receive not such comfort, that we can willingly offer ourselves to the Lord, and cast our whole care upon his back, honouring him with this honour, that he is and ever will be careful for us and all we have, as for his dear children. Be therefore of good cheer, even in the midst of these miseries ; be thankful to the Lord, and prepare yourself for a further trial ; which if God send you, as I hope, so do you believe, that God therein will help and comfort you, and make you able to bear whatsoever shall hap-

pen. And thus much, having this opportunity, I thought good to write; praying God our father to recompence into your bosom all the good that ever you have done, to me especially, and to many others, both in this time of trouble and always heretofore.

Your own in the Lord,

John Bradford.

### To Mistress Wilkinson.

The Lord of mercy, in Christ his Son our Saviour and only comforter, be with you all now and for ever. Amen.

Although presently I have little time, by reason of this bringer's short departing, and less occasion of necessary matter to write unto you; yet in that it hath pleased God to offer me more liberty to write than before I had, (as this reader can report,) I thought good to signify unto you the same, with the acknowledging of the receipt of your tokens; for the which I neither can nor will go about to flatter you with thanks, in that I know you look for none at mine hands, God being the cause and his word the end wherefore you did so. To him, I know, you would have me thankful; and I beseech you pray that I may so be; and not only thankful for myself and his benefits towards me, but also thankful for you, to whom God hath given to fear his name and love his truth. The which gifts far pass the riches of the world: for they shall perish, and be left we know not unto whom; but these gifts of God, as they last for ever, so they make happy the possessors of the same. Go to, therefore, and pray God to increase them of his goodness, as of his mercy he hath begun them in you; and indeed so he will. For to whom he giveth the earnest of willing, to the same he will give the grace of continuing, if we reject not the same; as we do when we be double-hearted, and part our fear and love, as did the Samaritans, which feared God and their Adrammelech, loved God's religion and their old country customs, &c. If this doubleness come on us, that we fear more the world and couple it with the fear of God; if we love the muck of this world and couple it with the love of God's religion; then part we stake,<sup>1</sup> then mar we the market, then the Spirit of GOD will depart, then play we as Ananias and Sapphira did, and so sooner or later shall fall to perdition with them. But, as I said, I think no such thing of you: I think of you as of God's dear children, whose hearts are whole with the Lord. And therefore I write not this as though you were such, but because it is God's goodness you be not such, because Satan would have you such, and because many that were as you now be are such. Therefore to make you, as thankful, so careful to continue, but yet so that your care be cast all on the Lord, is the only cause I write this—and would write more, but that the

<sup>2</sup>Kings 17

<sup>1</sup> we attempt to compound with God. Acts 5.

bringer cannot tarry. And therefore hastily and abruptly I make an end; beseeching Almighty GOD, in our Redeemer Jesus Christ, to be with you, and with his Holy Spirit comfort you all, and help my good sister, Mistress W., to be a happy and a good mother of the child, of which as yet I hear God hath not delivered her.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

John Bradford.

To my dear brother in the Lord, Master Richard Hopkins,

And his wife, dwelling in Coventry; and other my faithful brethren and sisters, professors of God's holy Gospel there and thereabouts.

The peace which Christ left to his church and to every true member of the same, the Holy Spirit (the guide of God's children) so engraft in your heart, and in the heart of your good wife, and of all my good brethren and sisters about you, that unfeignedly ye may, in respect thereof, contemn all worldly peace; which is contrary to that peace that I speak of, and driveth it utterly out of the hearts of all those which would patch them both together. For we cannot serve two masters: no man can serve GOD and mammon: Christ's peace cannot be kept with this world's peace. God therefore of his mercy do I beseech to give unto you his peace, which passeth all understanding; and so keep your hearts and minds, that they may be pure habitacles and mansions for the Holy Spirit, yea, for the blessed Trinity, who hath promised to come and dwell in all them that love Christ and keep his sayings.

My dearly beloved, the time is now come wherein trial is made of men that have professed to love Christ, and would have been counted keepers of his testimonies. But, weal away, the tenth person persevereth not; the more part do part stakes<sup>2</sup> with the papists and protestants, so that they are become mangy mongrels, to the infecting of all that company with them, and to their no small peril. For they pretend<sup>3</sup> outwardly popery, going to mass with the papists and carrying<sup>4</sup> with them personally at their Antichristian and idolatrous service: but with their hearts, say they, and with their spirits, they serve the Lord. And so by this means as they save their pigs which they would not lose, I mean their worldly pelf, so they would please the protestants, and be counted with them for gospellers—yea marry would they. But, mine own beloved in the Lord, flee from such persons, as from men most perilous and pernicious both before God and man; for they are false to both, and true to neither. To the magistrates they are false, pretending one thing and meaning clean contrary. To God

John 14.  
Rom. 8.

Matt. 6.

Phil. 4.

John 14.

1 well a  
day, alas  
2 com-  
pound,  
share fa-  
vours

3 exhibit  
The mongrel  
ex-  
cuse.  
4 acting

Matt. 8.

Company  
not with  
mongrels.

Mongrels  
are false  
both to  
God and  
man.

they are most untrue, giving him but a piece which should have the whole. I would they would tell me who made their bodies. Did not GOD, as well as their spirits and souls? And who keepeth both? Doth not he still? And alas, shall not he have the service of the body, but it must be given to serve the new-found god of Antichrist's invention? Did not Christ buy both our souls and bodies? And wherewith? with any less price than with his precious blood? Ah wretches then that we be, if we will defile either part with the rose-coloured whore of Babylon's filthy mass abomination. It had been better for us never to have been washed, than so to wallow ourselves in the filthy puddle of popery. It had been better never to have known the truth, than thus to betray it. Surely, surely, let such men fear that their latter end be not worse than the beginning. Their own conscience now accuseth them before God, if so be they have any conscience, that they are but dissemblers and hypocrites to God and man. For all the cloaks they make they cannot avoid this, but that their going to church and to mass is of self-love: that is, they go thither because they would avoid the cross. They go thither because they would be out of trouble. They seek neither the queen's highness nor her laws, (which in this point cannot bind the conscience to obey, because they are contrary to God's laws, which bid us often to flee idolatry and worshipping him after men's devices;)—they seek neither, I say, the laws, if there were any, neither their brethren's commodity,<sup>1</sup> for none cometh thereby, neither godliness or good example; for there can be none found in going to mass, &c., but horrible offences and woe to them that give them; but they seek their own selves, their own ease, their escaping the cross, &c. When they have made all the excuses they can, their own conscience will accuse them of this, that their going to church is only because they seek themselves. For if there would no trouble ensue for tarrying away, (I appeal to their conscience, would they come thither? Never, I dare say.

Therefore, as I said, they seek themselves; they would not carry the cross. And hereof their own conscience, if they have any conscience, doth accuse them. Now if their conscience accuse them at this present, what will it do before the judgment seat of Christ? Who will then excuse it, when Christ shall appear in judgment, and shall begin to be ashamed of them then, which now here are ashamed of him? Who then, I say, will excuse these mass-gospellers' consciences? Will the queen's highness? She shall then have more to do for herself, than, without hearty and speedy repentance, she can ever be able to answer, though Peter, Paul, Mary, James, John the pope and all his prelates, take her part, with all the singing Sir Johns that ever were, are, and shall be. Will the Lord Chancellor and prelates of the realm excuse them there? Nay, nay, they are like then to

God will have the whole service of soul and body. He made both. He keepeth both. He redeemed both.

Apoc. 18.  
2 Pet. 2.  
Heb. 6. 10.  
Matt. 12.  
Luke 11.

Mongrels sin against their own consciences.

The only cause why mongrels go to mass, is to avoid the cross.

1 Cor. 10.  
Acts 5.  
Deut. 12.  
1 advantage

Matt. 18.

Luke 9. 12.  
Mark 8.

smart for it so sore, as I would not be in their places for all the whole world. Will the laws of the realm, the nobility, gentlemen, justices of peace, &c. excuse our gospel mass-mongers' conscience then? Nay, God knoweth, they can do little there but quake and fear for the heavy vengeance of God like to fall upon them. Will their goods, lands, and possessions, the which they by their dissembling have saved, will these serve to excuse them? No, no, God is no merchant, as our mass priests be. Will masses or trentals and such trash serve? No, verily, the haunters of this gear then shall be horribly ashamed. Will the Catholic church excuse them? Nay, it will most of all accuse them; as will all the good fathers, patriarchs, apostles, prophets, martyrs, confessors, and saints, with all the good doctors, and good general councils: all these already condemn the mass, and all that ever useth it as it is now, being of all idols that ever was, the most abominable and blasphemous to Christ and his priesthood, manhood and sacrifice; for it maketh the priest, that saith mass, God's fellow, and better than Christ, for the offerer is always better or equivalent to the thing offered. If therefore the priest take upon him there to offer up Christ, as they boldly affirm they do, then must he needs be better, or equal with Christ. Oh that they would shew but one iota of the Scripture of God calling them to this dignity, or of their authority to offer up Christ for the quick and dead, and to apply the benefit and virtue of his death and passion to whom they will. Surely if this were true, as is most false and blasphemous, prate they at their pleasure to the contrary, then it made no matter at all, whether Christ were our friend or no, if so be the mass priest were our friend: for he can apply us Christ's merits by his mass if he will, and when he will, and therefore we need little to care for Christ's friendship. They can make him when they will and where they will. Lo here he is, there he is, say they: but Believe them not, saith Christ; believe them not, believe them not, saith he. For in his human nature and body, which was made of the substance of the Virgin's body and not of bread, in this body, I say, he is, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty in heaven; from whence, and not from the pix, shall he come to judge both the quick and dead. In the mean season, Heaven, saith St. Peter, must receive him. And, as Paul saith, he prayeth for us, and now is not seen elsewhere or otherwise seen than by faith there, until he shall be seen as he is, to the salvation of them that look for his coming, which I trust be not far off. For if the day of the Lord drew near in the apostles' time, which is now above fifteen hundred years past, it cannot be, I trust, long hence now; I trust our Redeemer's coming is at hand. Then these mass sayers and seers shall shake and cry to the hills, Hide us from the fierce wrath of the Lamb, if they repent not in time. Then will neither gold nor goods, friendship nor fellowship,

The most abominable on earth is the mass. The mass-priest is Christ's fellow.

Heb. 5.

The mass-priest's friendship is better than Christ's.

The mass-priest is above God, for he can make God.

Matt. 24.

Acts 3.

Rom. 8.

Heb. 7.

Heb. 9.

1 Thes. 5.

Luke 21.

Apc. 6.

lordship nor authority, power nor pleasure, unity nor antiquity, custom nor counsel, doctors, decrees, nor any man's device serve. The word, which the Lord hath spoken, in that day shall judge; the word, I say, of God in that day shall judge. And what saith it of idolatry and idolaters? Saith it not, Flee from it? And further, that they shall be damned? Oh terrible sentence to all mass-mongers, and worshippers of things made with the hands of bakers, carpenters, &c. This word of God knoweth no more oblations or sacrifices for sin, but one only which Christ himself offered, never more to be re-offered; but in remembrance thereof his supper to be eaten sacramentally and spiritually, according to Christ's institution; which is so perverted now, that there is nothing in it simply according to the judge, I mean the word of God. It were good for men to agree with their adversary the word of God, now whilst they be in the way with it; lest if they linger, it will deliver them to the judge Christ, who will commit them to the jailor, and so they shall be cast into prison, and never come out thence till they have paid the uttermost farthing, that is, never.

My dearly beloved, therefore mark the word; hearken to the word; it alloweth no massing, no such sacrificing nor worshipping of Christ with tapers, candles, topes, canopies, &c. It alloweth no Latin service, no images in the temples, no praying to saints dead, no praying for the dead. It alloweth no such dissimulation as a great many use now outwardly. If any withdraw himself, my soul, saith the Holy Ghost, shall have no pleasure in him. It alloweth not the love of this world, which maketh men to do many times against their consciences: for in them that love the world, the love of God abideth not. It alloweth not gatherers elsewhere than with Christ, but saith, they scatter abroad. It alloweth no lukewarm gentlemen: but if God be God, then follow him; if Baal and a piece of bread be GOD, then follow it. It alloweth not faith in the heart, that hath not confession in the mouth. It alloweth no disciples that will not deny themselves, that will not take up their cross and follow Christ. It alloweth not the seeking of ourselves, or of our own ease and commodity. It alloweth not the more part, but the better part. It alloweth not unity, except it be in verity. It alloweth no obedience to any, which cannot be done without disobedience to GOD. It alloweth no church that is not the spouse of Christ, and hearkeneth not to his voice only. It alloweth no doctor that speaketh against it. It alloweth no general council, that followeth not in all things. Summâ,<sup>1</sup> it alloweth no angel—much more then any such as should teach any other thing than Moses, the prophets, Christ Jesus and his apostles, have taught and left us to look upon, in the written word of God, the holy books of the Bible; but curseth all that teach, not only contrary, but also any other doctrine. It saith

John 12.

The word of God shall be our judge. 1 Cor. 10. 1 Cor. 6.

Heb. 7. 9. 10.

Matt. 5.

In all things hearken to the word of God as did the Thess. Acts 17.

Heb. 10.

1 John 2.

Matt. 12.

Apoc. 3. 1 Kin. 18. Rom. 10. Matt. 16. Mark 8. Luke 9. 14. Phil. 2. Matt. 7. 2. Rom. 16. Acts 4. 5. Eph. 5. John 10.

Gal. 1. 1 in short

1 Tim. 6. Matt. 7.

Jer. 8. they are fools, unwise, proud, that will not consent to the sound  
 Rom. 16. word and doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and biddeth and  
 commandeth us to flee from such.

Therefore obey this commandment: company not with them, specially in their church service, but flee from them; for in what thing consent they to Christ's doctrine? He biddeth us pray in a tongue to edify; they command contrary. He biddeth us call upon his Father in his name when we pray; they bid us run to Mary, Peter, &c. He biddeth us use his Supper in the remembrance of his death and passion, preaching it out till he come; whereby he doth us to wit,<sup>1</sup> that corporally he is not there in the form of bread; therefore saith Paul, Till he come. He willeth us to eat of the bread, calling it bread after consecration; and drink of that cup, all, making no exception, so that we do it worthily: that is, take it as the sacrament of his body and blood broke and shed for our sins, and not as the body itself, and blood itself, without bread, without wine, but as the sacrament of his body and blood; whereby he doth represent, and unto our faith give and obsign<sup>2</sup> unto us, himself wholly, with all the merits and glory of his body and blood. But they forbid utterly the use of the supper to all but to their shavelings, except it be once in the year, and then also the cup they take from us; they never preach forth the Lord's death but in mocks and mows.<sup>3</sup> They take away all the sacrament by their transubstantiation; for they take away the element, and so the sacrament. To be short, they most horribly abuse this holy ordinance of the Lord by adoration, reservation, oblation, ostentation, &c. In nothing they are contented with the simplicity of God's word. They add to and take from at their pleasure, and therefore the plagues of God will fall upon them at the length, and upon all that will take their part. They seek not Christ nor his glory; for, you see, they utterly have cast away his word, and therefore, as the prophet saith, there is no wisdom in them. They follow the strumpet church and bawdy spouse of Antichrist, which they call the Catholic church; whose foundation and pillars is the devil, and his daughter the mass, with his children the pope and his prelates. Their laws are craft and cruelty; their weapons are lying and murder; their end and study is their own glory, fame, wealth, rest and possessions. For if a man speak nor do nothing against these, though he be a sodomite, an adulterer, an usurer, &c. it forceth not; he shall be quiet enough, no man shall trouble him. But if any one speak any thing to God's glory, which cannot stand without the overthrow of man's glory, then shall he be disquieted, imprisoned, and troubled, (except he will play mum and put his finger upon his mouth,) although the same be a most quiet and godly man. So that easily a man may see, how that they be Antichrist's church, and sworn soldiers to the pope and his spouse,

1 Cor. 14.  
 Matt. 6.  
 John 14.15.  
 Matt. 26.  
 Luke 12.  
 1 Cor. 11.  
 1 causes  
 us to  
 know

The fruits  
 that follow  
 the worthy  
 receiving  
 of the  
 Lord's  
 Supper.  
 2 seal

3 fantas-  
 tic ges-  
 tures  
 Transub-  
 stantiation  
 taketh  
 away the  
 Sacrament

Apoc. 22.  
 John 5.

Jer. 8.  
 Deut. 4.  
 Apoc. 18.

Job 1.



and not to Christ and his church : for then would they not cast away God's word ; then would they be no more adversaries to his glory, which chiefly consisteth in obedience to his word. Therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, seem not to allow this or any part of the pelf of this Romish church and synagogue of Satan. Halt not on both knees, for halting will bring you out of the way ; but, like valiant champions of the Lord, confess, confess, I say, with your mouth, as occasion serveth, and as your vocation requireth, the hope and faith you have and feel in your heart.

But you will say, that so to do is perilous ; you shall by that means lose your liberty, your lands, your goods, your friends, your name, your life, &c. and so shall your children be left in miserable state, &c. To this I answer, my good brethren, that you have professed in baptism to fight under the standard of your captain Christ ; and will you now for peril's sake leave your Lord? You made a solemn vow that you would forsake the world ; and will you be forsworn, and run to embrace it now? You sware and promised to leave all and follow Christ ; and will you now leave him, for your father, your mother, your children, your lands, your life, &c. He that hateth not these, saith Christ, is not worthy of me. He that forsaketh not these and himself also, and withal taketh not up his cross and followeth him, the same shall be none of his disciples. Therefore either bid Christ adieu, be forsworn, and run to the devil quick ; or else say, as a Christian should say, that wife, children, goods, life, &c. are not too dear unto you in respect of Christ, who is your portion and inheritance. Let the worldlings, which have no hope of eternal life, fear perils of loss of lands, goods, life, &c. Here is not our home, we are here but pilgrims and strangers ; this life is but the desert and wilderness, to the land of rest. We look for a city, whose workman is GOD himself. We are now dwellers in the tents of Kedar. We are now in warfare, in travail and labour, whereto we were born as the bird to fly. We sorrow and sigh, desiring the dissolution of our bodies, and the putting off of corruption that we might put on incorruption. The way we walk in is strait and narrow, and therefore not easy to our enemy the corrupt flesh : but yet we must walk on ; for if we hearken to our enemy, we shall be served not friendly. Let them walk the wide way, that are ruled by their enemies ; let us be ruled by our friends, and walk the strait way, whose end is weal, as the other is woe. The time of our suffering is but short, as the time of their ease is not long ; but the time of our rejoicing shall be endless, as the time of their torments shall be ever and intolerable. Our breakfast is sharp, but our supper is sweet. The afflictions of this life may not be compared in any part to the glory that shall be revealed unto us. This is certain : if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with him ; if we confess him, he will confess us, and that before his Father in heaven, and all his

1 Kin. 18  
Heb. 12.  
Matt. 10. 16  
Mark 8.  
Luke 9. 14.  
2 Tim. 3.  
Rom. 10.  
1 Pet. 3.

Matt. 16. 19  
Matt. 10.  
Mark 8.  
Luke 9.

Acts 10.  
Psa. 119.  
Psa. 49.  
Heb. 11. 12.  
Psa. 119. 39

Heb. 11.  
Psa. 126.  
Job 9.  
Psa. 90.  
Job 5.  
2 Cor. 5.  
Rom. 8.  
Phil. 1.  
Matt. 7.  
Luke 13.  
2 Cor. 4.  
John 16.  
Matt. 25.

Rom. 8.  
2 Tim. 3.  
Matt. 10.

angels and saints, saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning. There shall be joy, mirth, pleasure, solace, melody, and all kind of beatitude and felicity, such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man is able in any point to conceive it as it is. In respect of this and of the joy set before us, should not we run our race, though it be something rough? Did not Moses so, the prophets so, Christ so, the apostles so, the martyrs so, and the confessors so? They were drunken with the sweetness of this gear, and therefore they contemned all that man and devils could do to them. Their souls thirsted after the Lord and his tabernacles, and therefore their lives and goods were not too dear to them. Read the 2d to the Hebrews, and the 2d of the Maccabees the 7th chapter; and let us go the same way, that is, by many tribulations. Let us labour to enter into the kingdom of heaven; for all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.

Think therefore the cross, if it come for confession of Christ, no strange thing to God's children; but rather take it as the Lord's medicine, by the which he helpeth our infirmities, and setteth forth his glory. Our sins have deserved cross upon cross; now if God give us his cross to suffer for his truth and confessing him, as he doth by it bury our sins, so doth he glorify us, making us like to Christ here, that we may be like unto him elsewhere; for if we be partakers of the affliction, we shall be partakers of the consolation; if we be like in ignominy, we shall be like in glory. Great cause we have to give thanks to God for lending us liberty, lands, goods, wife, children, life, &c. thus long; so that we shall be guilty of ingratitude, if he now shall come and take the same away, except we be cheerful and content. God hath given, and God hath taken away, saith Job; as it pleaseth the Lord, so be it done. And should not we do this, especially when the Lord taketh these away of love, to try us and prove us, whether we be faithful lovers or strumpets, that is, whether we love him better than his gifts or otherwise? This is a truth of all truths to be laid up in our hearts, that that is not lost which seemeth so to be for the confession of Christ. In this life your children shall find God's plentiful blessing upon them, when you are gone, and all your goods taken away. God is so good, that he helpeth the young ravens before they can fly, and feedeth them when their dams have most unkindly left them; and trow ye that God, which is the God of the widows and fatherless children, will not specially have a care for the babes of his dear saints, which die or lose any thing for conscience to him? Oh, my dearly beloved, therefore look up with the eyes of faith. Consider not things present, but rather things to come. Be content now to go whither God shall gird and lead us. Let us now cast ourselves wholly into his hands, with our wives, children, and all that ever we have. Let us

Matt. 25.  
Apo. 7. 14.  
19. 20. 21.  
2 Cor. 2.  
Esa. 64.  
Heb. 12.

Psa. 86.

Psa. 84.  
41. 68.

Acts 14.  
2 Tim. 3.

1 Pet. 4.

Psa. 18.  
Rom. 8,  
2 Cor. 1  
2 Cor. 15

Job 1,

Deut. 13,

Read the  
history of  
the widow,  
2 Kings 4,  
Psa. 37.  
Psa. 147.

Psa. 68.  
2 Cor. 4.  
John 21.  
1 Pet. 5.  
Psa. 55.  
Matt. 6.  
Luke 12.

be sure the hairs of our heads are numbered, so that one hair shall not perish without the good will of our dear father; who hath commanded his angels to pitch their tents about us, and in their hands to take and hold us up, that we shall not hurt as much as our foot against a stone. Let us use earnest prayer; let us heartily repent; let us hearken diligently to God's word; let us keep ourselves pure from all uncleanness both of spirit and body; let us flee from all evil, and all appearance of evil; let us be diligent in our vocation and in doing good to all men, especially to them that be of the household of faith; let us live in peace with all men, as much as is in us. And the Lord of peace give us his peace and that for evermore. Amen. I pray you remember me, your poor afflicted brother, in your hearty prayers to God.—This 2d of September.

Matt. 10.  
Psa. 91.

Eph. 6.  
Luke 13.  
Deut. 6.  
1 Cor. 7.  
1 Thes. 5.  
Matt. 25.  
1 Tim. 5.  
Rom. 12.  
Rom. 16.

John Bradford.

Another Letter to Master Richard Hopkins,

Then Sheriff of Coventry, and prisoner in the Fleet, for the faithful and constant confessing of God's holy Gospel.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, I wish unto you, as unto mine own brother, yea, as to mine own heart-root, God's merey and the feeling of the same plentifully in Christ our sweet Saviour; who gave himself a ransom for our sins, and price for our redemption—praised therefore be his holy name for ever and ever. Amen.

I will not go about to excuse myself for not sending unto you, hitherto suffering for the Lord's sake, as you do, to the comfort of me and of all that love you in the truth; but rather accuse myself both before GOD and you, desiring of you forgiveness, and with me to pray to GOD for pardon of this my unkind forgetting you, and all other my sins, which I beseech the Lord in his mercy to do away for his Christ's sake. Amen. Now to make amends to you-ward, I would be glad if I could; but because I cannot, I shall heartily desire you to accept the will, and this which I shall now write unto you thereafter—I mean, after my will and not after the deed to accept and take it. At this present, my dear heart in the Lord, you are in a blessed state, although it seem otherwise to you, or rather unto your old Adam; the which I dare now be so bold as to discern<sup>1</sup> from you, because you would have him not only discerned,<sup>1</sup> but also utterly destroyed. For if God be true, then is his word true. Now his word pronounceth of your state that it is happy; therefore it must needs be so. To prove this, I think it need not:<sup>2</sup> for you know that the Holy Ghost saith, that they are happy which suffer for righteousness sake; and that God's glory and Spirit resteth on them which suffer for conscience to God.

<sup>1</sup> *distinct*  
*guish*

<sup>2</sup> *it is not*  
*needful*

Now this you cannot but know, that this your suffering is for righteousness sake, and for conscience to Godwards; for else you might be out of trouble even out of hand.<sup>1</sup> I know in very deed that you have and feel your unthankfulness to God, and other sins, to witness to you that you have deserved this imprisonment and lack of liberty betwixt God and yourself; and I would you so would confess unto God in your prayers, with petition for pardon and thanksgiving for his correcting you here. But you know that the magistrates do not persecute in you your sins, your unthankfulness, &c., but they persecute in you Christ himself, his righteousness, his verity; and therefore happy be you, that have found such favour with God your Father, as to account you worthy to suffer for his sake in the sight of man; surely you shall rejoice therefore one day with a joy unspeakable in the sight of man also.

You may think yourself born in a blessed time, that have found this grace with God, to be a vessel of honour to suffer with his saints, yea, with his Son. My beloved, God hath not done so with many. The apostle saith, Not many noble, not many rich, not many wise in the world hath the Lord God chosen. Oh then what cause have you to rejoice, that amongst the not many he hath chosen you to be one. For this cause hath God placed you in your office, that therefore you might the more see his special dignation<sup>2</sup> and love towards you. It had not been so great a thing for Master Hopkins to have suffered as Master Hopkins, as it is for Master Hopkins also to suffer as Master Sheriff. Oh happy day that you were made sheriff; by the which, as God in this world would promote you to a more honourable degree, so by suffering in this room<sup>3</sup> he hath exalted you in heaven, and in the sight of his church and children, to a much more excellent glory. When was it read, that a sheriff of a city hath suffered for the Lord's sake? Where read we of any sheriff that hath been cast in prison for conscience to Godwards? How could God have dealt more lovingly with you, than herein he hath done? To the end of the world it shall be written for a memorial to your praise, that Richard Hopkins, sheriff of Coventry, for conscience to do his office before God, was cast into the Fleet, and there kept prisoner a long time. Happy, and twice happy are you, if herefore<sup>4</sup> you may give your life. Never could you have attained to this promotion on this sort, out of that office. How do you preach now, not only to all men, but specially to magistrates in this realm? Who would ever have thought that you should have been the first magistrate, that for Christ's sake should have lost any thing? As I said before therefore I say again, that your state is happy. Good brother, before God I write the truth unto you, my conscience bearing me witness, that you are in a most happy state with the Lord and before his sight.

Be thankful therefore, rejoice in your trouble, pray for patience,

<sup>1</sup> *immediately*

<sup>1</sup> *Cor. 1.*

<sup>2</sup> *choice*

<sup>3</sup> *place, office*

<sup>4</sup> *for this*

persevere to the end, let patience have her perfect work. If you want<sup>1</sup> this wisdom and power, ask it of God, who will give it to you in his good time. Hope still in him : yea, if he should slay you, yet trust in him with Job, and you shall perceive that the end will be to find him merciful and full of compassion ; for he will not break promise with you, which hitherto did never so with any. He is with you in trouble ; he heareth you calling upon him ; yea, before you call, your desires are not only known but accepted through Christ. If now and then he hide his face from you, it is but to provoke your appetite, to make you the more to long for him. This is most true, he is a-coming and will come, he will not be long. But if for a time he seem to tarry, yet stand you still, and you shall see the wonderful works of the Lord. Oh, my beloved, wherefore should you be heavy ? Is not Christ Emmanuel God with us ? Shall you not find that as he is true in saying, In the world you shall have trouble, so is he in saying, In me you shall have comfort ! He doth not swear only that trouble will come, but withal he sweareth that comfort shall ensue. And what comfort ! Such a comfort as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive. Oh great comfort ! who shall have this ? Forsooth they that suffer for the Lord. And are not you one of them ? Yea, verily, are you. Then, as I said, happy, happy, and happy again are you, my dearly beloved in the Lord. You now suffer with the Lord ; surely you shall be glorified with him. Call upon God therefore now in your trouble, and he will hear you, yea, deliver you, in such sort as most shall make both to his and your glory also. And in this calling I heartily pray you to pray for me, your fellow in affliction. Now we be both going in the high way to heaven, for by many afflictions must we enter in thither ; whither God bring us, for his mercies' sake. Amen, amen.

Your fellow in affliction,

John Bradford.

### To my Dear Fathers

Doctor Cranmer, Doctor Ridley, Doctor Latimer, prisoners in Oxford for the testimony of the Lord Jesus and his holy Gospel.

Almighty God our heavenly Father more and more kindle our hearts and affections with his love ; that our greatest cross may be, to be absent from him and strangers from our home, and that we may godly contend more and more to please him. Amen.

As always I have had great cause to praise our dear Father through Christ, so methinks I have more and more, in seeing

more likely the end of my life (which is due for my sin,) to be through the exceeding grace of Christ a testimony of God's truth. Thus the Lord dealeth not with every body; not that every body hath not more deserved at God's hands than I, which have deserved more vengeance than any other, I know, of my time and state; but that by me I hope the Lord will make the riches of his grace, to his glory, to be seen more excellent. With me therefore I humbly beseech you all, my most dear fathers in God, to give thanks for me; and, as you do, still to pray for me that the Lord, as for his love's sake in Christ he hath begun his good work in me, even so, of and for the same his love's sake in Christ, he would make it perfect, and make me continue to the end—as I hope he will, for his mercy and truth endureth for ever.

As for your parts, in that it is commonly thought your staff standeth next to the door, ye have the more cause to rejoice and be glad, as they which shall come to your fellows under the altar: to the which society God, with you, bring me also in his mercy, when it shall be his good pleasure.—I have received many good things from you, my good lord, master, and dear father, N. Ridley; fruits, I mean, of your godly labours. All which I send unto you again by this bringer: one thing except, which he can tell, I do keep, upon your further pleasure to be known therein.

And herewithal I send unto you a little treatise which I have made, that you might peruse the same; and not only you, but also ye, my other most dear and reverend fathers in the Lord for ever, to give to it your approbation as ye may think good. All the prisoners hereabouts, in manner, have seen it and read it; and as therein they agree with me, nay rather with the truth, so they are ready, and will be, to signify it, as they shall see you give them example. The matter may be thought not so necessary as I seem to make it. But yet if ye knew the great evil that is like hereafter to come to the posterity by these men, as partly this bringer can signify unto you, surely then could ye not but be most willing to put hereto your helping hands. The which thing that I might more occasion you to perceive, I have sent you here a writing of Harry Hart's own hand; whereby ye may see how Christ's glory and grace is like to lose much light, if that your sheep *quondam* be not something holpen by them which love God, and are able to prove that all good is to be attributed only and wholly to God's grace and mercy in Christ, without other respect of worthiness than Christ's merits. The effects of salvation they so mingle and confound with the cause, that if it be not seen to, more hurt will come by them than ever came by the papists; inasmuch as their life commendeth them to the world more than the papists. God is my witness, that I write not this but because I would God's glory, and the good of his people. In free-will they are plain papists, yea, pelagians: and ye know that modicum

This was  
the chiefest  
maintainer  
of man's  
free will,  
and enemy  
to God's  
free grace.

fermenti totam massam corrumpit. They utterly contemn all learning.\* But hereof shall this bringer shew you more. As to the chief captains therefore of Christ's church here, I complain of it unto you: as truly I must do of you even unto GOD in the last day, if ye will not, as ye can, help something ut veritas doctrinæ maneat apud posteros in this behalf; as ye have done on the behalf of matters expugned by the papists. God for his mercy in Christ guide you, my most dearly beloved fathers, with his Holy Spirit, here and in all other things, as most may make to his glory and the commodity of his church. Amen.

Upon this occasion Master Ridley wrote a learned and godly treatise of God's election and predestination.

All here, God therefore be praised, prepare themselves willingly to pledge our captain Christ, even when he will and how he will. By your good prayers we shall all fare the better; and therefore we all pray you to continue to cry to God for us, as we, God willing, do and will remember you.—My brethren, here with me, have thought it their duty to signify this need to be no less than I make it, to prevent the plantations which may take root by these men.

Yours in the Lord,

Robert Ferrar,  
Rowland Taylor,

John Bradford,  
John Philpot.

\* This is well known to all those which have had to do with them, in disputations or otherwise: for the writings and authority of the learned they have utterly rejected and despised.

### To Master Shalcross and his Wife

Dwelling in Lancashire.

The peace of conscience in Christ, and through faith in his blood, which as it passeth and is far better than any worldly riches or joy, so is it to be redeemed with the loss of the dearest treasures we have, rather than we should lose it; this peace I wish unto you, good Master Shalcross, and unto your good yoke-fellow, my good sister in the Lord, now and for ever. Amen.

Hitherto although I could not write unto you, yet, as I trust you pray for me, so I have not been forgetful of you in my poor prayers to Almighty GOD, my dear father through Christ; to whom I give humble praises that he hath given you grace as yet, for so I hear, to keep yourself undefiled in his service, which far differeth from the Romish rags revived of late (and justly, for our sins and unthankful using his true religion and holy ceremonies), once again in place and use amongst us. In token

whereof, (I mean, that I have not been forgetful of you), I thought good now, when I may write, to signify the same, as well to renew our mutual love in GOD and care one for another by hearty prayer, as to excite and provoke you both to thankfulness for God's graces hitherto, especially in the point before spoken of, and to be diligent and wary that you unto the end continue in the same; for you know that perseverance in godliness and purity is required of us, and that none other shall be crowned but such as fight lawfully.

Go to, therefore, and fight on a good fight, stoutly and manfully; that is, as you know God is not to be worshipped and served but after his word written, and not after unwritten verities, or the device, phantasy, and pleasures of men or women, in what state soever they be, accordingly behave yourself, as inwardly in God's sight, so outwardly before your brethren. Seem not to approve by your outward man, that which the inward man detesteth. It is not enough to believe with the heart, except the mouth and fact confess the same. Nor it is not enough with the mouth to acknowledge a verity, and by our fact and deed to destroy the same. Paul speaketh sometimes of deniers of God, not only with their lips and tongue, but also with their deed and life. Let not the world or the more part of men be an example to you to follow them, or do as they do in the service of God. Christ saith, Follow me, speaking of himself, which is the pattern and sampler<sup>1</sup> we should set before us, and not the world or more part, which windeth the wide and broad way, whose end doth lead to perdition and everlasting woe: but rather let the example of such as walk in the narrow and strait way which, bringeth to life endless, encourage you to walk with them, although the number of them be but few, and the personages of them be utterly contemned with the world and in the world; which world cannot love, no, not know indeed, the children of God, because it cannot receive the Spirit of God; and therefore, as the ape her young ones, so it, (the world, I mean), doth think her own birds the fairest, contemning with deadly hate all others, that will not follow her judgment. But what saith Christ? Be of good cheer: although the world will persecute you, yet I have overcome the world. Oh comfortable sentence, I have overcome the world. This undoubtedly he meaneth for you and me, and all other his children, that he hath overcome the world for us. But by what means? Surely by suffering contempt, wrong, false reports, and even very shameful and most bitter death. If he went this way, and won the victory this way, as I trust we know; let us, as his servants, whose state ought not to be above our master's, not be dismayed of contempt, of wrong, of loss of goods or life itself, but rather joyfully suffer the same, as men knowing we have better portions in heaven, and that this is the sure way to victory most victorious.

<sup>2</sup> Tim. 2.

<sup>1</sup> *et-emplar*



For by many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of heaven, if we will come thither; except for tribulation's sake we will with ease and worldly quietness go to hell. You know that Paul saith, All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. Wherefore, in that<sup>1</sup> you are in Christ Jesus, I dare say <sup>1 since</sup> you will continue, though persecution come to you, being assured that it cannot come except God have so decreed: and if he have so decreed, then cannot you but receive it, or else a cross which will be much worse. Willingly, therefore, take what cross the Lord shall offer; and then the Lord will make you able to bear it, and never tempt you further than he will make you strong enough: yea, all the hairs of your head he will number and keep, so that one of them shall not perish. But if you should refuse God's cross, especially in suffering the loss of any thing for his sake, which giveth you all the good that ever you have, and keepeth it; if, I say, you refuse, be certain the plagues of God will be poured down, first on your soul and conscience in hardening your heart and blinding your mind, either by bringing you into despair or into a contempt and carnal security, whereafter will ensue loss of the dearest things you have, if God love you—or else he will conserve<sup>2</sup> the same to your eternal destruction. I write not this as <sup>2 pre-serve</sup> distrusting your constancy in God's cause; God forbid! for methinks I am assured of your godly zeal; but I do it, as I said, that you may be the more heedful, ware, diligent, and earnestly given to call upon the name of God for his help and grace of perseverance, which is more ready to give than we to ask.

I know this kind of writing is madness to the world, foolishness to reason, and sore to the flesh; but to you which are a man of God, and by profession in baptism have forsaken the world, and do consider things after the reach of faith, and have tasted of the good Spirit of God and of the life to come, unto such a one, I say, as I trust you be, this kind of writing is otherwise esteemed. For here you are but a pilgrim, your home is in heaven, your treasures are there hoarded where thieves cannot come to steal them, there is your heart; and therefore you can and will say, as the philosopher said when he was robbed of all he had, *Omnia mea mecum porto*, I carry all with me. If he, an heathen, took his riches to be the world's rather than his, how much more should we so do?

Therefore, my dear brother, accordingly prepare yourself, as you have done and do, I hope. Read the 2d of Ecclesiasticus, how he counselleth them that will serve God to prepare themselves to temptation. Often set before your eyes the judgment of Christ, his coming in the clouds, and the resurrection, which is now our comfort, especially in afflictions. I write to you none otherwise than I am persuaded, I thank God, and purpose to go before you. I know there is an eternal life: I hope to be partaker of it through

Christ. I know this is the way thither—I mean, by suffering. I know if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him. I know that by the cross he make thus like to Christ here, that we might be like to him elsewhere; therefore I write to you not words only. And hereupon I am the more earnest, as to admonish, so to pray you to cleave still to the Lord and his true religion, which you have received, and I for my part am sure that I have preached unto you. For the confirmation whereof, as I am in bonds, so I trust in the goodness of God and his power to give my life in and for the same, that you and others might be certain, and follow as God shall call you and vouch you worthy. Remember that die you must; but when, as you know not, so where and how, it is uncertain to you. Again, all you have you must leave behind you; for nothing shall go with you, but a good or an evil conscience. Moreover, to whom you shall leave your goods it is hid from you; for you may purpose, but God will dispose. Therefore if God will have you to die, or to lose your goods for his cause, how much are you bound then to bless God? Sure you may be, that then you cannot perish; for of all ways to heaven it is the most sure way. Your goods God will preserve, so that your children shall find them, although the wicked spoil every piece of them: for the righteous man's seed I have not seen, saith David, beg their bread, but God will bless them into a thousand generations; the which thing I pray God to remember towards your children, for his name's sake. Amen.

Thus will I betake you to God, and to his holy word, which is able, as to teach you which way to serve God, so to save you if you believe and love it. If I thought it might do you any good, I would send you a book which James Bradshaw already hath, to teach you how you should behave yourselves, especially concerning the mass. I wrote it since my trouble. Commend me to T. Riddleston, although I fear me he have defiled himself in this false service. That book I would wish he would read; as you shall advertise me I will do in sending to him. I shall pray God to illuminate his eyes with his grace. Commend me to Sir W. Charlton, who, I trust, hath kept himself pure from idolatry; God grant he so continue.—Written in haste, as it appeareth, from the Counter in the Poultry,

By yours in Christ,

John Bradford.

To his godly Friends G. and N.,

Encouraging them to prepare themselves to the cross, and patiently to endure afflictions for God's cause and his holy Gospel.

The God of all mercies, and the Father of all consolations, shew unto you more and more the riches of his mercies in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant you a lively faith to apprehend and pull unto yourselves the same, to your everlasting comfort. Amen.

Because my mind will not let me rest to think upon, and as it were to see, sore storms like to fall more felly<sup>1</sup> than any yet we have felt (I should rather say, ye have felt, and are like to feel, if ye continue to confess Christianity as ye have begun), I thought it my duty to admonish you that therefore ye should not be dismayed, nor think it any strange thing. For undoubtedly, you confessing Christ according to the truth taught you, (yea, received of you), though trouble come, the same shall be so far from hurting you, that it shall profit you exceedingly, making you thereby like to him which for your sakes suffered much greater sorrow than all men can sustain: as well that your sorrows and afflictions, whatsoever they be that shall come unto you, should be sanctified in his cross, and that which he suffered; as also that in him ye might have both example how to order yourselves in the cross, and how soon, shortly, and gloriously the end of your cross will be. Therefore, I say, be not dismayed, in that the cross cannot but conform and make us like unto Christ, not simply of itself, but by God's Spirit, which maketh it his chief mean thereto: first, in putting us in mind of our corruption received of Adam, the cause of all care; then by occasioning us to remember as well our privy hid sins, as also our more manifest evils, that we therethrough might be provoked to repentance and asking of mercy, the which undoubtedly God will give us for his Christ's sake, and thereto also his Holy Spirit to sanctify us, if we ask the same. Now this Spirit will not cease more and more both to mortify the old man with his desires, and also to renew and repair the new man daily with augmentation and increase, so that at the length we shall be made so like to Christ, that we cannot but be coupled unto him; I mean not by faith as now we be, but even in deed, leaving here behind us with Hely<sup>2</sup> our cloak the flesh, which one day God will call and quicken again, to be like unto the glorious and immortal body of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, after that it hath suffered and slept, as his hath done, the afflictions and time which God hath already appointed. My dear brethren and sisters, this is most certain; that the afflictions and crosses which ye shall suffer, God hath already appointed for you, so that they are not in the power, choice, and will of your and his enemies. If ye would fly

<sup>1</sup> dreadfully

<sup>2</sup> Elias

them, ye cannot; but, will ye nill ye, needs must ye have them. If ye will not carry them in the love of God, ye shall carry them in his displeasure. Therefore cast your care on him, which careth for you, and hath counted all the hairs of your heads, so that one shall not perish, if that ye commit yourselves to his ordering; <sup>1</sup>whereas otherwise where else<sup>1</sup> your heads and bodies, yea, souls too shall perish, if that ye withdraw yourselves as unwilling to take his cup and to drink of it. Not that I would have you to thrust yourselves headlong, and rashly to take or pull unto you trouble, or that I would not have you to use such honest and lawful means as ye may, in the fear of God and with good conscience, to avoid the cross and give place to evil; but that I would have you willing to put forth your hand to take it, when God offereth it in such sort as with good conscience ye cannot escape. Then take it, kiss it, and thank God for it; for it is even a very sacrament that God loveth you—as he saith, Whom I love them do I chastise; and, If ye be not, partakers of correction, surely ye are no children. But if he once chastise you, if that ye kiss the rod, verily he will cast the rod into the fire, and coll<sup>2</sup> you and kiss you, as the mother doth her child, when she perceiveth the child to take in good part the correction. But why do I compare God your Father's love to a mother, in that it far passeth it? For, saith he, though it be possible that a natural mother should forget the child of her womb, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord, our good God and Father through Christ. Though he seem angry towards evening, yet in the morning we shall find him well pleased, if in Christ we come to him, and cry, Abba, dear Father, help us, and, as thou hast promised, tempt us not further than thou wilt make us able to bear.

Therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, be of good comfort, be of good comfort in the Lord. Confess him and his truth, and fear not prison, loss of goods or life. Fear rather that prison, out of the which there is no deliverance: fear rather the loss of those goods which last for ever: fear rather the loss of the life which is eternal, whereunto ye are called, and the way by which God will bring you to it; in that ye certainly know not whether it will be by prison, fire, halter, &c. Whensoever these come, as I said before, let them not dismay you, nor seem strange to you. For no small number of God's children are gone that way; and we are a good company here together, which are ready to follow the same way through God's grace, if God so will. I beseech you, make you ready and go with us; or rather, be ready, that when we come we may go with you. The journey is but short, though it be unpleasant to the flesh. Perchance if we should die in our beds on a corporal malady, it would be much longer and also more painful; at the least in God's sight it cannot be so precious and gainful, as I know this kind of death is: whereto I exhort you to prepare yourselves, mine own dear hearts in the bowels and blood

of our Saviour Jesus Christ—to whose tuition, grace, governance, and protection, I heartily commend you all, and beseech you that ye would do the like unto me in your hearty prayers.

Out of the tower of London, 1554. By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

John Bradford.

### Another Letter,

Written to certain godly persons to the same effect.

Gracious God, and most merciful Father for Jesus Christ's sake thy dearly beloved Son, grant us thy mercy, grace, wisdom, and Holy Spirit, to counsel, comfort, and guide us in all our cogitations, words, and works, to thy glory, and our everlasting joy and peace for ever. Amen.

In my last letter ye might perceive my conjecturing to be no less towards you, than now I have partly learned. But, my dearly beloved, I have learned none other thing, than before I have told you would come to pass, if ye cast not away that which I am sure ye have learned. I do appeal to both your consciences, whether herein I speak truth; as well of my telling, (though not so often as I might and should, God forgive me!) as also of your learning. Now God will try you, to make others to learn by you that which ye have learned by others; and by them which suffered this day ye might learn, if already ye had not learned, that life and honour is not to be set by, more than God's commandment. They in no point, for all that ever their ghostly fathers could do, having Doctor Death to take their part, would consent or seem to consent to the popish mass and papistical god, otherwise than in the days of our late king they had received. And this their faith they have confessed with their deaths, to their great glory and all our comforts, if we follow them; but to our confusion if we start back from the same. Wherefore I beseech you both to consider it; as well to praise God for them, as to go the same way with them if God so will. Consider not the things of this life, which is a very prison to all God's children; but the things of everlasting life, which is our very<sup>1</sup> home. But to the beholding of this gear<sup>2</sup> ye must open the eyes of your mind—of faith, I should have said; as Moses did, which set more by<sup>3</sup> trouble with God's people, than by the riches of Egypt and Pharaoh's court. Your house, home, and goods, yea, life and all that ever ye have, God hath given you as love tokens, to admonish you of his love, and to win your love to him again. Now will he try your love, whether ye set more by<sup>3</sup> him than by his tokens, or no. If ye for his tokens' sake, that is, for your home, house, goods, yea, life, will go with the world

The lady Jane and her husband were beheaded that day.

<sup>1</sup> true  
<sup>2</sup> thing

<sup>3</sup> more  
valued

lest ye should lose them, then be assured, your love, as he cannot but espy it to be a strumpet's love, so will he cast it away with the world. Remember, that he which will save his life shall lose it, if Christ be true: but he which adventureth, yea, loseth his life for the Gospel's sake, the same shall be sure to find it eternally. Do not ye both know, that the way to salvation is not the broad way which many run in, but the strait way which few now walk in?

Before persecution came, men might partly have stood in a doubt by the outward state of the world with us (although by God's word it was plain), whether was the high way for there was as many pretended<sup>1</sup> the Gospel as popery: but now the Sun is risen, and the wind bloweth, so that the corn which hath not taken fast root cannot nor will not abide; and therefore easily ye may see the strait way, by the small number that passeth through it. Who will now adventure their goods and life for Christ's sake, which yet gave his life for our sakes? We now are Gergesites, and would rather lose Christ than our porkers. A faithful wife is never tried so to be, but when she rejecteth and withstandeth wooers. A faithful Christian is then found so to be, when his faith is assaulted. If we be not able, I mean, if we will not forsake this world for God's glory and Gospel's sake, trow ye that God will make us able or give us a will to forsake it for nature's sake? Die ye must once, and leave all ye have (God knoweth how soon and when), will ye or will ye not. And seeing perforce ye must do this, will ye not willingly now do it for God's sake? If ye go to mass, and do as the most part doth, then may ye live at rest and quietly: but if ye deny to go to it, then shall ye go to prison, lose your goods, leave your children comfortless, yea, lose your life also. But, my dearly beloved, open the eyes of your faith, and see how short a thing this life is, even a very shadow and smoke. Again, see how intolerable the punishment of hell-fire is, and that endless. Last of all, look on the joys incomprehensible, which God hath prepared for all them, world without end, which lose either lands or goods for his name's sake. And then do ye reason thus: If we go to mass, the greatest enemy that Christ hath, though for a little time we shall live in quiet, and leave to our children that they may live hereafter, yet shall we displease God, fall into his hands, (which is horrible to hypocrites), and be in wonderful hazard of falling from eternal joy into eternal misery, first of soul and then of body, with the devil, and all idolaters. Again, we shall want peace of conscience, which surmounteth all the riches of the world: and, for our children, who knoweth whether God will visit our idolatry on them in this life? Yea, our house and goods are in danger of losing, as our lives be, through many casualties: and when God is angry with us, he can send always, when he will, one mean or another

<sup>1</sup> *professed*

Matt. 8.

to take all from us for our sins : and to cast us into care, for our own sakes, which will not come into some little trouble for his sake.

On this sort reason with yourselves, and then doubtless God will work otherwise with you and in you, than ye are aware of. Where<sup>1</sup> now ye think yourselves unable to abide persecution, <sup>1</sup> *whereas* be most assured, if so be<sup>2</sup> ye purpose not to forsake God, that God <sup>2</sup> *if* will make you so able to bear his cross, that therein ye shall rejoice. Faithful is God (saith Paul), which will not tempt you <sup>1</sup> *Cor. 10.* further than he will make you able to bear ; yea, he will give you an outscapc in the cross, which shall be to your comfort. Think how great a benefit it is, if God will vouch you worthy this honour, to suffer loss of any thing for his sake. He might justly cast most grievous plagues upon you ; and now he will correct you with that rod, whereby you shall be made like to his Christ, that for ever ye may reign with him. Suffer yourselves therefore now to be made like to Christ, for else ye shall never be made like unto him. The devil would gladly have you now to overthrow that, which godly ye have of long time professed. Oh how would he triumph, if he could win his purpose ? Oh how would the papists triumph against God's Gospel in you ? Oh how would you confirm them in their wicked popery ? Oh how would the poor children of God be discomforted, if now ye should go to mass and other idolatrous service, and do as the world doth ? Hath God delivered you from the sweat, to serve him so ? Hath GOD miraculously restored you to health from your grievous agues, for such a purpose ? Hath God given you such blessings in this world, and good things all the days of your life hitherto, and now of equity will ye not receive at his hands, and for his sake, some evil ? God forbid ! I hope better of you. Use prayer, and cast your care upon God : commit your children into his hands : give to God your goods, bodies, and lives, as he hath given them, or rather lent them unto you. Say with Job, God hath given and God hath taken away ; his name be praised for ever. Cast your care upon him (I say), for he is careful for you : and take it among the greatest blessings of God, to suffer for his sake. I trust he hath kept you hitherto to that end. And I beseech thee, O merciful Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, that thou wouldest be merciful unto us, comfort us with thy grace, and strengthen us in thy truth, that in heart we may believe, and in tongue boldly confess thy Gospel, to thy glory and our eternal salvation. Amen. Pray for me ; and I, by God's grace, will do the same for you.

John Bradford.

## Another Letter to the same Persons.

God's mercy in Christ I wish you to feel, my dear brother, with my faithful sister your wife, now and for ever. Amen.

Having this occasion, I could not but write something, as well to put myself in remembrance of my duty to Godwards for you both, in thankfulness and prayer, as to put you in remembrance of me and your duty towards God for me, in praying for me: for I dare not say, in thankfulness for me; not that I would have you to give no thanks to God, for his wonderful great and sweet mercies towards me and upon me in Christ his Son, but because I have not deserved it at either of your hands. For ye both know right well, at least my conscience doth accuse me, how that I have not only not exhorted and taught you, as both my vocation and your deserts required, to walk worthy of that vocation which God hath made you worthy of, and with trembling and fear to work out your salvation, that is, in the fear of God to give yourselves to great vigilance in prayer for the increase of faith, and to a wary circumspection in all your conversation, not only in works and words but also in thoughts—because God is a searcher of the heart, and out of the heart it cometh that defileth us in God's sight: I have (I say) not only not done this, but also have given you example of negligence in prayer, watching, fasting, talking, and doing; so that woe to me for giving you such offence. Partly for this cause, dear brother and sister, God hath cast me and keepeth me here, that I might repent me and turn to him; and that ye might also, by this correction upon me, be more diligent to redress these things and others, if they in your conscience do accuse you.

My dearly beloved, heavy is God's anger fallen upon us all: doleful is this day. Now hath Antichrist all his power again; now is Christ's Gospel trodden under foot; now is God's people a derision and a prey for the wicked. Now is the greatest plague of all plagues fallen, the want of God's word: and all these we have, yea I alone have, justly deserved. Oh that, as I write (I alone), I could with David, 1 Chron. 21, and with Jonas, in heart say so. But I do not, I do not; I see not how grievously I have sinned, and how great a misery is fallen, for mine unthankfulness for God's word, for mine hypocrisy in professing, preaching, hearing, and speaking of God's word, for my not praying to God for the continuance of it, for my not living of it thoroughly as it requireth, &c. I will speak nothing of my manifest evils, for they are known to you well enough.

Dear brother and sister, with me say ye the like for your own parts; and with me join your hearts, and let us go to our heavenly



Father, and for his Christ's sake beseech him to be merciful unto us, and to pardon us. Oh, good Father, it is we that have deserved the taking away of thy word ; it is we that have deserved these thy just plagues fallen upon us, we have done amiss, we have dealt unjustly with thy Gospel, we have procured thy wrath ; and therefore just art thou in punishing us, just art thou in plaguing us, for we are very miserable. But, good Lord and dear Father of mercy, whose justice is such that thou wilt not punish the poor souls of this realm, which yet have not thus sinned against thee as we have done (for many yet never heard thy word) for our trespasses, and whose mercy is so great that thou wilt put our iniquities out of thy remembrance for thy Christ's sake, if we repent and believe— grant us, we beseech thee, true repentance and faith ; that we, having obtained pardon for our sins, may through thy Christ get deliverance from the tyranny of Antichrist, now oppressing us.

Oh, good Father, which hast said that the sceptre of the wicked should not long lie upon and over the just, lest they put forth their hands to iniquity also ; make us just, we pray thee, in Christ's name, and cut asunder the cords of them that hate Sion. Let not the wicked people say, Where is their God ? Thou our God art in heaven, and doest whatsoever it pleaseth thee upon earth. Oh that thou wouldst in the meanwhile, before thou do deliver us, that, I say, thou wouldst open our eyes to see all these plagues to come from thee ; and all other that shall come, whatsoever they be, public or private, that they come not by chance nor by fortune, but that they come even from thy hand, and that justly and mercifully ; justly, because we have and do deserve them, not only by our birth-poison still sticking and working in us, but also by our former evil life past, which by this punishment and all other punishments thou wouldst have us to call to our remembrance and to set before us, that thou mightest put them from before thee, whereas' they stand so long as they are not in our remembrance to put them away by repentance. Mercifully, O Lord God, dost thou punish, in that thou dost not correct to kill, but to amend, that we might repent our sins, ask mercy, obtain it freely in Christ, and to begin to suffer for righteousness sake ; to be part of thy house, whereat thy judgment beginneth ; to be partakers of the afflictions of thy church and thy Christ, that we might be partakers of the glory of the same ; to weep here, that we might rejoice elsewhere ; to be judged in this world, that we might with thy saints judge hereafter the world ; to suffer with Christ, that we might reign with him ; to be like to Christ in shame, that we might be like to him in glory ; to receive our evils here, that we might with poor Lazarus find rest elsewhere ; rest, I say, and such a rest, as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive. Oh that our eyes were open <sup>1 where</sup>

to see this, that the cross cometh from thee to declare thy justice and thy mercy, and hereto that we might see how short a time the time of suffering is ; how long a time the time of rejoicing is to them that suffer here ; but, to them that will not, how long and miserable a time is appointed and prepared, a time without time in eternal woe and perdition, too horrible to be thought upon. From the which keep us, dear Father, and give more sight in soul to see this gear,<sup>1</sup> and how that all thy dearest children have carried the cross of grievous affliction in this life : in whose company do thou place us, and such a cross lay upon us as thou wilt make us able to bear, to thy glory and our salvation in Christ ; for whose sake we pray thee to shorten the days of this our great misery fallen upon us most justly, and in the mean season give us patience, repentance, faith, and thy eternal consolation. Amen, amen, amen.

And thus, dear hearts, I have talked, methinks, a little while with you, or rather we have all talked with God. Oh that God would give us his Spirit of grace and prayer. My dearly beloved, pray for it ; as for yourselves, so for me ; and that God would vouchsafe to make me worthy to suffer with a good conscience for his name's sake. Pray for me, and I shall do the like for you.

This 20th of December, by him whom by this bringer ye shall learn. I pray you give my commendations to all that love me in the Lord. Be merry in Christ ; for one day in heaven we shall meet and rejoice together for evermore. Amen.

John Bradford.

**To my good brother John Careless,**

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

The Father of mercy, and God of all comfort, visit us with his eternal consolation, according to his great mercies in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

My very dear brother, if I shall report the truth unto you, I cannot but signify that, since I came into prison, I never received so much consolation as I did by your last letter ; the name of God be most heartily praised therefore. But if I shall report the truth unto you, and, as I have begun, speak still the verity, I must confess that for mine unthankfulness to youwards, and to God especially, I have more need of God's merciful tidings than I had ever heretofore. Ah, that Satan envieth us so greatly. Ah, that our Lord would tread his head under our feet shortly. Ah, that I might for ever both myself beware, and be a godly example to you and others to beware of unthankfulness. Good brother Careless, we had more need to take heed, after a lightning,<sup>2</sup> of a foil than before. God therefore is to be praised, even when he hideth, and

<sup>1</sup> thing

<sup>2</sup> an alleviation

that of long, a cheerful countenance from us ; lest we, being not expert how to use it as we should do, do hurt more ourselves thereby, so great is our ignorance and corruption. This, my good brother and right dear to my very heart, I write unto you as to one whom in the Lord I embrace ; and I thank God that you do me in like manner. God our Father more and more give us both his good Spirit, that as by faith we may feel ourselves united unto him in Christ, so by love we may feel ourselves linked in the same Christ one to another—I to you and you to me, we to all the children of God and all the children of God to us. Amen, amen.

Commend me to our good brother Skelthrop ; for whom I heartily praise my God, which hath given him to see his truth at the length, and to give place to it. I doubt not but that he will be so heed<sup>1</sup> in all his conversation, that his old acquaintance may ever thereby think themselves astray. Woe and woe again should be unto us, if we by our example should make men to stumble at the truth. Forget not salutations in Christ, as you shall think good, to Trew and his fellows. The Lord hath his time, I hope, for them also, although we perchance think otherwise. A drop maketh the stone hollow, not with once but with often dropping : so if, with hearty prayer for them and good example, you still<sup>2</sup> and drop upon them as you can, you shall see God's work at the length. I beseech God to make perfect all the good he hath begun in us all. Amen. I desire you all to pray for me, the most unworthy prisoner of the Lord.

Your brother,

John Bradford.

### To Master John Hall and his Wife,

Prisoners in Newgate for the testimony of the Gospel.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, be with you both, my dearly beloved, as with his dear children for ever ; and he so bless you with his Holy Spirit, that you may in this your cross, for his cause doubtless, rejoice, and gladly take it up, to bear it so long as he shall think good. I have heard, my good brother and sister, how that God hath brought you both into his school-house, (whereas you were both purposed, by his leave, to have played the truants), that thereby you might see his carefulness and love toward you. For if it be a token of a loving and careful father for his children, to prevent the purpose and disappoint the intent of his children, purposing to depart a while from the school for fear of beating ; which thing they would not do, if they did as much consider the commodity<sup>3</sup> of learning which

<sup>3</sup> advantage

there they might get; how should you take this work of the Lord, preventing your purpose, but as an evident sign of love and fatherly carefulness that he beareth towards you? If he should have winked at your wiles, then would you have escaped beating, I mean the cross: but then should you have lost the commodity<sup>1</sup> of learning, which your father will now have you to learn and feel, and therefore hath he sent to you his cross. He, I say, hath brought you where you be; and though your reason and wit will tell you it is by chance or fortune or otherwise, yet, my dearly beloved, know for certain, that whatsoever was the mean, GOD your father was the worker hereof; and that for your weal, although otherwise your old Adam doth tell you, and you feel: yet, I say of truth, that your duty is to think of this cross, that, as it is of God's sending and cometh from him, so, although your deserts be otherwise, it is of love and fatherly affection, for your weal and commodity's<sup>1</sup> sake.

What commodity<sup>1</sup> is hereby? you will perchance object. You are now kept in close prison you will say; your family and children be without good overseers; your substance diminisheth by these means; poverty will approach, and perchance more perils also, as loss of life, &c.; these are no commodities<sup>1</sup> but discommodities, and that no small ones; so that justly you would be glad to know what commodity<sup>1</sup> can come to you by this cross, whereby cometh so great discommodities.

To these things I answer, that indeed it is true you say, of your bodies, families, children, substance, poverty, life, &c.: which things, if you would consider awhile with inward eyes, as you behold them with outward, then perhaps you should find more ease. Do not you now by the inward sense perceive, that you must part from all these, and all other commodities<sup>1</sup> in the world? Tell me then, have not you this commodity<sup>1</sup> by your cross, to learn to loathe and leave the world, and to long for and desire another world where is perpetuity? You ought of your own head and freewill to have, according to your profession in baptism, forsaken the world and all earthly things, using the world as though you used it not, your heart only set upon your hoard in heaven; or else you could never be Christ's true disciples, that is, be saved, and be where he is. And trow you, my good hearts in the Lord, trow you, I say, that this is no commodity<sup>1</sup> by this cross to be compelled hereto, that you might assuredly enjoy with the Lord endless glory? How now doth God, as it were, fatherly pull you by the ears, to remember your former offences concerning these things and all other things, that repentance and remission might ensue! How doth God now compel you to call upon him, and to be earnest in prayer! Are these no commodities?<sup>1</sup> Doth not the Scripture say, that God doth correct us in the world, because we shall not be damned with the world? that God chasteneth every

one whom he loveth? that the end of this correction shall be joy and holiness? Doth not the Scripture say, that they are happy that suffer for righteousness sake, as you now do? that the glory and Spirit of God is upon them? that as you are now made like unto Christ in suffering, so you shall be made like to him in reigning? Doth not the Scripture say, that you are now going the high and right way to heaven? that your suffering is Christ's suffering?

My dearly beloved, what greater commodities<sup>1</sup> than these can a godly heart desire? Therefore ye are commanded to rejoice and be glad when ye suffer, as now ye do; for, through the goodness of God, great shall be your reward. Where? Forsooth on earth, first, for your children: for now they are in God's mere<sup>2</sup> and immediate protection. Never was father so careful for his children, as God is for yours presently. God's blessing, which is more worth than all the world, you leave in deed to your children. Though all your providence for them should be pulled away: yet God is not poor; he hath promised to provide for them most fatherly. Cast thy burden upon me, saith he, and I will bear it. Do you therefore cast them and commend them unto God your father, and doubt not that he will die in your debt. He never yet was found unfaithful, and he will not now begin with you. The good man's seed shall not go begging his bread: for he will shew mercy upon thousands of the posterity of them that fear him. Therefore, as I said, God's reward first upon earth shall be felt by your children, even corporally; and so also upon you if God see it more for your commodity,<sup>1</sup> at the least inwardly you shall feel it by quietness and comfort of conscience. And secondly, after this life you shall find it so plentifully, as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, the heart cannot conceive how great and glorious God's reward will be upon your bodies, much more upon your souls. God open our eyes to see and feel this in deed. Then shall we think the cross, which is a mean hereto, to be commodious. Then shall we thank God that he would chastise us. Then shall we say with David, Happy am I that thou hast punished me; for before I went astray, but now I keep thy laws. This that we may do indeed, my dearly beloved, let us first know that our cross cometh from God. Secondly, that it cometh from God as a father, that is, to our weal and good. Therefore let us, thirdly, call to mind our sins, and ask pardon. Whereto let us, fourthly, look for help certainly at God's hand in his good time; help, I say, such as shall make most to God's glory, and to the comfort and commodity<sup>1</sup> of our souls and bodies eternally. This if we certainly conceive, then will there issue out of us hearty thanksgiving, which God requireth as a most precious sacrifice. That we may all through Christ offer this, let us use earnest prayer to

<sup>1</sup> *advantages*

<sup>2</sup> *undeniable*

Psa. 55.

Psa. 37.

our God and dear Father ; who bless us, keep us, and comfort us under his sweet cross, for ever. Amen, amen.

My dear hearts, if I could any way comfort you, you should be sure thereof, though my life lay thereon ; but now I must do as I may, because I cannot as I would. Oh that it would please our dear father shortly to bring us where we should never depart, but enjoy continually the blessed fruition of his heavenly presence ; pray, pray that it may speedily come to pass ; pray. To-morrow I will send unto you to know your estate ; send me word what are the chiefest things they charge you withal.—From the Counter,

By your brother in the Lord,

John Bradford.

### To Mistress Wall,

Prisoner in Newgate, and ready to make answer before her adversaries.

Our most merciful God and Father, through Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour, be merciful unto us, and make perfect the good he hath begun in us unto the end. Amen.

Matt. 5. My dear sister, rejoice in the Lord, rejoice ; be glad, I say, be merry and thankful ; not only because Christ so commandeth us, but also because our state wherein we are presently requireth no less ; for we are the Lord's witnesses. God the Father hath vouchsafed to choose us amongst many, to witness and testify that Christ his Son is king, and that his word is true. Christ our Saviour, for his love's sake towards us, will have us to bear record that he is no usurper nor deceiver of the people, but God's ambassador, prophet, and Messias : so that of all dignities upon earth this is the highest. Greater honour had not his prophets, apostles, nor dearest friends, than to bear witness with Christ, as we now do. The world, following the counsel of their sire Satan, would gladly condemn Christ and his verity : but lo, the I hinder Lord hath chosen us to be his champions, to let' this. As stout soldiers, therefore, let us stand to our master, who is with us, and standeth on our right hand, that we shall not be much moved if we hope and hang on his mercy ; he is so faithful and true, that he will never tempt us further than he will make us able to bear. Therefore be not careful, (for I hear say this day you shall be called forth,) what you shall answer. The Lord, which is true and cannot lie, hath promised and will never fail nor forget it, that you shall have both what and how to answer, so as shall make his shameless adversaries ashamed. Hang therefore on this promise of God, who is an helper at a pinch, and a most present remedy to

them that hope in him. Never was it heard of, or shall be, that any hoping in the Lord was put to foil.

Therefore as I said, I say again, dear sister; be not only not careful for your answering, but also be joyful for your cause. Confess Christ and be not ashamed, and he will confess you and never be ashamed of you. Though loss of goods and life be like here to ensue: yet if Christ be true (as he is most true), it is otherwise in deed; for he that loses his life, saith he, winneth it, but he that saveth it, loses it. Our sins have deserved many deaths. Now if God deal so with us, that he will make our deserved death a demonstration of his grace, a testimonial of his verity, a confirmation of his people, and an overthrow of his adversaries, what great cause have we to be thankful! Be thankful, therefore, good sister, be thankful, rejoice, and be merry in the Lord, be stout in his cause and quarrel, be not faint-hearted, but run out your race, and set your captain Christ before your eyes. Behold how great your reward is: see the great glory, and the eternity of felicity prepared for you. Strive and fight lawfully, that you may get the crown. Run to get the game; you are almost at your journey's end. I doubt not but our Father will with us send to you also, as he did to Hely,<sup>1</sup> a fiery chariot, to convey us into his kingdom. Let us therefore not be dismayed to leave our cloak behind us, that is, our bodies to ashes. God will one day restore them to us, like to the body of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose coming is now at hand; let us look for it, and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. Amen, amen. The Lord of mercy grant us his mercy. Amen.

<sup>2</sup> Kings 2.  
<sup>1</sup> Elias

I pray you, pray for me, and so desire my brethren which be with you. God's peace be with us all. Amen. Blessed be the dead that die in the Lord: then how much more they that die for the Lord!

Your brother in bonds,

John Bradford.

### An admonition to certain Professors and Lovers of the Gospel,

To beware they fall not from it, in consenting to the Romish religion, by the example of the shrinking, halting, and double-faced Gospellers.

The peace of Christ, which is the true effect of God's gospel believed, my dearly beloved, be more and more plentifully perceived of you, through the grace of our dear Father, by the mighty working of the Holy Spirit our Comforter. Amen.

Though I have many lets<sup>2</sup> presently to hinder me from writing unto you, yet, being desired, I could not but something signify my ready good will in this behalf so much as I may, when I cannot so

<sup>2</sup> impediments.

much as I would. You hear and see how Satan bestirreth him, raging as a roaring lion to devour us. You see, and feel partly, what storms he hath raised up, to drown the poor boat of Christ, I mean his church. You see how terribly he traineth his soldiers, to give a fierce onset on the van-ward of God's battle. You see how he hath received power of God to molest God's children, and to begin at his house. By reason whereof consider two things: one, the cause on our behalf; the other, what will be the sequel on strangers. For the first, if we be not blind, we cannot but well see that our sins are the cause of all this misery; our sins, I say, which I would that every one of us would apply to ourselves, after the example of Jonas and David, turning over the wallet, that other men's offences might lie behind and our own before. Not that I would excuse other men, which exteriorly have walked much more grossly than many of you have done: but that I would provoke you all, as myself, to more hearty repentance and prayer. Let us more and more increase, to know and lament our doubting of God, of his presence, power, anger, mercy, &c. Let us better feel and hate our self-love, security, negligence, unthankfulness, unbelief, impatience, &c.: and then doubtless the cross shall be less careful,<sup>1</sup> yea, it shall be comfortable, and Christ most dear and pleasant; death then shall be desired, as the dispatcher of us out of all misery, and entrance into eternal felicity and joy unspeakable: the which is so much the more longed for, by how much we feel indeed the serpent-bites wherewith he woundeth our heels, that is, our outward Adam and senses. If we had, I say, a lively and true feeling of his poison, we could not but, as rejoice over our Captain that hath bruised his head, so be desirous to follow his example, that is, to give our lives with him and for him, and so to fill up his passions, that he might conquer and overcome, in us and by us, to his glory and comfort of his children.

Now the second, I mean the sequel, or that which will follow on the strangers, my dearly beloved, let us well look upon. For if so be that God justly do thus give to Satan and his seed, to vex and molest Christ and his penitent people; oh, what and how justly may he and will he give to Satan to intreat<sup>2</sup> the reckless and impenitent sinners! If judgment begin thus at God's house, what will follow on them that be without, if they repent not? Certainly for them is reserved the dregs of God's cup, that is, brimstone, fire, and tempest intolerable. Now are they unwilling to drink of God's cup of afflictions which he offereth, common with his Son Christ our Lord, lest they should lose their pigs with the Gergesites. They are unwilling to come into the way that bringeth to heaven, even afflictions; they in their hearts cry, Let us cast his yoke from us; they walk two ways, that is, they seek to serve God and mammon, which is impossible. They will not come nigh the strait way that bringeth to life; they open their

<sup>1</sup> burden-  
some

Col. 1.

<sup>2</sup> treat

Matt. 8.



eyes to behold present things only ; they judge of religion after reason, and not after God's word ; they follow the more part and not the better ; they profess God with their mouths, but in their hearts they deny him, or else they would sanctify him by serving him more than men ; they part stake<sup>1</sup> with GOD which would have all, giving part to the world, to the Romish rout, and Antichristian idolatry now set abroad amongst us publicly ; they will have Christ, but none of his cross, which will not<sup>2</sup> be ; they will be counted to live godly in Christ, but yet they will suffer no persecution ; they love this world, wherethrough the love of God is driven forth of them ; they savour those things that be of men, and not that be of God. Summâ,<sup>3</sup> they love God in their lips, but in their hearts, yea, and in their deeds, deny him ; as well by not repenting their evils past, as by continuing in evil still, by doing as the world, the flesh, and the devil willeth : and yet still perchance they will pray, or rather prate, Thy will be done in earth—which is generally, that every one should take up his cross and follow Christ. But this is a hard sermon ; who is able to abide it ? Therefore Christ must be prayed to depart, lest all their pigs be drowned. The devil shall have his dwelling again in themselves, rather than in their pigs ; and therefore to the devil shall they go, and dwell with him in eternal perdition and damnation, even in hell-fire, a torment endless, and above all cogitations incomprehensible, if they repent not.

Wherefore by them, my dearly beloved, be admonished to remember your profession, how that in baptism you made a solemn vow to renounce the devil, the world, &c. You promised to fight under Christ's standard. You learned Christ's cross, before you began with A B C. Go to, then, pay your vow to the Lord ; fight like men, and valiant men, under Christ's standard ; take up your cross and follow your Master, as your brethren Masters Hooper, Rogers, Taylor, and Saunders have done ; and as now your brethren Masters Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Ferrar, Bradford, Hawkes, &c. be ready to do. The ice is broken before you, therefore be not afraid, but be content to die for the Lord. You have no cause to waver or doubt of the doctrine thus declared by the blood of the pastors. Remember that Christ saith, He that will save his life shall lose it ; and, What should it profit you to win the whole world, much less a little quietness, your goods, &c., and to lose your own souls ? Render to the Lord that he hath lent you, by such means as he would have you render it, and not as you would. Forget not, Christ's disciples must deny themselves, as well concerning their will, as concerning their wisdom. Have in mind, that, as it is no small mercy to believe in the Lord, so it is no small kindness of God towards you to suffer any thing, much more death, for the Lord. If they be blessed that die in the Lord, how shall they be that die for the Lord ? Oh what a blessing is it

to have death (due for our sins). diverted into a demonstration and testification of the Lord's truth? Oh that we had a little of Moses' faith, to look upon the end of the cross, to look upon the reward, to see continually with Christ and his people greater riches than the riches of Egypt. Oh let us pray that God would open our eyes, to see his hid manna, heavenly Jerusalem, the congregation of the first-born, the melody of the saints, the tabernacle of God dwelling with men: then should we run, and become violent men, and so take the kingdom of heaven as it were by force. God our Father give us, for his Christ's sake, to see a little what and how great joy he hath prepared for us, he hath called us unto, and most assuredly giveth us, for his own goodness and truth's sake. Amen.

My dearly beloved, repent, be sober, and watch in prayer; be obedient, and after your vocations shew your obedience to the higher powers, in all things that are not against God's word: therein acknowledge the sovereign power of the Lord; howbeit, so that ye be no rebels, or rebellers for no cause; but, because with good conscience you cannot obey, be patient sufferers, and the glory and good Spirit of God shall dwell upon us. I pray you, remember us your afflicted brethren, being in the Lord's bonds for the testimony of Christ, and abiding the gracious hour of our dear and most merciful Father. The Lord, for Christ's sake, give us merry hearts to drink lustily of his sweet cup, which daily we groan and sigh for, lamenting that the time is thus prolonged. The Lord Jesus give us grace to be thankful, and to abide patiently the provident hour of his most gracious good will. Amen, amen.

From the Counter in the Poultry.

Yours in Christ,

John Bradford.

**To my good friends in the Lord, Master R. and his Wife.**

My dearly beloved, I heartily commend me unto you in our common Christ: whom I so call, not that I would make him as common things be, that is, nothing set by; but because by him we are brought into a communion; and that, as with him, so with his Father; and as with his Father, so with all God's people, if we be his people, as I trust we are. And therefore write I unto you as one careful (but not so much as I should be) for you, as for them whose well-doing comforteth me and is profitable to me, and whose evil-doing maketh me heavy, and woundeth me.

The days are come, in the which we cannot but declare what we be; if we be indeed as we should be, as I trust we are, that is, if we be Christ's disciples. I mean, we cannot now do as the world

doth, or say as it saith, but as God's church doth and saith. The world seeketh itself, and speaketh thereafter: the church of God seeketh Christ's glory, and speaketh accordingly. The worldlings follow the world: the church-children follow their captain Christ, and therefore, as of the world they are not known to be as they be, so are they hated, and, if God permit it, are persecuted and slain; the which persecution is the true touchstone which trieth the true church-children from hypocrites, as the wind doth the wheat from the chaff. And of this <sup>1</sup>gear<sup>1</sup> this our time and age setteth very many forth for example, doctrine, and fear; which once were hearty and very zealous, and now are so cold, that they smell nothing of the Spirit; for they are not only afraid to seem to speak with a church-child, but also ashamed, and not only ashamed of them and so of that they profess, but also frame and fashion themselves in all outward behaviour, (as in coming to church and hearing mass,) so as no man can accuse them for not allowing it or not honouring it as well as the papists; where<sup>2</sup> in their hearts they disallow it, and know the same to be nought, at the least they have known it; but halting out of the way may perchance have brought them so far, that now they cannot see the way, they are so far and so long gone astray; for the farther and longer a man goeth wide, the harder shall it be to recover and see the way. And therefore the apostle giveth warning thereof, Hebrews 12; as doth Moses, Deut. 29, speaking of men that bless themselves, inwardly cursing themselves. Read both the chapters, I pray you. And mark the example of Master Hales; which, after that he consented to seem to allow in outward fact, that which he knew once was evil, was fearfully left of GOD, to our admonition. For albeit God hath not done thus to all, that have in deed done that he purposed to do, yet in this example he teacheth us how fearful a thing it is to wound our conscience, and do any thing thereagainst, to the offence of the godly, and comfort of the obstinate.

I write not this, as thereof to accuse you or either of you; for, as I cannot lightly be persuaded of any such thing of you, so I am assured you hitherto would not do any such thing: for I ween<sup>3</sup> there be yet no great penalty to punish you for not so doing, if thereof you should have been accused. For he that will do a thing unforced, I cannot hope any thing of the same, but that he will run apace when he is forced. But of this enough, to you, which are to be comforted and exhorted to continue in that pureness of religion, which you have, as I think, hitherto received, and by your open conversation protested.<sup>4</sup> Howbeit, considering how you have heard and read as much as in manner can be spoken herein, (for the Scriptures, which of themselves are most perfect herein, you have read and read again,) I think it good to exhort you to use earnest and hearty prayer, as I trust you do, and then doubtless God<sup>5</sup> will so write that you have read in your hearts, as

<sup>1</sup> thing<sup>2</sup> whereas<sup>3</sup> suppose<sup>4</sup> witnessed

shall be both comfortable and profitable unto you and others plentifully. You shall rejoice in the strait way, which few find, and fewer walk in, but most few continue therein to the end. You shall suffer with joy the direption<sup>1</sup> of your goods, because the best part of your substance is in heaven. You will set before you the example of Christ, the beginner and ender of your faith, who suffered much more than we can suffer, that we should not be faint-hearted. You will rejoice, and greatly, because great is your reward in heaven. You will be glad that GOD accounteth you worthy to suffer any thing for his sake. You will set before you the end of this your short cross, and the great glory which will ensue the same. You will know that it is no small benefit of God, to suffer for his sake. You will know that your sorrowing shall be turned to joying. You will know that as God doth make you now like to Christ in suffering, so shall you be in reigning; and if you be partakers of affliction, you shall be also of glory, &c. Summâ,<sup>2</sup> you will know that this is the surest and safest way to heaven, which is called the kingdom of patience; Apoc. 1.

But because I have written a little treatise hereof, and of the harm of halting with the world in coming to mass, I send them both unto you to peruse and read them; and then at your leisure to re-deliver them to this bringer or my man, when I shall send to you for the same. In the mean season, I shall as heartily as I can pray to God for you both, my most dear members in the Lord. What said I, as heartily as I can? God forgive me, for I do nothing so well as I might; in that, I flatter myself too much—God lay it not to my charge. Indeed, I have most cause to pray night and day, and to give thanks night and day for you both. The Lord of mercy in Christ bless you both, keep you both, and send you both as well to do, as I wish to my dearest and best beloved friends and brethren in the Lord. I pray you continue to pray for me, as I doubt not you do; and so give thanks to God for me, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. The day will come, when we shall meet together and never depart. God send it shortly. Amen.

John Bradford.

To the worshipful Sir William Fitzwilliams,

Then being Knight Marshal of the King's Bench.

The peace of God, proper to his people, the Holy Ghost work daily and deeply in your heart, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I thank my Lord and God, through his Son our Mediator and Saviour, for his mercies and graces given to your mastership, the

which I beseech his goodness to increase in you continually, to your everlasting comfort in him. By his mercies towards you, I mean not in your lands, possessions, offices, natural wisdom, riches, health, form, &c. which indeed be gifts of God, given to you of his mercy without your deserts, and therefore should he be daily of you praised for the same, as I doubt not but he is, for else your ingratitude would provoke him to punish you in them and by them, if he love you; but I mean, his mercies towards you in the knowledge and love of his truth in religion. The which benefit in that you, amongst the not many of your estate and condition, as St. Paul witnesseth, have received, as a very testimonial of your election in Christ, I would be sorry that you should need any such as I am to move you to thankfulness: for I am not in a mammering<sup>1</sup> whether you be thankful to God for this great mercy, which is much more to be esteemed than all that ever you have. I humbly beseech God, in his Christ, to increase the same in you to the very end. And that by me he might do the same in some part, I thought it good, and also my bounden duty deeply deserved on your behalf towards me, (for the which I beseech the Lord to reward you,) to send to you this treatise of the doings of Master Ridley at Oxford, concerning his disputation about the Sacrament. I know that there hath gone divers copies abroad, but none of them were as I know this is: for I have translated it out of that copy in Latin which was corrected with his own hand, which came unto me not without his own consent; and therefore dare I be bold to say, that this hath not before been seen on this sort. In reading whereof you shall well see this I speak to be most true: and also (that which causeth me to suppress commendations of the thing), the excellency and worthiness thereof; I mean, because I think I cannot speak any thing so worthily, as undoubtedly these his doings do deserve. Unto your mastership I send them, as a token of my duty towards you; thereby to declare, that, as you deserve much of me, so I would shew myself willing to recompence the same if I could; but in that I cannot, and also your doing is simple<sup>2</sup> in respect of GOD and his cause, I will, according to your expectation, leave the recompence unto him—in the mean season praying him, that of his goodness he would, as increase the knowledge and love of his truth in you, so strengthen you after your vocation, both purely to walk and manfully to confess his gospel, if he shall think it needful to call you to that honour; for surely of all honours it is the greatest, to suffer any thing for Christ's sake. Most happy may that man think himself, that hath any thing for his cause to lose; as he shall be sure to find for his own part eternal felicity and honour endless, so shall his posterity even temporally prove this to be most true. For God's sake, therefore, right worshipful sir, consider well this gear,<sup>3</sup> and weigh it not as the world and your mother wit will

I doubt

This treatise of Master Ridley's disputation which he sent to him, you shall read in the book of Martyrs, fol. 96.

<sup>2</sup> disinterested.

<sup>3</sup> thing

move you to do, but as the word of God doth teach you: there shall you see this I speak of to be matter of much mirth, joy, and glory, though to the world it seem clean contrary. God's good Spirit always guide you, to his glory, and give you the spirit of prayer, continually to pray that God never further tempt you, than he will make you able to bear. Amen. In that this copy is not so fair written, as I wish and would have had it, I shall desire you to consider where I am, and how I cannot have things so done as I would; and therefore you have it as may be, when it may not be as I would it were, and should be.—From the King's Bench.

Your humble,

John Bradford.

To my good brother Master Coker,

At Maldon in Essex.

Although I have presently both little time and less opportunity otherwise to write as I would, yet as I may I thought better to write something, than utterly to be silent. For if I should not so do, having so convenient a messenger, as I might towards you incur the suspicion of ingratitude and forgetfulness, so might I not satisfy the desire of this my poor brother and friend John Searchfield, which cometh unto you for help and comfort in this troublesome time. This dare I say, that the man feareth God, and for God's sake, and conscience towards him, sustaineth both loss and labour. For our common Father's sake therefore in Christ, help him to some hole to hide himself in for a little time, if conveniently you may: and remember, that he that receiveth one of Christ's little ones receiveth Christ, as he himself in the last day will acknowledge; which last day let us often look on and set before us, as the thing which most maketh to our comfort. Now we sorrow and sigh, to see the sea swell and rage on this sort as it doth. And to confess the truth, we have double cause; as well because we have deserved this sour sauce by reason of our unthankfulness and many sins, which the Lord pardon! as because God's glory is trodden under foot. But this comfort we have, that as God our good Father will not the death of a sinner, so will he order this gear<sup>1</sup> most to his glory and our joy and comfort, if we repent now, and heartily lament our evils, use earnest, humble, and often, yea continual prayer, and cast ourselves wholly on him and his goodness, still labouring to loath this life, and longing for the life to come, for the which we should account this (as it is,) a very vale of misery, much to be mourned in, because the time of our habitation herein and exile is prolonged. God grant us his Holy Spirit, to strengthen us in his truth professed; that we may

<sup>1</sup> thing

persevere to the end, in the joyful and courageous confessing of his Christ. Amen.

I pray you continue, as I trust you do, to keep both soul and body pure in God's service. Strive to enter in at the narrow gate, though you leave your lands and goods behind you. It is not lost which for Christ's sake we leave, but lent to a great usury. Remember that this time is come but to try us. God make us faithful to the end. God keep us always as his children. Amen. I pray you commend me to Master Osbourn, and to all our good brethren in the Lord. The peace of Christ be with us all. Amen, amen.

Yours in Christ,

John Bradford.

### To a friend of his,

Instructing him how he should answer his adversaries.

My good brother, our merciful God, and dear Father through Christ, open your eyes effectually to see, and your heart ardently to desire, the everlasting joy which he hath prepared for his slaughter sheep; that is, for such as shrink not from his truth for any storm's sake. Amen.

When you shall come before the magistrates to give an answer of the hope which is in you, do it with all reverence and simplicity. And because you may be something afraid<sup>1</sup> by the power of the magistrates, and cruelty which they will threaten against you, I would you set before you the good father Moses, to follow his example: for he set the invisible God before his eyes of faith, and with them looked upon God and his glorious majesty and power, as with his corporal eyes he saw Pharaoh and all his fearful terrors. So do you, my dearly beloved; let your inward eyes give such light unto you, that, as you know you are before the magistrates, so, and much more, you and they also are present before the face of God; which will give such wisdom to you, fearing him and seeking his praise, as the enemies shall wonder at: and further; he will so order their hearts and doings, that they shall, will they nill they, serve God's providence towards you, (which you cannot avoid though you would,) as shall be most to his glory and your everlasting comfort. Therefore, my good brother, let your whole study be only to please God; put him always before your eyes, for he is on your right hand lest you should be moved; he is faithful, and never will suffer you to be tempted above that he will make you able to bear. Yea, every hair of your head he hath numbered, so that one of them shall not perish without his good will; which cannot be but good unto you, in that he is become

your father through Christ : and therefore, as he hath given you to believe in him, (God increase this belief in us all !) so doth he now graciously give unto you to suffer for his name's sake ; the which you ought with all thankfulness to receive, in that you are made worthy to drink of the self-same cup which not only the very sons of God have drank of before you, but even the very natural Son of God himself hath brought you good luck.<sup>1</sup> Oh, he of his mercy make us thankful to pledge him again. Amen.

*1 hath  
pledged  
you to*

Because the chiefest matter they will trouble you and go about to deceive you withal, is the sacrament, not of Christ's body and blood but *of the altar*, as they call it, thereby destroying the sacrament which Christ instituted, I would you noted these two things. First, that the sacrament of the altar which the priest offereth in the mass, and eateth privately with himself, is not the sacrament of Christ's body and blood instituted by him ; as Christ's institution, plainly written and set forth in the Scriptures, being compared to their using of it, plainly doth declare.

Again, if they talk with you of Christ's sacrament instituted by him, whether it be Christ's body or no, answer them, that as to the eyes of your reason, to your taste and corporal senses it is bread and wine, and therefore the Scripture calleth it after the consecration so : even so to the eyes, taste, and senses of your faith, which ascendeth to the right hand of God in heaven where Christ sitteth, it is in very deed Christ's body and blood, which spiritually your soul feedeth on to everlasting life, in faith and by faith, even as your body presently feedeth on the sacramental bread and sacramental wine.

By this means, as you shall not allow transubstantiation, nor none of their popish opinions, so shall you declare the sacrament to be a matter of faith, and not of reason, as the papists make it. For they deny God's omnipotency, in that they say, Christ is not there if bread be there ; but faith looketh on the omnipotency of God joined with his promise, and doubteth not but that Christ is able to give that he promiseth us spiritually by faith, the bread still remaining in substance, as well as if the substance of bread were taken away ; for Christ saith not in any place, This is no bread. But of this gear<sup>2</sup> God shall instruct you, if you hang on his promise, and pray for the power and wisdom of his Spirit : which undoubtedly as you are bound to look for, praying for it, so he hath bound himself by his promise to give it ; the which thing he grant unto us both, and to all his people, for his name's sake, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*2 matter*

John Bradford.



A Letter written to a Dear Friend of his :

Wherein he entreateth,<sup>1</sup> as briefly, so most perfectly, godly, soundly, and pithily of God's holy election, free grace, and mercy in Jesus Christ. <sup>1</sup> *discourseth*

Faith of God's election, I mean, to believe that we be in very deed the children of God through Christ, and shall be for ever inheritors of everlasting life, through the only grace of God our Father in the same Christ, is, of all things which God requireth of us, not only the most principal, but also the whole sum; so that without this faith there is nothing we do that can please God. Rom. 14.  
Heb. 11. And therefore as God first requireth it, in saying, I am the Lord thy God, &c., that is, I remit thee thy sins and give thee my Holy Spirit, and for ever will I keep thee; so our Saviour would have us to be persuaded when we come to pray, and therefore teacheth, yea, he commandeth us, to call God our Father; whose power were not infinite, as we profess in the first article of our belief, where we call him expressly our Almighty Father, if we shall doubt of his final favour. Exod. 20.  
Matt. 6. And therefore I cannot but much marvel at some men, which seem godly, and yet are in this behalf too malicious<sup>2</sup> both to God and man. For what is more seemly to God than mercy, which is most magnified of the elect children of God? <sup>2</sup> *unjust* And what is more seemly to man than humility, the which is not nor cannot be indeed but in the elect of God? for they alone attribute nothing at all to themselves continually but damnation, that in God only and for ever may be their whole glory. Jer. 9. But this notwithstanding, there is that have gone about together,<sup>3</sup> yea, to set abroad enormities out of the doctrine of God's most holy and comfortable election and predestination; where<sup>4</sup> the same doctrine hath more commodities, than all the whole world can be able to conceive, much less to express. For what destroyeth enormities so much as it doth? It overthroweth the most pestilent papistical poison of doubting of God's favour, which is the very dungeon of despair, and of the contempt of God. 3 per-  
haps, to  
gather  
4 *whereas* It destroyeth the Ethnic<sup>5</sup> opinion of Fortune. <sup>5</sup> *heathenish* It comforteth most comfortably in the cross, and casteth down all cogitations that would else cover us with sorrow and dolour, in telling that all things shall turn to the best. Rom. 8. It maketh us modest and putteth away pride in prosperity, by pulling from men meriting or deserving. It enforceth men to love and carefully to travail for their brethren, utterly impugning<sup>6</sup> the contempt of any. <sup>6</sup> *forbidding* It provoketh to piety, and is the greatest enemy to ungodliness that can be, by teaching us of what dignity we be, of what price even our bodies be, temples of the Holy Ghost, and members of Christ. 1 Cor. 1.  
1 John 1.  
1 Cor. 6. 3. It engendereth a true desire of our home in heaven, and so to despise this world, and the things that this world hath in estimation. It maketh man wholly and

continually to give over himself to be careful, not for himself but for others, and for those things that make to God's glory. It helpeth very much to the true understanding of the Scriptures; and preserveth from errors, by knowing what is to be attributed to the law, to the gospel, to the ministry, to the vocal word, to the Old Testament, to the New Testament, to the Sacraments, to faith, to works, to prayer, to penance,<sup>1</sup> to God, to man, &c. For

<sup>1</sup> *repentance*  
Col 1.

by the spirit of election we see and know Christ, in whom dwelleth all the riches and treasures of knowledge. It setteth up Christ's kingdom, and utterly overthroweth the wisdom, power, choice, and ableness of man, that all glory may be given only unto God. But what go I about to reckon the commodities coming out of the doctrine of God's election, in that they be innumerable? This is a sum; that, where<sup>2</sup> a Christian man's life hath respect to God, to man, and to himself, to live godly, justly, and soberly, all is grounded in predestination in Christ. For who liveth godly, but he that believeth? And who believeth, but such as are ordained to eternal life? Who liveth justly, but such as love their neighbours? And whence springeth this love, but of God's election before the beginning of the world, that we might be blameless by love? Who liveth soberly, but such as be holy? and who are those, but only they that be endued with the spirit of sanctification, which is the seal of our election which (by election) do believe?

<sup>2</sup> *whereas*  
Tit. 2.

Acts 13.

Eph. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cor. 1.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I have taken in hand at this present something to write to you and for your sake in this matter, which herewithal I have sent unto you; as well to be a help to you herein, as also to be a pledge of my careful love and hearty desire I have for your continuance in the truth (wherein I trust you stand presently,) when I am dead and burned, as I look for none other, so soon as God shall give leave to his enemies for my weal and endless joy in Christ: to whom, as to a most faithful pastor, from the bottom of my heart I do commend and bequeath you, beseeching him to watch over you night and day as over one of his poor lambs, to keep you out of the claws of the lion and mouth of the wolves, to his glory, and your eternal joy and comfort in him. Amen.

All things  
must be  
esteemed  
after God's  
will.

THERE is neither virtue nor vice to be considered according to any outward action, nor according the will and wisdom of man, but according to the will of God. Whatsoever is conformable thereto, the same is virtue, and the action that springeth thereof is laudable and good, howsoever it appear otherwise to the eyes and reason of man: as was the lifting up of Abraham's hand to have slain his son. Whatsoever is not conformable to the will of God, that same is vice, and the action springing thereof is to be disallowed and taken for evil; and that so much the more and greater evil, by how much it is not consonant and agreeing to

Gen. 22.

God's will, although it seem fair otherwise to man's wisdom ; as was Peter's wish of making three tabernacles, and the request of some which would have had fire to come down from heaven, upon a zeal to God, &c.

Matt 17.  
Mark 9.

Now the will of God is not so known as in his word : therefore according to it must vice and virtue, good and evil, be judged ; and not according to the judgment, wisdom, reason, and collection of any man, or of all the whole world, if all the angels in heaven should take their part.

God's will must be sought for in his word

But this word of God, which is written in the canonical books of the Bible, doth plainly set forth unto us, that God hath of his own mercy and good-will, and to the praise of his grace and glory, in Christ elected some and not all, whom he hath predestinated unto everlasting life in the same Christ, and in his time calleth them, justifieth them, and glorifieth them, so that they shall never perish and err to damnation finally.

God's word is written in the bible

In the bible is predestination published.

Therefore to affirm, teach, and preach this doctrine, hath in it no hurt, no vice, no evil ; much less then hath it any enormities (as some do affirm) to the eyes and spirit of them which are guided, and will be, by the word of God.

No enormity is therefore in it.

That God, the eternal Father of mercies, before the beginning of the world, hath of his own mercy and good-will, and to the praise of his grace and glory, elected in Christ some and not all of the posterity of Adam, whom he hath predestinate unto eternal life, and calleth them in his time, justifieth them, and glorifieth them, so that they shall never perish or err to damnation finally : that this proposition is true, and according to God's plain and manifest word, by the help of his Holy Spirit (which in the name of Jesus Christ I humbly beseech him, of his mercy, plenteously to give to me at this present and for ever, to the sanctification of his holy name,) by the help (I say) of his Holy Spirit, I trust so evidently to declare, that no man of God shall be able by the word of God ever to impugn it, much less to confute it.

The proposition that sheweth what is meant by election and predestination, which he after proveth by the parts out of the text of St. Paul immediately following.

In the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, the Apostle saith thus : Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath blessed us with all manner of blessings in heavenly things by Christ, according as he hath elect (or chosen) us in him, before the foundation of the world was laid, that we should be holy and without blame before him through love : and hath predestinate us (or ordained us) through Jesus Christ, to be heirs unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherewith he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, by whom we have received redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace ; which grace he hath shed on us abundantly in all wisdom and understanding, and hath opened unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he pur-

Eph. 1.

posed in himself, to have it declared when the time was full come, that he might gather together all things by (or in) Christ, as well the things that be in heaven, as the things that be in earth, even in (or by) him : by (or in) whom we are made heirs, being thereto predestinate according to the purpose of him which worketh all things according to the decree (or counsel) of his own will, that we which hoped before (you) in Christ, should be unto the praise of his glory : in whom ye also hoped, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation ; wherein ye also believing, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption (or full fruition) of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

These be the words of Paul ; which I have faithfully translated according to the very text in the Greek, as by the judgment of all that be learned I desire herein to be tried. Out of the which words of Paul we may well perceive every thing affirmed in my proposition, as I will give occasion plainly, to them that will, to see it.

First, that the cause of God's election is of his good-will, the Apostle sheweth, in saying that it is through his love, whereby we are holy and without blame : also, According to the good pleasure of his will : according to his good pleasure purposed in himself : according to his purpose which worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Secondly, that election was before the beginning of the world, the Apostle plainly sheweth, in saying, that we were chosen before the foundation of the world was laid : and afterwards, in calling it the mystery of his will purposed with himself, in time to be declared.

Thirdly, that election is in Christ, the Apostle doth so flatly and plainly set it forth, that I need not here to repeat it. We (saith he) are chosen in him : we are heirs by him : we are accepted by him : we are gathered together in him, &c.

Fourthly, that election is of some of Adam's posterity and not of all, we may plainly see it, if we consider that he maketh the true demonstration of it, believing, hoping, and having the earnest of the Spirit. In whom ye hoped (saith he), after ye heard the word, &c. In whom ye believed, were sealed up, &c. Again, in attributing to the elect forgiveness of sins, holiness, blameless living, being in Christ, &c. That we should be holy, saith he, &c. ; we have received forgiveness of sins, &c. Who seeth not that these are not common to all men ? All men have not faith, saith Paul elsewhere. None believed (saith Luke), but such as were ordained to eternal life. None believe, but such as be born of God. None believe truly, but such as have good hearts, and keep God's seed to bring forth fruit by patience. So that it is plain (faith being a demonstration of God's election, to them that be of years of discretion), that all men are not elect : because all men

The cause of God's election is his grace and good will.

The time of God's election was from the beginning.

Election is in Christ.

Election is not of all men.

2 Thes. 3.  
Acts 13.  
1 John 1.  
Matt. 13.  
Faith is a demonstration of election to such as be of years of discretion.

believe not. For he that believeth in the Lord, shall be as Mount Sion, that is, he shall never be removed: for if he be removed, that is, finally perish, surely he never truly believed. But what go I about to lighten a candle in the clear sun-light, when our Saviour plainly saith that all be not chosen, but few? Many be called, saith he, but few be chosen. And in the 2nd chap. to the Ephesians the Apostle plainly saith, that the great riches of God's mercy, through his exceeding great love, hath saved them before their parents and many other Gentiles, which were excluded from Christ, and strangers from the promise, hopeless, godless, &c. Wherethrough we may be occasioned to cry, Oh the depth of the judgments of God, which is just in all his doings, and holy in all his works; extending his mercy, after his good pleasure and will, above all his works.

Psa. 125.

Matt. 20.

Rom. 11.

Psa. 144.

Fifthly, that God hath predestinate these, thus elect, unto everlasting life in Christ, the Apostle doth also in the words before written declare, in saying, And hath predestinate us through Jesus Christ to be heirs unto himself. Again, By him (saith he) ye are made heirs and predestinate to the praise of his glory. So saith the Apostle elsewhere: Whom he hath predestinate, them hath he predestinate to be like fashioned unto the shape of his Son. And therefore Christ saith, Rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven.

Election is to eternal life.

Rom. 8.

Luke 10.

Sixthly, that the end of election is to the praise of God's glory and grace, the Apostle sheweth here, in saying, We are predestinate to be holy and without blame before God, &c; in saying, We are predestinate to the glory of his grace; and in saying also, Unto the praise of his glory: so that nothing can be more manifest.

The end of election is to the praise and glory of God.

Seventhly, that predestination is not without vocation in God's time, and justification, the Apostle here doth teach, in bringing us to the consideration of hearing the word of truth, believing, receiving the Holy Spirit, remission of sins, &c. In whom, saith he, ye have hoped, after that ye heard the word of truth, &c. Again, By whom ye have redemption, that is, remission of sins through the shedding of his blood, &c. Also, He hath in his full time declared the mystery of his will, &c. Unto the Romans the Apostle sheweth it most manifestly, in saying, Whom he hath predestinate, them he calleth: whom he calleth, them he justifieth. Whereby we may see, that predestination or election is not universal of all, for all be not justified.

Election is not without vocation and justification in time.

Eighthly, and last of all, that election is so certain that the elect and predestinate to eternal life shall never perish or err to damnation finally, the Apostle doth here also very plainly shew, in saying, that they are predestinate to the praise of God's grace. He saith not, to the praise of his justice, to the praise of his wisdom, to the praise of his power, (although he might most truly

Election is certain for ever.

say so,) but he saith, to the praise of his grace : which were not grace if there were any respect at all of works on our behalf, for then were grace not grace. If there should be any condemnation of the elect and predestinate to eternal life, it must needs be because of their sins : but where were the praise of God's grace then, which is the end of God's election? Shall we not by this means make God's election without an end, and so without a head, and so no election at all, as some would have, further than they elect themselves? Let such fear they shall not find the benefit of God's election, because they seek it as the Israelites did, and not as the elect, which not only find it, but also obtain it.

Rom. 11. The other are blinded, as it is written : God hath given them the spirit of unquietness, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should [not] hear, even to this day, &c. Secondly, he sheweth the certainty of salvation to them that be elected, in saying that they be accepted in the Beloved. Once accepted and beloved in Christ, and ever beloved : for whom he loveth, he loveth to the end : and God's gifts are such that he cannot repent him of them.

John 13. And therefore saith Christ, I know whom I have chosen ; attributing to election the cause of final perseverance. By which thing Judas was seen not to be elected to eternal life, although he was elected to the office of an Apostle, as Saul was elected to the office of a king. Which kind of election is to be discerned, in reading the Scriptures, from this kind of election the which I speak of now ; that is, from election to eternal life in Christ. Thirdly, he sheweth the certainty of salvation of the elect, by calling them heirs. For if we be heirs of God, then are we fellow-heirs with Christ, to be afflicted and glorified with Christ : and therefore saith he, According to the decree of his own will. Lo, he calleth it a decree or counsel which shall stand, as Esay saith, The counsel of the Lord shall stand. Fourthly, he sheweth this certainty, by saying, that they are elect and predestinate to the praise of God's glory, which we should more care for, than for the salvation of all the world. This glory of the Lord is set forth as well in them that perish and are reprobates, as in the elect ; and therefore St. John, bringing in the place of Esay speaking of the reprobate, saith that Esay spake that when he saw the glory of the Lord. This glory of the Lord to be set forth by us, is a great mercy and benefit of God. I am assured, that if the very devils and reprobate did not repine hereat, but were thankful that they might be ministers in any point to set forth God's glory—I am assured (I say) that they should find no hell nor torments. Their hell and torments cometh of the love they have to themselves, and of the malice, envy, and hatred they have against God and his glory. Let them tremble and fear ; they may not away with the glory of the Lord in election and reprobation. Let not their eyes be evil, because God is good, and doth good to whom

it pleaseth him : wrong he doth to no man, nor can do, for then he were not righteous, and so no God. He cannot condemn the just, for then were he untrue, because his word is contrary. He cannot condemn the penitent and believer, for that were against his promise. Let us therefore labour, study, cry, and pray for repentance and faith, and then cannot we be damned ; because we are the blessed of the Father before all worlds, and therefore we believe, therefore we repent. And forasmuch as it pertaineth to us which be within, to see and to speak of those things which are given unto us of God in Christ, let us labour hereabouts, and leave them that be without to the Lord, which will judge them in his time. The Apostle prayeth for the Ephesians, for none other wisdom and revelation from God, than whereby they might know God, and have their minds illumined, to see what they should hope for by their vocation, and how rich the glory of his inheritance is upon his saints. Further than this, I think is unseemly for us to search ; until we have sought out, how rich God's goodness is and will be to us his children. The which we can never do, but, the more we go thereabouts, and the more we taste his goodness, the more we shall love him, and loath all things that displease him. This (I say) let us do, and not be too busy-bodies in searching the majesty and glory of God, or in nourishing in any wise that doubting of our salvation, whereto we are ready enough, and the devil goeth about nothing else so much as that : for by it we are dull to do good to others, we are so careful for ourselves. By it we are more dull to do good to ourselves, because we stand in doubt whether it profiteth us or no. By it we dishonour God ; either in making him as though he were not true, or else as though our salvation came not only and altogether from him, but hanged partly on ourselves. By it the devil will bring men at length to despair and hatred of God. Doubt once of thy salvation, and continue therein, and surely he then will ask no more. It was the first thing wherewith he tempted Christ : If thou be the Son of God, &c. It is the first and principal dart he casteth at God's elect. But as he prevailed not against Christ, no more shall he do against any of his members ; for they have the shield of faith which quenqueth his fiery darts. They praise God night and day ; how then should they perish ? The angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about them ; how then should Satan prevail ? They are borne in the hands of the angels, lest they should hurt their feet at any stone. God hath given commandment to his angels over them. The angels are ministers unto them. Their names are written in the book of life, and therefore Christ bade them rejoice, as Paul doth the Philippians, for nothing shall separate them from the love wherewith God loveth them in Christ Jesus, who saith that it is impossible for them to err finally to damnation ; for he is their light to illumine

Matt. 25.

1 Cor. 2.

1 Cor. 5.

Eph. 1.

Col. 2.

Matt. 4.

Eph. 6.

Luke 18.

Psa. 34.

Psa. 92.

Heb. 1.

Luke 10.

Phil. 4.

Rom. 8.

Psa. 18.  
John 6, 10.  
Heb. 3.  
John 5, 6.  
John 17.  
Heb. 5.  
Rom. 8.  
John 10.  
1 Cor. 1.  
1 John 4.  
Psa. 67.  
Hos. 6.

their darkness. They are given to him to keep, and he is faithful over all God's children. He saith, he will keep them so that they shall never perish. After they believe, they are entered already into everlasting life. Christ hath set them there already: he hath committed them into his Father's hands by prayer, which we know is sure; and therefore death, hell, devils, nor all power, sins, nor mischief, shall never pull us out of our Head's hands, whose members we are; and therefore, receiving of his Spirit as we do, we cannot but bring forth the fruits thereof, though now and then the flesh fail us. But the Lord, even our Lord, be praised, which is more strong in us than he which is in the world. He always putteth under his hand that we lie not still, nor shall do, as the reprobate, whose piety is as the morning dew, soon come and soon gone, and therefore they cannot continue to the end. Cannot? No, they will not if they could; because they hate God and his glory, and therefore all them that seek it or set it forth: whereas the elect love all men, and seek to do all men good in God, suspending their judgments of others, that they may stand or fall to the Lord and not to them.

Hitherto out of this one place of Paul to the Ephesians, if the matter of election and predestination be so fully set forth, to God's glory and to the comfort of his church, how may we suppose is this matter set forth in the whole body and books of the canonical Scripture? Whereto I had rather send you with this candle-light which I have now given you, than, in a matter so manifest, to make more ado than needeth.

John Bradford.

### To a Woman that desired to know his mind,

Whether she, refraining from the Mass, might be present at the popish Mattins or no.

I beseech Almighty God, our heavenly Father, to be merciful unto us, and to increase in you, my good sister, the knowledge and love of his truth; and at this present give me grace so to write to you something of the same, as may make to his glory, and our own comfort and confirmation in him, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Whether you may come with safe conscience to the church now, that is, to the service used commonly, in part, as at Mattins or at Evensong, or no, is your desire to have me to write something for your further stay. My dearly beloved, although your benefits towards me might perchance make you to think, that in respect thereof I would bear with that which else were not to be borne withal, yet by God's grace I am purposed simply, and with-



out all such respect in this matter, to speak to you the truth according to my conscience, as I may be able to stand unto, when I shall come before the Lord. First therefore, go about to learn perfectly the first lesson to be learned of all that profess Christ; that is, to deny yourself, and in nothing to seek yourself. Secondly, learn after this, to begin at the next lesson to it; which is, to seek God in all things you do and leave undone. Thirdly, know that then you seek God, when in his service you follow his word and not man's phantasies, custom, multitude, &c. and when with your brother you follow the rule of charity, that is, to do as you would be done by. In these is a sum of all the counsel I can give you, if that hereto I admonish you of the service now used, which is not according to God's word, but rather against God's word directly, and in manner wholly. So that you going to the service is a declaration that you have not learned the first lesson, nor never can learn it so long as you go thither: therefore that second lesson you shall utterly lose, if you cease not the seeking yourself; that is, if for company, custom, father or friend, life or goods, you seem to allow that which God disalloweth.

And this, that you the better may perceive, I purpose, by God's grace, briefly to shew. First, the Mattins and Evensong is in a tongue forbidden publicly to be used in the congregation, that perceiveth not the tongue. Read how Paul affirmeth it, to pray 1 Cor. 14 in an unknown tongue to be against God's commandment. This one (I trow) were enough, if nothing else were. For how can God's glory be sought, where his word and commandment is wilfully broken? How can charity to man stand, when charity to God, which is obedience to his word, is overthrown? Again, both in Mattins and in Evensong is idolatry maintained for God's service: for there is invocation and prayer made to saints departed this life, which robbeth God of that glory which he will give to none other.

Moreover, this service, and the setters forth of it, condemneth the English service as heresy; thereby falling into God's curse, Essay 5. which is threatened to all such as call good evil, and evil good, whereof they shall be partakers that do communicate with them. Besides this, this Latin service is a plain mark of antichrist's catholic synagogue: so that the communicants and approvers of it thereby declare themselves to be members of the same synagogue, and so cut off from Christ and his church; whose exterior mark is the true administration of God's word and sacraments. Furthermore, the example of your going thither to allow the religion of antichrist (as doubtless you do indeed, howsoever in heart you think), occasioneth the obstinate to be utterly intractable, the weak papists to be more obstinate, the strong gospellers to be sore weakened, and the weak gospellers to be utterly overthrown: which things, how great offences they be, no pen is able to utter

by letters. All these evils you shall be guilty of, that company with these in religion exteriorly, from whom you are admonished to fly. If Christ be Christ, follow him: gather with him, lest you scatter abroad. Serve God, not only in spirit, but also in body. Make not your body, now a member of Christ, a member of antichrist. Come out from amongst them, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing. Confess Christ and his truth, not only in heart but also in tongue, yea, in very deed; which few gossellers do. Indeed they deny him, and therefore had need to tremble, lest that Christ will deny them in the last day: the which day if it were set before our eyes often, then would the pleasures and treasures of this world be but trifles. Therefore, good sister, often have it before your eyes; daily set yourself and your doings as before the judgment seat of Christ now, that hereafter you be not called into judgment. Think that it will little profit you to win the whole world, and to lose your own soul. Mark Christ's lessons well: He that will save his life shall lose it. The Father from heaven commandeth you to hear Christ; and he saith, Follow me: this can you not do, and follow idolatry or idolaters. Fly from such, saith the Scripture. This God grant to you, to me, and to all God's children. Amen. Thus in haste I have accomplished your request. God grant that, as you have done me much good bodily, so this may be a little mean to do you some good spiritually. Amen. If time would serve, I would have written more at large. The 2nd of March, Anno 1556.

To the worshipful, and in God my most dear friend, the  
Lady Vane.

The good Spirit of God our Father be more and more plentifully perceived of your good ladyship, through the mediation and merits of our dear Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Although your benefits towards me have deserved at my hands the service I can do for you, yet, right worshipful and dearly beloved in the Lord, the true fear of God and the love of his truth, which I perceive to be in you, especially and above all other things doth bind me hereunto. This bearer hath told me that your desire is, to have something sent to you concerning the usurped authority of the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome (which is undoubtedly the great Antichrist, of whom the apostles do so much admonish us); that you may have as well something the more to stay you on, as also wherewith to answer the adversaries, because you may perchance therein be something opposed. To satisfy this your desire I will briefly go about; and so, that I will, by God's grace, fully set forth the same, to enarm<sup>1</sup> you to with-

stand the assaults of the papists herein, if you mark well and read over again that which I now write.

The papists do place in pre-eminence over the whole church the pope; thereby displacing Christ, which is the head of the church, that giveth life to the whole body, and by his Spirit doth make lively every member of the same. This they do, without all Scriptures. For where<sup>1</sup> they bring in this, spoken to Peter, <sup>1</sup> *whereas* Feed my sheep; I would gladly know whether this was not commanded unto others also. As for that, which perchance they will urge, that he spake to Peter by name; if they had any learning, they would easily perceive how that it was not for any such cause as they pretend, but rather, by a threefold commandment to restore to him the honour of an apostle, which he had lost by his threefold denial. And how dare they interpret this word, My sheep, my lambs, to be the universal church of Christ? I trow, a man might easily by the like reason prove, that Peter himself had resigned that which Christ had given to him, in exhorting his fellow pastors to feed the flock of Christ. Is not this pretty stuff? Because Christ saith to Peter, Feed my sheep, therefore he ought to rule the universal and whole church of Christ! If Peter do truly write unto others that they should do the like, that is, feed Christ's flock, either he translateth his right and authority committed to him upon them, or else he doth participate and communicate it with them. So that foolishly they go about to establish that which hath no ground. Peter indeed was a shepherd of the sheep; but such a one as bestowed his labour on them, so far as he could stretch out himself by his ministry. But the papists prate that he had full power over all churches: wherein they may see Paul to improve them, for else he had done unjustly in denying them the superior place. Howbeit, who ever yet read, that Peter did take any thing upon him over churches committed unto other men? Was not he sent of the church, and sent as one not having rule over the rest? I grant that he was an excellent instrument of God; and, for the excellence of his gifts, whensoever they met together, place therefore was commonly given unto him. But what is this to the purpose, to make him ruler and head over all the whole church, because he was so over a small congregation?

But be it so that Peter had as much given to him as they do affirm; who yet will grant that Peter had a patrimony given for his heirs? He hath left, say the papists, to his successors, the self-same right which he received. Oh Lord God, then must his successor be a Satan, for he received that title of Christ himself. I would gladly have the papists to shew me one place of succession mentioned in the Scriptures. I am sure that when Paul purposely pointeth out the whole administration of the church, he neither maketh one head, nor any inheritable primacy; and yet he is altogether in commendation of unity. After he hath made mention

of one God the Father, of one Christ, of one Spirit, of one body of the church, of one faith, and of one baptism, then he describeth the mean and manner how unity is to be kept; namely, because unto every pastor is grace given, after the measure wherewith Christ hath endowed them. Where, I pray you, is now any title of plenitudinis potestatis, of fulness, of power? When he calleth home every one unto a certain measure, why did he not forthwith say, one pope? which thing he could not have forgotten, if the thing had been as the papists make it.

But let us grant, that perpetuity of the primacy in the church was established in Peter: I would gladly learn why the seat of the primacy should be rather at Rome than elsewhere. Marry, say they, because Peter's chair was at Rome. This is even like to this; that, because Moses the great prophet, and Aaron the first priest, exercised their offices unto their death in the desert, therefore the principallest place of the Jewish church should be in the wilderness.

But grant them their reason, that it is good. What should Antioch claim? For Peter's chair was there also: wherein Paul gave him a check, which was unseemly and unmannerly done of Paul, that would not give place to his president and better. No, say the papists, Rome must have this authority because Peter died there. But what and if a man should by probable conjectures shew that it is but a fable, which is feigned of Peter's bishopric at Rome? Read how Paul doth salute very many private persons, when he writeth to the Romans. Three years after his epistle made, he was brought to Rome prisoner. Luke telleth, that he was received of the brethren: and yet in all these no mention at all of Peter, which then by their stories was at Rome. Belike he was proud, as the pope and prelates be, or else he would have visited Paul. Paul, being in prison in Rome, did write divers epistles, in which he expresseth the names of many which were in comparison of Peter but rascal<sup>1</sup> personages; but of Peter he speaketh never a word. Surely if Peter had been there, this silence of him had been suspicious. In the second epistle to Timothy, Paul complaineth that no man was with him in his defence, but all had left him. If Peter had been then at Rome, as they write, then either Paul had belied him, or Peter had played his Peter's part. Luke xxiii. In another place, how doth he blame all that were with him, only Timothy excepted. Therefore we may well doubt whether Peter was at Rome bishop, as they prate; for, all this time and long before, they say that Peter was bishop there. But I will not stir up coals in this matter. If Rome be the chief seat because Peter died there, why should not Antioch be the second? Why should not James and John, which were taken with Peter to be as pillars, why, I say, should not their seats have honour next to Peter's seat? Is not

<sup>1</sup> inferior

<sup>2</sup> Tim. 4.

Phl. 2.

this gear<sup>1</sup> preposterous, that Alexandria, where Mark, which was <sup>1 thing</sup> but one of his disciples, was bishop, should be preferred before Ephesus, where John the Evangelist taught and was bishop; and before Jerusalem, where not only James taught and died bishop, but also Christ Jesus, our Lord and High Priest for ever? By whom being master, I hope, honour should be given to his chair, more than to the chair of his chaplains. I need to speak nothing how that Paul telleth, Peter's apostleship to concern rather circumcision or the Jews, and therefore properly pertaineth not to us. Neither do I need to bring in Gregorius, the sixth bishop of Rome, which was about the year of our Lord 600: who plainly in his works doth write, that this title of primacy, and to be head over all churches under Christ, is a title meet and agreeing only to Antichrist; and therefore he calleth it a profane, a mischievous, and an horrible title. Whom should we believe now, if we will neither believe apostle nor pope?

If I should go about to tell how this name was first gotten by Phocas, I should be too long. I purpose, God willing, to set it forth at large in a work which I have begun of Antichrist, if God for his mercies' sake give me life to finish it. For this present, therefore, I shall desire your ladyship to take this in good part. If they will needs have the bishop of Rome to be acknowledged for the head of the church, then will I urge them that they shall give us a bishop. But they obtrude unto us a butcher rather, or a bite-sheep, than a bishop. They brag of Peter's succession, of Christ's vicar; this is always in their mouth. But, alas, how can we call him Christ's vicar, that resisteth Christ, oppugneth his verity, persecuteth his people, and, like a prelate, preferreth himself above God and man? How, or wherein, doth the pope and Christ agree? How supplieth he Peter's ministry, that boasteth of his succession? Therefore to begin withal, which I will use presently for a conclusion, if the papists will have the bishop of Rome supreme head of the church of Christ on earth, they must, before they attain this, give us a bishop in deed and not in name. For whosoever he be that will make this the bond of unity, whatsoever the bishop of Rome be, surely this must needs follow, that they do nothing else but teach a most wicked defection and departing from Christ. But of this, if God lend me life, I purpose to speak more at large hereafter.—Now will I betake your ladyship unto the tuition of God our Father, and Christ, our only head, pastor, and keeper: to whom see that you cleave, by true faith which dependeth only upon the word of God; which if you do follow as a lantern to your feet and a light to your steps, you shall then avoid darkness, and the dangerous deeps whereinto the papists are fallen by the just judgment of God, and seek to bring us into the same dungeon with them, that, the blind following the blind, they both may fall into the ditch; out of the which God de-

liver them, according to his good will, and preserve us for his name's sake, that we, being in his light, may continue therein, and walk in it whilst it is day: so shall the night never oppress us, we going from light to light, from virtue to virtue, from faith to faith, from glory to glory, by the governance of God's good Spirit; which God our Father give unto us all for ever and ever. Amen.

From the King's Bench.

Your brother in bonds for the testimony of Jesus Christ,

John Bradford.

**To my own good brother, Master John Philpot,**

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

My dear brother, God our Father be praised for the good he doth work in you, and by you. Even now I have received your loving letters; wherein I see cause to bless God for the wisdom, love, and efficacy he hath and doth work in you, and by you. Go on, for God's sake, to seek unity in Christ. If any will go to work dissemblingly, refuse it not: either shall it increase his damnation, or occasion him the sooner to conversion. Judas' dissembling turned to the hurt of himself only. If once we come into an unity and love, then shall we not respect one another, neither take things in to the worse part. Nothing hindereth them more, than for that now they hear all that ever we speak cum prejudicio; where<sup>1</sup> if an unity be had, this prejudicium will be taken away, and so then shall they see the truth the sooner. Therefore, mine own dearest brother, go on and bring it to a good end. God our Father be with thee for ever. Amen.

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Pray, my good brother; and desire mine own fellow and beloved brother J. Careless to do the like. I shall pray for you, both in my prayers with others, and with myself alone, as for my most dear brother upon earth. I will not forget, by God's grace, to write in the behalf of our brethren in necessity. Jesus Christ, our sweet Saviour, be with us all, Emanuel for ever. Amen.

Your own in the Lord,

John Bradford,

**To my friends and brethren in the Lord, R. Cole and  
N. Shyterden.**

I wish to you, my good brethren, the same grace of God in Christ, which I wish and pray the Father of mercies to give to me, for his holy name's sake. Amen.

Your letter though I have not read myself, because I would not alienate my mind from conceived things to write to others, yet I have heard the sum of it, that it is of God's election; wherein I will briefly write to you my faith, and how I think it good and meet for a Christian man to wade in it. I believe that Man, made after the image of God, did fall from that blessed state, to the condemnation of himself and all his posterity. I believe that Christ, for man being thus fallen, did appose<sup>1</sup> himself to the justice of God, a mediator, paying the ransom and price of redemption, for Adam and his whole posterity that refuse it not finally. I believe that all that believe in Christ (I speak of such as be of years of discretion,) are partakers of Christ and all his merits. I believe that faith, and to believe in Christ, (I speak not now of faith that men have by reason of miracles, 10, 2, 12 Acts 8, or by reason of earthly commodity, Matt. 13, custom, and authority of men, which is commonly seen; the hearts of them that so believe being not right and simple before God: but I speak of that faith which indeed is the true faith, the justifying and regenerating faith)—<sup>Ex. 14.</sup> I believe, I say, that this faith and belief in Christ is the work and gift of God, given to none other than to those which be the children of God, that is, to those whom GOD the Father, before the beginning of the world, hath predestinated in Christ unto eternal life. Thus do I wade in predestination,\* in such sort as God hath pacified<sup>2</sup> and opened it. <sup>2 settled</sup> Though in God it be the first, yet to us it is last opened. And therefore I begin with creation, from thence I come to redemption, so to justification, and so to election. On this sort I am sure, that, warily and wisely, a man may walk in it easily by the light of God's Spirit, in and by his word; seeing this faith not to be given to all men, 2 Thess. 3, but to such as are born of God, predestinate before the world was made, after the purpose and good will of God; which will we may not call into disputation, but in trembling and fear submit ourselves to it, as to that which can will none otherwise than that which is holy, right, and good, how far soever otherwise it seem to the judgment of reason, which must needs be beaten down to be more careful for God's glory than for man's salvation, which dependeth only thereon, as all God's children full well see; for they seek not the glory which cometh of men, but the glory which cometh of

\* For the certainty of this faith search your hearts: if you have it, praise the Lord, for you are happy, and therefore cannot finally perish; for then happiness were not happiness, if it could be lost. When you fall, the Lord will put under his hand, that you shall not lie still. But if ye feel not this faith, then know that predestination is too high a matter for you to be disputers of, until ye have been better scholars in the school-house of repentance and justification; which is the grammar-school wherein we must be conversant and learned, before we go to the university of God's most holy predestination and providence.

GOD. Jer. 9, John 5. They know God to be a God which doth on earth not only mercy but also judgment ; which is justice, and most justice, although our foolish reason cannot see it. And in this knowledge they glory and rejoice, though others through vain curiosity grudge and murmur thereagainst. Thus briefly I have sent you my mind and meaning concerning this matter. Hereafter you shall have, I think, your letter particularly answered by Master Philpot : as also, if I have time and you so require it, I will do.

John Bradford.

**To my good Brother, R. Colr.**

Mine own good brother, our good and most merciful Father more and more embrace us in the arms of his mercy, as his loving and own natural children ; and give us one to embrace another in the arms of love as true brethren, that with one heart and mind we may praise his holy name in Christ our Saviour, and through the grace of his Spirit may mightily every one fight against sin, and all that is against the kingdom of Christ : whereunto, my beloved, we are called effectually to our everlasting felicity (I doubt not) ; praised be the name of our good God therefore, for ever and ever. Amen.

Mine own heart in the Lord, desire our brethren that every one would bend himself to bow : let us never break. Love suffereth long, and seeketh not herself. We have all one Father ; we are all brethren ; God keep us from dissension. If we cannot agree in all points, either the points perchance be not so necessary, or else by love we shall hereafter be brought to see that which yet is hid. If love may appear in all our doings, and that we seek one another with a simple and a single eye in God's sight, doubtless all prejudice, whereby we are letted<sup>1</sup> to see manifest things, will be had away, and we will take things spoken and done in the best part : and so, doubtless, the name of our Father shall be sanctified in us and by us, as by instruments of grace, and God's kingdom shall increase apace in us and by us also ; which thing he grant, for his mercies' sake. Amen.

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Commend me heartily, I pray you, to both those good women. Good I call them, because I am persuaded that God will deliver them, especially my good Mary. I will not cease, but even as for myself, to pray to God for them, and for you, my right dear brother in the Lord. If you were acquainted with Master Robert Harrington, you should find a plain Nathanael ; you should see the worst at the first. I dare say for him his only desire is to please God, and he is afraid to offend him. Pray for him, and for my good sister J. H., as I know she doth for you. The peace of God be with you, mine own in the Lord.

John Bradford.



## To my good Sister, Mistress Elizabeth Brown.

Good sister, God our Father make perfect the good he hath begun in you unto the end.

I am afraid to write unto you, because you so overcharge yourself at all times, even whensoever I do but send to you commendations. I would be more bold on you than on many others, and therefore you might suspend so great tokens till I should write unto you of my need; which thing doubtless I would do, if it urged me. Dear sister, I see your unfeigned love to me-wards in God, and have done of long time; the which I do recompence with the like, and will do by God's grace so long as I live; and therefore I hope not to forget you, but in my poor prayers to have you in remembrance, as I hope you have me. Otherwise I can do you no service, except it be now and then by my writing, to let<sup>1</sup> you from better exercise; where<sup>2</sup> yet the end of my writing is to excite and stir up your heart more earnestly to go on forwards in your well begun enterprise. For you know, none shall be crowned but such as strive lawfully; and none receiveth the glee,\* but those that run to the appointed mark. None shall be saved but such as<sup>3</sup> persist and continue to the very end. Therefore, dear sister, remember that we have need of patience, that when we have done the good will of God we may receive the promise. Patience and perseverance be the proper notes, whereby God's children are known from counterfeit. They that persevere not, were always but hypocrites. Many make good beginnings, yea, their progress seemeth marvellous, but yet after the end they fail. These were never of us, saith St. John: for if they had been of us, they would have continued unto the very end. Go to, therefore, mine own beloved in the Lord; as you have well begun, and well gone forward, so well persist and happily end; and then all is yours. Though this be sharp and sour, yet it is not tedious or long. Do all that ever you do, simply for GOD and as to God; so shall never unkindness nor any other thing make you to leave off from well doing, so long as you may do well. Accustom yourself now to see GOD continually, that he may be all in all unto you. In good things behold his mercy, and apply it unto yourself. In evil things and plagues behold his judgments, wherethrough learn to fear him. Beware of sin as the serpent of the soul, which spoileth us of all our ornature<sup>3</sup> and seemly apparel in God's sight. Let Christ crucified be your book to study on, and that both night and day. Mark your vocation, and be diligent in the works thereof; use hearty and earnest prayer, and that in Spirit. In all

<sup>1</sup> hinder  
<sup>2</sup> whereas  
<sup>2</sup> Tim. 2.

Hab. 10.

<sup>3</sup> ornaments

\* Glee. This word has occurred before, and was explained by goal. Perhaps it is glive; a sword or lance fixed in the ground, as the mark to run at, the prize to be won.

things give thanks to GOD our Father through Christ. Labour to have here life everlasting begun in you; for else it will not be elsewhere enjoyed. Set God's judgment often before your eyes; that, now examining yourself, you may make diligent suit and obtain never to come into judgment. Uncover your evils to God, that He may cover them. Beware of this antichristian trash; defile not yourself in soul or body therewith, but accomplish holiness in the fear of GOD, and bear no yoke with unbelievers. Look for the coming of the Lord, which is at hand: by earnest prayer and godly life hasten it. GOD our Father accomplish his good work in you. Amen. Commend me to my good mother Mistress Wilkinson, and to my very dear sister Mistress Warcup. I shall daily commend you all to GOD; and, I pray you, do the like for me.

John Bradford.

### To Mistress Brown.

Good sister, I beseech God to make perfect the good he hath begun in you, unto the very end. Amen.

This life more and more waxeth unto us as it should be, that is, a miserable life, a weeping life, a woeful life: and therefore let us long for our happy life, our laughing life, our joyful life; which we shall enjoy and then have in very deed, when we depart by death out of this dangerous state, wherein we now are by reason of this sinful flesh which we carry about us. Therefore let us prepare ourselves accordingly, and, in misery and sorrow, be glad through hope. Now we are dispersed; but we shall be gathered together again there, where we shall never part, but always be together in joy eternal. In hope hereof let us bear, with better will, our bitter burdens which we feel, and shall feel, in this miserable world. We have cause to thank God, that maketh this world unto us a wilderness. If so be therein we be patient, kiss God's rod, and humble ourselves before God, assuredly we shall come into the most pleasant land of rest. Wherefore, good sister, as I said I say again, Be merry with sorrow, rejoice in hope, be patient in trouble, pray in affliction; and, amongst other, I pray you heartily pray for me, that God would forgive me my unthankfulness, not only against you which is great indeed, but also against all his people, but especially against His majesty. As I can, I shall commend you unto the tuition<sup>1</sup> of our shepherd Christ; who always keep us as his lambs, for his holy name's sake. Amen.

Your afflicted brother,

John Bradford.

<sup>1</sup> protection

To a faithful Friend of his,

Whom, for his godly simplicity and singleness of heart in the ways of the Lord, he called Nathanael; as he doth also here in this letter

The merciful God and Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which loveth us as a most dear Father, and hath put upon him towards us the affection of a most tender mother towards her children, so that he can no less think upon us, (although of ourselves we be most unworthy, and deserve nothing less,) than she can think on her only begotten child in his distress; yea, if she should forget her child, as some unnatural mother will do, yet will he never forget us, although for a time he seem to sleep, that we might be occasioned to call loud and awake him: this good GOD keep you, my dear brother Nathanael, and your good yoke-fellow, my heartily beloved sister in the Lord, in all things now and for ever, to his glory and your eternal comfort. And also, of his goodness, he grant you both the feeling of that hope, which undoubtedly he hath laid up in store for you both, far passing the store and provision, not only which you had made, but all the world is able to make; as I trust already he hath wrought it in you, but I beseech him to increase it more and more, and kindle in you a hearty longing for the enjoying of the same: the which once felt and had indeed, then the means by the which we come thereto cannot be so greatly dreaded, as most men do dread them, because either they want this feeling (I mean it of altogether), or else because the sense of this present time and things therein are as a mist, to the hiding of those things from our sight, lest we should run and embrace them by hearty prayer: the spirit whereof God grant us—and indeed we should attain enough in this behalf, if we continued therein.

For auricular confession, wherein you desire my advice for your good yoke-fellow and family (my most dear brother), I am as ready to give it, as you to desire it; yea more glad, forasmuch as half a suspicion was in me (at the least, touching my dear sister your wife) of a lothing of my advice, that too much had been given; where<sup>1</sup> indeed I should lament my too little feeding you spiritually, <sup>1</sup> whereas as both you out of prison and in prison have fed me corporally. But as I always thought of her, so I yet think, that she is the child of GOD, whom God dearly loveth, and will in his good time, to her eternal comfort, give her her heart's desire, in sure feeling and sensible believing of this, which I would she had often in her mind: namely that he is her God and Father, through Christ Jesus our dear Lord and Saviour. A greater service to God she cannot give, than to believe this. If Satan say she

believeth not, to answer, not him but the Lord, and to say, Yea Lord, help my unbelief, and increase my poor faith, which Satan saith is no faith : make him a liar, Lord, as always he hath been, is, and shall be. Undoubtedly, sooner or later, God will graciously hear her groans, and keep all her tears in his bottle, yea, write them in his counting-book : for he is a righteous God, and hath no pleasure in the death of his creature : he loveth mercy, he will return and shew her his mercy : he will cast all her sins and iniquities into the bottom of the sea : and the longer that he tarrieth (as he doth it but to prove her), so the more liberally will he recompence her long looking ; which no less pleaseth him, than it grieveth now her outward Adam. For the mortification whereof, God useth this cross ; and therefore, if she desire to bear the same, doubtless God will make her able to bear it : and in presumption of his goodness and strength, let her cast herself wholly upon him : for he is faithful, and will assuredly confirm and bring to a happy end that good, which graciously he hath begun in her. The which thing I desire him to do, for his own glory and name's sake. Amen, amen.

And now to the matter. Confession auricular, as it was first used and instituted (which was by the way of a counsel asking,) I take to be among those traditions which are indifferent ; that is, neither unlawful, nor necessarily binding us, except the offence of the weak could not be avoided. But to consider it as it is now used, I write to you but as I think and what my mind is ; the which follow no further, than good men by God's word do allow it ; to consider it, I say, as it is now used, methinks it is plainly unlawful and wicked, and that for these causes. First, because they make it a service of God, and a thing which pleaseth God of itself, I will not say meritorious. This bringer, my brother, can tell you at large how great an evil this is. Secondly, because they make it of necessity, so that he or she that useth it not, is not taken for a good Christian. Thirdly, because it requireth of itself an impossibility, that is, the numbering and telling of all our sins ; which no man perceiveth, much less can utter. Fourthly, because it establisheth and confirmeth, at the least alloweth, praying to saints : Precor sanctam Mariam, you must say, or the priest for you. Fifthly, because it is very injurious to the liberty of the Gospel ; the which to affirm, in example and fact, I take to be a good work and a dear in God's sight. Sixthly, because (as it is used) it is a note, yet a very sinew, of the popish Church ; and therefore we should be so far from allowing the same, that we should think ourselves happy to lose any thing in bearing witness thereagainst. Seventhly, because, instead of counsel, thereat you should receive poison ; or if you refuse it under Sir John's *benedicite*, you should no less there be wound in the briars. Eighthly, because the end and purpose why we go thither, is for the avoid-

ing of the cross ; that is, for our own cause, and not for Christ's cause, or for our brethren's commodity.<sup>1</sup> For in that they make it so necessary a thing and a worshipping of God, it cannot but be against Christ and the freedom of his Gospel: and the same thing teacheth us that it is against the commodity<sup>1</sup> of our brethren, which either be weak, either be strong, either be ignorant, either be obstinate. If they be weak, by your resorting to it they be made more weak. If they be strong, you do what you can to infirm their strength. If they be ignorant, therein you help to keep them by your fact. If they be obstinate, your resorting to it cannot but rock them asleep in their obstinate error of the necessity of this rite and ceremony. These causes recited do shew you what I think in this : but my thinking must no further bind you than a man's thought should do, except the same be grounded upon God's word, which bindeth indeed ; as I think they do. I doubt not but you, weighing these causes, and especially two, (of the first and the last,) if you pray to God for his Spirit to direct you, and thereto ask the advice of this my good brother and other godly learned men, I doubt not (I say) but you should be guided to do that which is best in God's sight, although, in the sight of the world, perhaps you should be counted foolish and precise. But be at a point with yourselves, as the disciples of Christ : which had forsaken themselves, to follow, not your will but God's will, as you daily pray in the Lord's prayer. The cross of Christ be willing to carry, lest you carry the cross of the world, the flesh, or the devil. One of these four crosses you must carry. Three of them bringeth to hell ; and therefore the more part goeth that way, which is a broad way. Only the fourth bringeth to heaven, but few go that way, as well because the way is strait, as also because few walk in it. Howbeit, though it be strait it is but short : and the few are many ; if you consider the godly as, the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and Christ Jesus, with all his guard and train. Think not scorn to come after them which are gone before you, and after them which now go before you : in whose number, I trust, I am appointed to be one; and I beseech you pray for me, that God would vouch me worthy that honour. Our sins deserve plagues, prison, and the loss of all that ever we have : therefore if God remove our sins out of sight, and send us prison, or loss of goods and living, for his name's sake, oh how happy are we ! My dear hearts in the Lord, consider this gear,<sup>2</sup> and be assured that he which loseth any thing for Christ's sake, the same in his posterity shall find it here, and in heaven elsewhere. As for unableness to answer for your faith, it shall be enough to will<sup>3</sup> them to dispute with your teachers. Faith standeth not in disputing. I think few, if it came to disputing, could defend the Godhead of Christ, and many other articles : I speak it for the simple sort. Pray for me.

<sup>1</sup> advantage

Why the more part go that way that leadeth to perdition.

<sup>2</sup> thing

<sup>3</sup> desire

Lack of paper maketh this end. Commend me to my good brother Richard Bleacher, and my good sister his wife: I pray them to pray for me. I trust by this bearer to hear how you do.

John Bradford.

To certain godly men,

Whom he exhorteth to be patient under the cross, and constant in the true doctrine which they had professed.

My dearly beloved in the Lord, as in him I wish you well to fare, so I pray God I and you may continue in his true service; that perpetually we may enjoy the same welfare, as here in hope, so in heaven indeed and eternally.

You know this world is not your home, but a pilgrimage, and place wherein God trieth his children; and therefore, as it knoweth you not, nor can know you, so I trust you know not it, that is, you allow it not, nor in any point will seem so to do, although by many you be occasioned thereto. For this whole sun, which now shineth, burneth so sore, that the corn which is sown upon sand and stony ground beginneth to wither; that is, many which before-times we took for hearty gospellers, begin now for the fear of afflictions to relent, yea, to turn to their vomit again; thereby declaring, that though they go from amongst us, yet were they never of us, for else they would have still tarried with us, and neither for gain nor loss have left us, either in word or deed. As for their heart, (which undoubtedly is double and therefore in danger to God's curse,) we have as much with us as the papists have with them, and more too, by their own judgment. For they, playing wily-beguile themselves, think it enough inwardly to favour the truth, though outwardly they curry favour. What though with my body, say they, I do this or that? GOD knoweth, my heart is whole with him. Ah, brother, if thy heart be whole with GOD, why dost not thou confess and declare thyself accordingly by word and fact? Either that which thou sayest thou believest in thy heart, is good or no. If it be good, why art thou ashamed of it? If it be evil, why dost thou keep it in thy heart? Is not GOD able to defend thee, adventuring thyself for his cause? Or will not he defend his worshippers? Doth not the Scripture say, that the eyes of the Lord are on them that fear him, and trust in his mercy? And whereto? Forsooth, to deliver their souls from death, and to feed them in the time of hunger. If this be true, as it is most true, why are we afraid of death, as though GOD could not comfort or deliver us, or would not, contrary to his promise? Why are we afraid of the loss of our goods, as though GOD would leave them that fear him destitute of all good things,

John 2.

Psa. 33.

and so do against his most ample promises? Ah, faith, faith, how few feel thee now-a-days? Full truly said Christ, that he should scarcely find faith when he came on earth. For if men believed these promises, they would never do any thing outwardly which inwardly they disallow. No example of men, how many soever they be, or how learned soever they be, can prevail in this behalf; for the pattern which we must follow is Christ himself, and not the more company or custom. His word is the lantern to lighten our steps, and not learned men. Company and custom are to be considered according to the thing they allow. Learned men are to be listened to and followed according to God's lore<sup>1</sup> and law, for else the more part goeth to the devil. As custom causeth error and blindness, so learning, if it be not according to the light of God's word, is poison, and learned men most pernicious. The devil is called Demon for his cunning, and the children of this world are much wiser than the children of light in their generation; and I know the devil and his darlings have always for the most part more helps in this life, than Christ's church and her children. They, the devil and his synagogue I mean, have custom, multitude, unity, antiquity, learning, power, riches, honour, dignity, and promotions plenty, as always they have had, and shall have commonly and for the most part, until Christ's coming, much more than the true church have presently, heretofore have had, or hereafter shall have. For her glory, riches, and honour is not here; her trial, cross, and warfare is here. And therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, consider these things accordingly. Consider what you be, not worldlings but God's children. Consider where you be, not at home but in a strange country. Consider among whom you are conversant, even in the midst of your enemies, and of a wicked generation; and then, I trust, you will not much muse at affliction, which you cannot be without, being (as you be). God's children, in a strange country, and in the midst of your enemies; except you would leave your captain Christ, and follow Satan for the muck of this mould, rest and quietness, which he may promise you, and you indeed think you shall receive it, by doing as he would have you to do. But, my sweet hearts, he is not able to pay that he promiseth. Peace and war come from GOD, riches and poverty, wealth and woe. The devil hath no power, but by God's permission. If then GOD permit him a little on your goods, body, or life, I pray you tell me, what can much hurt you, as Peter saith, you being followers of godliness? Think you that GOD will not remember you in his time, as most shall be to your comfort? Can a woman forget the child of her womb? And if she should, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord. Look upon Abraham in his exile and misery; look upon Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, the prophets, apostles, and all the godly from the beginning: and, my good

Luke 18.

Psa. 119.

1 wisdom

Luke 16.

1 Peter 2.

Esa. 49.

brethren, is not GOD the same God? Is he a changeling? You have heard of the patience of Job, saith St. James, and you have seen the end, how that God is merciful, patient, and long-suffering: even so say I unto you, that you shall find accordingly, if so be you be patient, that is, if so be you fear him, set his word before you, serve him thereafter, and, if he lay his cross on you, you bear it with patience: the which you shall do, when you consider it not according to the present sense, but according to the end. Heb. 12. 2 Cor. 4.

Therefore I heartily beseech you, and, out of my bonds which I suffer for your sake, pray you, mine own sweet hearts in the Lord, that you would cleave, in heart and humble obedience, to the doctrine taught you by me and many other my brethren. For we have taught you no fables nor tales of men, or our own phantasies, but the very word of God, which we are ready with our lives (God so enabling us, as we trust he will,) to confirm, and by the shedding of our bloods, in all patience and humble obedience to the superior powers, to testify and seal up: as well that you might be more certain of the doctrine, as that you might be ready to confess the same before this wicked world; knowing that, if we confess Christ and his truth before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven; if so be we be ashamed hereof for loss of life, friends, or goods, he will be ashamed of us before his Father and his holy angels in heaven.

Therefore take heed, for the Lord's sake take heed, take heed; and defile not your bodies or souls with this Romish and Antichristian religion set up amongst us again: but come away, come away, as the angel crieth, from amongst them in their idolatrous service, lest you be partakers of their iniquity. Hearken to your preachers, as the Thessalonians did to Paul: that is, confer their sayings with the Scriptures; and if they sound not thereafter, the morning light shall not shine upon them. Use much and hearty prayer for the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, humbleness, meekness, sobriety, and repentance; which we have great need of, because our sins have thus provoked the Lord's anger against us. But let us bear his anger, and acknowledge our faults with bitter tears and sorrowful sighs, and doubtless he will be merciful to us after his wonted mercy. The which thing he vouchsafe to do, for his holy name's sake in Christ Jesus our Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, and everlasting thanks, from this time forth for evermore. Amen.

Out of prison, by yours in the Lord to command,

John Bradford.

James 5.

Apoc. 18.

Esa. 8.



To my dearly beloved in the Lord, *Mistress W.* and *Mistress W.*

Almighty God, our dear and most merciful Father, be always with you both, my entirely beloved mother and sister in the Lord; and as his babes, he for ever keep you unto his eternal kingdom, through Christ our Saviour. Amen.

I purpose not to go about to render thanks to you, for God's great goodness towards me by you, because I cannot. Either of you hath so heaped upon me benefits, that it were hard for me to reckon the tithes. He, for whose sake you have done it, and all the good you do, one day recompence you after your heart's desire in him. In the mean season, I beseech him to reveal unto you more and more the riches of his grace and love in Christ, by whom ye are beloved, and were before the world was, and shall be doubtless world without end. According to the revelation, and your sense or faith herein, so will you contend to all piety and godliness, as St. John saith: he that hath this hope will purify <sup>1 John 2.</sup> himself as Christ is pure. For how should it otherwise be, but, if we be certainly persuaded that heaven is ours and we citizens thereof, but, I say, we should desire the dissolution of our bodies, and death to dispatch us, and to do his office upon us? If we did certainly believe we were members of Christ and God's temples, how should we but fly from all impurity, and corruption of the world, which cometh by concupiscence? If we did certainly believe that God indeed of his mercy in Christ, is become our Father, in that his good will is infinite, and his power according thereto, how could we be afraid of man or devil? How could we doubt of salvation, or any good thing which might make to God's glory and our own weal? Now that we should be certain and sure of this, that we are God's children in Christ, mark whether all things teach us not. Behold the creation of this world, and the gubernation<sup>1</sup> of the same: do not these teach us that God <sup>1 govern-</sup> loveth us? And is God's love out of Christ the Beloved? Is not his love as he is unchangeable? Doth not St. John say, that he <sup>John 13.</sup> loveth to the end whom he loveth? Therefore, I say, the very creatures of God, concerning both their creation and conservation, tell us that God loveth us; that is, that we in Christ be his children and darlings, although in ourselves and of our selves we be otherwise, namely, children of wrath. Again, look upon the law of God, and tell me whether it do not require this certainty of you, namely, that you be God's dear children in Christ? Doth not God plainly affirm and say, I am the Lord thy God? Doth he not charge you to have none other gods but him? How then can you perish, if God be your God? Doth not that make God no God? Doth not David say, that those people be happy which <sup>Psa. 144.</sup> have the Lord for their God?

Besides this, look on your belief: do you not profess that you believe in God your Father Almighty, which wanteth no power to help you, as he wanted no good will in Christ to choose you? Do you not say, that you do believe remission of sins, resurrection of the body, life everlasting, fellowship with the saints, &c.? But how do you say you believe this gear,<sup>1</sup> and be not certain thereof? Is not faith a certainty? Is not doubting against faith? as St. James saith, pray in faith and doubt not; for he that doubteth obtaineth nothing. When Peter began to doubt, he had like to have been drowned: beware of it therefore.

1 thing

Matt. 8.

Moreover, for to certify your consciences that you be God's children, and shall never finally perish, through God's goodness in Christ, behold your head, your captain—I mean, Christ Jesus. Wherefore came he into this world, but to redeem you? to marry you unto himself? to destroy the works of Satan? to save and seek that which was lost? Wherefore suffered he so great and bitter passions? Did he it not to take away your sins? Wherefore did he rise from death? Did he it not to justify you? Wherefore did he ascend into heaven? Did he it not to take possession there for you? to lead your captivity captive? to prepare and make ready all things for you? to appear before the Father, always praying for you? If these be true, as they be most true, why then stand you in a doubt? Do you not thereby deny Christ? Wherefore were you born of Christian parents and in God's church, but because you were God's children by Christ before you were born? For this cause you were baptized; and hitherto the Lord hath thus dealt with you, sparing you, correcting you, and blessing you. But why? Verily, because you be his children, and shall be for ever, through Christ. Tell me, why hath God kept you till this time, but that he will for his sake have you, even here, made like unto Christ, that elsewhere you may so be? Why hath he opened your eyes from popery, but because you be his children indeed? When you do pray, do you not call him Father? Why do you doubt of it then? Why will you believe the devil, more than God your Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? more than the holy word of GOD, both in the law and in [the] gospel? more than all the blessings and castigations of God? Do not all these preach to you, and tell you, that you are God's babes through Christ? Therefore, my dearly beloved, believe it; and give not place to the devil, but withstand him, strong in faith. Say with the poor man, I believe, Lord; help my unbelief. Say with the apostles, Lord, increase our faith.

Mark 9.  
Luke 19.

This, mine own hearts in the Lord, I write, not that you should live more securely and carnally, doing as the spiders do, which gather poison where bees gather honey: but that, as the elect of God, you might live in all purity, godliness, and peace; which God increase in us all, for his Christ's sake. Amen.

I pray you heartily, pray for us; that to the very end we may, as I hope we shall, go lustily and cheerfully whithersoever our heavenly Father shall bring and lead us. His will, which is always good, be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Amen.

Your brother in bonds, for the testimony of Jesus Christ,

John Bradford.

### To my good Sister M. D.

The peace of God, with increase of faith and feeling of his mercy, to your comfort in Christ, the Holy Ghost work in your heart now and for ever. Amen.

As it is much to my comfort that God hath given you such a love and zeal to his truth, so I exhort you, my good sister, diligently to labour, as by continual reading and meditation of God's holy word, so by earnest prayer and other godly exercises, to maintain and increase the same; that, by the feeling of God's gracious Spirit working in you such good fruits as witnesses of your faith, you may grow in strength thereof, and certainty of God's favour and good will towards you. For above all things, of this I would have you to be most assured; that you are beloved of God, that you are his dear child, and shall be for evermore, through Christ, in whom you are by faith, and he in you. Out of this certainty, the cause whereof is God's own goodness, grace, and truth, springeth true love, and loving fear, and obedience to God continually and in all things. Where it is, (I mean, this faith, certainty, and persuasion of God's eternal goodness to you in Christ,) there no sins are imputed to you, or laid to your charge to condemnation, nor shall be: though, for correction sake, now and then your heavenly Father visit them fatherly, or rather you for them. Where it is not, there is nothing, be it never so well done, that pleaseth God. Labour therefore for this certainty of faith, through Christ. Whensoever you doubt, you heap sin upon sin. If Satan, your conscience, or God's law do accuse you, confess your fault, and hide it not before the Lord. But when they would infer that because of your sin you are condemned, you are cast away; then answer them, that it is but their office to accuse and witness, not to give sentence and judge; it only appertaineth to God to give judgment. Paul saith, It is God that absolveth, who then shall condemn us? God himself promiseth, before he demand any thing of us, that he is our Lord and our God: and art not they happy, which have the Lord for their God? Is he God to any, whose sins he remitteth not? Through Christ he is our Father, and therefore we are commanded so to call him; and can there want any fatherly kindness in him towards us, which be his children? No, verily. Therefore be sure, and waver not, of

God's love and favour towards you in Christ. The cause of his love is his own goodness and mercy; this lasting for ever, his love lasteth for ever. How can you then but be quiet and happy? Use this gear<sup>1</sup> to comfort the weak conscience; and not to unbridle the mighty affections of the flesh or old Adam, which must have other meat.

Your own in the Lord,

John Bradford.

**An Exhortation to the patient suffering of trouble  
and afflictions for Christ's cause,**

Written to all the unfeigned professors of the Gospel throughout the realm of England, at the beginning of his imprisonment, and here placed as it came to our hands.

The Holy Spirit of God, which is the earnest and pledge of God, given to his people for their comfort and consolation, be poured into our hearts by the mighty power and merits of our alone Saviour Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.

Because I perceive plainly, that to the evils fallen upon us which profess Christ's Gospel, greater are most like to ensue, and after them greater, till the measure of iniquity be up heaped (except we shrink, and, having put our hands to the plough do look back, and so with Lot's wife and the Israelites, desiring to return into Egypt, fall into God's heavy displeasure uncurably, all which God forbid); and because I am persuaded of you, my dearly beloved brethren and sisters throughout the realm of England, which have professed unfeignedly the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (for unto such do I write this epistle), that as ye have begun to take part with God's Gospel and truth, so through his grace ye will persevere and go on forwards, notwithstanding the storms risen and to arise: I cannot but write something unto you, lustily to go on forwards in the way of the Lord, and not to become faint-hearted or fearful, (whose place St. John appointeth with the unbelievers, murderers, and idolators in eternal perdition,) but cheerfully to take the Lord's cup and drink of it, afore it draw towards the dregs and bottom; whereof at the length they shall drink with the wicked to eternal destruction, which will not receive it at the first with God's children; with whom God be-ginneth his judgment, that, as the wicked world rejoiceth when they lament, so they may rejoice when the wicked world shall mourn, and without end find woe intolerable.

First therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I beseech you to consider, that though ye be in the world, yet ye are not of the world. Ye are not of them which look for their portion in this

1 thing,  
consider  
ation

Gen. 15.  
Luke 9.  
Gen. 19.

Apoc. 51.

Psa. 75.

1 Peter 4.

John 16.

John 14.  
Psa. 17.

life, whose captain is the god of this world, even Satan, who now ruffeth it apace, as he were wont, because his time on earth is not long. But ye are of them that look for a city of God's own blessing. Ye are of them that know yourselves to be here but pilgrims and strangers: for here ye have no dwelling-place. Ye are of them whose portion is the Lord, and which have their hope in heaven: whose captain is Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and governor of heaven and earth. Unto him is given all power, yea, he is God Almighty, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, praiseworthy for ever. Ye are not of them which receive the beast's mark, which here rejoyce, laugh, and have their heart's ease, joy, paradise, and pleasure: but ye are of them which have received the angel's mark, yea God's mark, which here lament, mourn, sigh, sob, weep, and have your wilderness to wander in, your purgatory and even hell to purge and burn up your sins. Ye are not of them which cry, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. Ye are not of that number which say, they have made a covenant with death and hell for hurting of them. Ye are not of them which take it for a vain thing to serve the Lord. Ye are not of them which are lulled and rocked asleep in Jezebel's bed, a bed of security. Ye are not of the number of them which say, Tush, God is in heaven, and seeth us not nor much passeth what we do. Ye are not of the number of them which will fall down, for the muck of the world, to worship the fiend, or for displeasing of men to worship the golden image. Finally, ye are not of the number of them which set more by your pigs than by Christ, which for ease and rest in this life will say and do as Antiochus biddeth you do or say, and will follow the multitude to do evil with Zedekias and the 300 false prophets, yea Ahab, Jezebel, and the whole court and country. But ye are of the number of them which are dead already, or at least be in dying daily, to yourselves and to this world. Ye are of them which have made a covenant with God to forsake yourselves in this world, and Satan also. Ye are of them which say, Nay, the Lord hath all things written in his memorial book, for such as fear him and remember his name. Ye are of them which have their loins girded about and their lights burning in their hands, like unto men that wait for their lord's coming. Ye are in the number of them that say, The Lord looketh down from heaven, and beholdeth the children of men, from the habitation of his dwelling; he considereth all them that dwell upon the earth. Ye are of the number of them which will worship the only Lord God, and will not worship the works of man's hands, though the oven burn never so hot. Ye are in the number of them to whom Christ is precious and dear, which cry out rather because your habitation is prolonged here, as David did. Ye are of them which follow Mattathias and the godly Jews: which know the way to life to be a strait way,

2 Cor. 4.  
 Apoc. 12.  
 Heb. 11.  
 1 Peter 2.  
 Heb. 13.  
 Psa. 119.  
 Heb. 12.  
 Matt. 28.  
 Rom. 9.  
 1 John 5.  
 Apoc. 13.  
 Luke 6.  
 Ezek. 9.  
 Matt. 5.  
 Esay 22.  
 1 Cor. 15.  
 Esay 27.  
 Mat. 3.  
 Apoc. 3.  
 Ezek. 8.  
 Psa. 73.  
 Matt. 4.  
 Dan. 3.  
 Matt. 8.  
 1 Mac. 1. 2.  
 Ezek. 23.  
 1 Kings 22.  
 Rom. 6. 7.  
 Col. 3.  
 Luke 12.  
 Mal. 3.  
 Luke 12.  
 Psa. 33. 14.  
 101.  
 Luke 13.  
 Dan. 3.  
 1 Pet. 2.  
 Psa. 120.  
 1 Mac. 2.  
 Matt. 7.

<sup>1 Kings 22.</sup> and few to go through it: which will not stick to follow poor Michaias, although he be racked and cast into prison, having the Sun, Moon, seven stars, and all against him.

Thus therefore, dearly beloved, remember first that (as I said) ye are not of this world: that Satan is not your captain: your joy and paradise is not here: your companions are not the multitude of worldliness, and such as seek to please men, and live here at ease in the service of Satan. But ye are of another world: Christ is your captain: your joy is in heaven, where your conversation is: your companions are the Fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, virgins, confessors, and the dear saints of God, which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, dipping their garments in his blood, knowing this life and world to be full of evil, a warfare, a smoke, a shadow, a vapour, and, as replenished, so environed, with all kind of miseries. This is the first thing which I would have you often and diligently with yourselves to consider, and to muse well upon, namely, what ye be and where ye be.

Now secondly, forget not to call to mind, that ye ought not to think it any strange thing if misery, trouble, adversity, persecution, and displeasure come upon you. For how can it otherwise be, but that trouble and persecution must come upon you? Can the world love you, which are none of his? Can worldly men regard you, which are your chief enemy's soldiers? Can Satan suffer you to be in rest, which will do no homage unto him? Can this way be chosen of any, that make it so narrow and strait as they do? Will ye look to travel, and to have no foul way or rain? Will shipmen shrink, or sailors on the sea give over if storms arise? Do they not look for such? And (dearly beloved) did not we enter into God's ship and ark of baptism at the first? Will ye then count it strange, if perils come or tempests blow? Are not ye travelling to your heavenly City of Jerusalem, where is all joy and felicity? and will ye now tarry by the way for storms or showers? The mart and fair will then be past: the night will so come upon you, that ye cannot travel: the door will be sparred, and the bride will be at supper. Therefore away with dainty niceness. Will ye think the Father of heaven will deal more gently with you in this age, than he hath done with others, his dearest friends in other ages? What way, yea, what storms and tempests, what troubles and disquietness found Abel, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and good Joseph? Which of these had so fair a life and restful times as we have had? Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David the king, and all the good kings, priests, prophets in the Old Testament, at one time or other (if not throughout their life), did feel a thousand parts more misery than we have felt hitherto.

As for the New Testament, Lord God! how great was the afflic-

tion of Mary, of Joseph, of Zacharias, of Elizabeth, of John Baptist, of all the Apostles and Evangelists, yea of Jesus Christ our Lord, the dear Son and darling of God! And since the time of the Apostles, how many and great are the number of Martyrs, Confessors, and such as have suffered the shedding of their blood in this life, rather than they would be staid in their journey, or lodge in any of Satan's inns, lest the storms or winds which fell in their travellings, might have touched them! And, dearly beloved, let us think what we are, and how far unmeet to be matched with these, with whom yet we look to be placed in heaven. But with what face can we look for this, that are so fearful, unwilling, and backward to leave that, which, will we nill we, we must leave, and that so shortly, as we know not the time when? Where is our abrenouncing and forsaking of the world and the flesh, which we solemnly took upon us in baptism? Ah, shameless cowards that we be, which will not follow the trace of so many Fathers, Patriarchs, Kings, Priests, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, and saints of God, yea, even of the very Son of God. How many now go with you lustily, as I and all your brethren in bonds and exile for the Gospel? Pray for us; for, God willing, we will not leave you now: we will go before you. Ye shall see in us, by God's grace, that we preached no lies nor tales of tubs, but even the very true word of God: for the confirmation whereof, we, by God's grace, and the help of your prayers, will willingly and joyfully give our blood to be shed, as already we have given our livings, goods, friends, and natural country. For now be we certain that we be in the highway to heaven's bliss; as St. Paul saith, By many tribulations and persecutions we must enter into God's kingdom. And because we would go thither ourselves, and bring you thither also, therefore the devil stirreth up the coals. And forasmuch as we all loitered in the way, he hath therefore received power of God to overcast the weather and to stir up storms, that we God's children might more speedily go on forwards, and make more haste: as the counterfeits and hypocrites will tarry and linger till the storms be past; and so, when they come, the market will be done and the doors sparred, as it is to be feared. Read Matthew 25. This wind will blow God's children forwards, and the devil's darlings backward. Therefore, like God's children, let us go on forward apace: the wind is on our backs; hoist up the sails: lift up your hearts and hands unto God in prayer, and keep your anchor of faith to cast out in time of trouble, on the rock of God's word and mercy in Christ, by the cable of God's verity, and I warrant you.—And thus much for you secondly to consider: that affliction, persecution, and trouble is no strange thing to God's children, and therefore it should not dismay, discourage, or discomfort us; for it is none other thing than all God's dear friends have tasted, in their journey to heavenwards.

Matt. 22.

*Enseb. ec. hist. Tripart hist.*

Psa. 49.

1 Peter 5.

1 Pet. 2.

Acts 14.

Matt. 8.

Matt. 14.

Lam. 3.

Heb. 6.

As I would in this troublesome time that ye would consider what ye be by the goodness of God in Christ, even citizens of heaven, though ye be presently in the flesh, even in a strange region, on every side full of fierce enemies; and what weather and way the dearest friends of God have found: even so would I have you, thirdly, to consider for your further comfort, that, if ye shrink not, but go on forwards pressing to the mark appointed, all the power of your enemies shall not overcome you, nor in any point hurt you. But this must not you consider according to the judgment of reason, and the sense of old Adam; but according to the judgment of God's word, and the experience of faith and the new man: for else you mar all. For to reason, and to the experience of our sense or of the outward man, we poor souls which stick to God's word, to serve him as he requireth only, are counted to be vanquished and to be overcome; in that we are cast into prison, lose our livings, friends, goods, country, and life also at the length, concerning this world. But, dearly beloved, God's word teacheth otherwise, and faith feeleth accordingly. Is it not written, Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, either hunger, either nakedness, either peril, either sword? As it is written, For thy sake are we killed all day long, and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain. Nevertheless in all these things we overcome, through him that loved us. For I am sure that neither death, neither life, neither angels nor rule, neither power, neither things present, neither things to come, neither high nor low, neither any creature, shall be able to part us from that love, wherewith God loveth us in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus spake one which was in affliction, as I am, for the Lord's Gospel's sake—his holy name be praised therefore: and he grant me grace with the same to continue in like suffering unto the end. This (I say) one spake which was in affliction for the Gospel; but yet so far from being overcome, that he rejoiced rather of the victory which the Gospel had. For though he was bound, yet the Gospel was not bound. And therefore giveth he thanks unto God, which alway giveth the victory in Christ, and openeth the savour of his knowledge by us, and such as suffer for his truth, although they shut us up never so much, and drive us never so far out of our own natural country in every place.

The world for a time may deceive itself, thinking it hath the victory; but yet the end will try the contrary. Did not Cain think he had the victory, when Abel was slain? But how say you now, is it not found otherwise? Thought not the old world and men then living, that they were wise and well, and Noe a fool, which would creep into an Ark, leaving his house, lands, possessions? for I think he was in an honest state for the world. But I pray you, who was wise when the flood came? Abraham (I

Phil. 3.

Rom. 8.

Psa. 44.

2 Tim. 2.

2 Cor. 2.

Gen. 4.

Gen. 7. 8.

I honour  
able,  
wealthy  
Gen. 19.



trow) was counted, a fool, to leave his own country and friends, kith and kin, because of God's word: but, dearly beloved, we know it proved otherwise. I will leave all the Patriarchs, and come to Moses, and the children of Israel. Tell me, were not they thought to be overcome and stark mad, when, for fear of Pharaoh, at God's word, they ran into the Red Sea? Did not Pharaoh and the Egyptians think themselves sure of the victory? But I trow, it proved clean contrary. Saul was thought well, and David in an evil case, and most miserable, because he had no hole to hide him in: but yet at the length Saul's misery was seen, and David's felicity began to appear. The prophet Micaias, being cast into prison for telling Ahab the truth, was thought to be overcome of Zedekias and the other false prophets: but, my good brethren and sisters, the holy history telleth otherwise. Who did not think the prophets unhappy in their time? For they were slain, prisoned, laughed to scorn and jested at of every man. And so were all the Apostles; yea, the dearly beloved friend of God, than whom among the children of women none arose greater, I mean John Baptist, who was beheaded, and that in prison, even for a dancing damsel's desire. As all these, to the judgment of reason, were then counted heretics, runagates, unlearned, fools, fishers, publicans, &c. so now, unhappy and overcome indeed, if God's word and faith did not shew the contrary.

Ex. 14.

1 Sam. 16.  
17, 18, 19.

1 Kings 22.

Jer. 40.  
Essay 8.  
2 Kings 2.  
1 Cor. 4.

But what speak I of these? Look upon Jesus Christ, to whom we must be like-fashioned here, if we will be like him elsewhere. How say ye? was not he taken for a most fool, a seditious person, a new<sup>1</sup> fellow, an heretic, and one overcome, of every body? yea even forsaken both of God and men? But the end told them, and telleth us, another tale: for now is he in majesty and glory unspeakable. When he was led to Pilate or Herod, or when he was in prison in Caiaphas' house, did not their reason think, that he was overcome? When he was beaten, buffeted, scourged, crowned with thorn, hanged upon the cross, and utterly left of all his disciples, taunted of the high priests and holy fathers, cursed of the commons, railed on of the magistrates, and laughed to scorn of the lewd heathen: would not a man then have thought that he had been out of the way, and his disciples fools to follow him and believe him? Think ye that whilst he did lie in his grave, men did not point with their fingers, when they saw any that had followed and loved him, or believed in him and his doctrine, saying, Where is their Master and teacher now? What? Is he gone? Forsooth, if they had not been fools, they might well have known, that this learning he taught could not long continue. Our doctors and Pharisees are no fools now, they may see. On this sort either men spake, or might have spoken, against all such as loved Christ or his doctrine: but yet at the

Rom. 8.

1 strange

length, they and all such were proved fools and wicked wretches. For our Saviour arose, maugre<sup>1</sup> their beards, and published his Gospel plentifully spite of their heads, and the heads of all the wicked world, with the great powers of the same; always overcoming, and then most of all, when he and his doctrine was thought to have the greatest fall. As<sup>2</sup> now, dearly beloved, the wicked world rejoiceth: the papists are puffed up against poor Christ and his people, after their old kind: now cry they out, Where are these new-found preachers? Are they not in the Tower, Marshalsea, Fleet, and beyond the seas? Who would have thought, that our old Bishops, Doctors, and Deans, were fools, as they would have made us to believe, and indeed have persuaded some already which are not of the wisest, especially if they come not home again to the holy Church?

These and such like words they have to cast in our teeth, as triumphers and conquerors. But, dearly beloved, short is their joy; they beguile themselves. This is but a lightning before their death. As God, after he had given the Jews a time to repent, visited them by Vespasian and Titus most horribly, to their utter subversion, delivering first all his people from among them; even so, my dear brethren, will he do with this age. When he hath tried his children from amongst them, as now he beginneth, and by suffering hath made us like to his Christ, and by being overcome to overcome indeed to our eternal comfort; then will he, if not otherwise, come himself in the clouds—I mean our dear Lord whom we confess, preach, and believe on; he will come, I say, with the blast of a trump and shout of an archangel, and so shall we be caught up in the clouds to meet him in the air, the angels gathering together the wicked wretches, (which now welter and wallow as the world and wind bloweth,) to be tied in bundles and cast into the fire, which burneth for ever most painfully. There and then shall they see who hath the victory, they or we. When they shall see us afar off in Abraham's bosom, then will they say, Oh, we thought these folks fools, and had them in derision; we thought their life madness, and their end to be without honour; but look how they are counted among the children of God, and their portion is with the saints: oh, we have gone amiss and would not hearken. Such words as these shall the wicked say one day in hell; whereas now they triumph as conquerors.—And thus much for you, thirdly, to look often upon; namely, that whatsoever is done unto you, yea, even very death itself, shall not dash or hurt you, no more than it did Abel, David, Daniel, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ our Lord, with other the dear saints of God which suffered for his name's sake. Let not reason therefore be judge in this matter, nor present sense, but faith and God's word, as I have shewed. In the which, if we set before our eyes the shortness of this present time wherein we suffer, and consider the

<sup>1</sup> in spite  
of

<sup>2</sup> so

Euseb,  
eccl.  
hist. lib. 3.  
cap. 5. 6. 7.  
8. 9.

Thess.

Matt. 13

Luke 16.  
Wisd. 3.

eternity to come, as our enemies and persecutors shall be in intolerable pains helpless, and we (if we persevere to the end,) in such felicity and joys dangerless, as the very heart of man in no point is able to conceive; if we consider this, I say, we cannot but even contemn and set nothing by the sorrows and griefs of the cross, and lustily go through thick and thin with good courage.

1 Cor. 2.  
Esa. 64.

Thus have I declared unto you three things, necessary to be mused on of every one which will abide by Christ and his gospel in this troublesome time—as I trust you all will; namely, first, to consider that we are not of this world, nor of the number of the worldlings, or retainers to Satan; that we are not at home in our own country, but of another world, of the congregation of the saints and retainers to Christ, although in a region replete and full of untractable enemies. Secondly, that we may not think it a strange thing to be persecuted for God's gospel; from the which the dearest friends of God were in no age free, as indeed it is impossible that they should any long time be, their enemies being always about them to destroy them if they could. And thirdly, that the assaults of our enemies, be they never so many and fierce, in no point shall be able to prevail against our faith, albeit to reason it seemeth otherwise. Wherethrough we ought to conceive a good courage and comfort: for who will be afraid when he knoweth the enemies cannot prevail?—Now will I, for the more encouraging you to the cross, give you a farther memorandum; namely, of the commodities and profits which come by the trouble and afflictions now risen, and to arise, to us which be God's children elect through Jesus Christ. But here look not to have a rehearsal of all the commodities which come by the cross, to such as are exercised well therein; for that were more than I can do. I will only speak of a few, thereby to occasion you to gather, and at the length to feel and perceive, more.

Heb. 12.

First, in that there is no cross which cometh upon any of us without the counsel of our heavenly Father, (for as for the ethnic<sup>1</sup> of Fortune, it is wicked, as many places of the Scripture do teach,) we must needs, to the commendation of God's justice, (for in all his doings he is just,) acknowledge in ourselves that we have deserved at the hands of our heavenly Father this his cross or rod fallen upon us. We have deserved it, if not by our unthankfulness, slothfulness, negligence, intemperance, uncleanness, and other sins committed often by us, (whereof our consciences can and will accuse us, if we call them to counsel with the examination of our former life,) yet at least by our original and birth sin, as, by doubting of the greatness of God's anger and mercy, by self-love, concupiscence, and such like sins; which as we brought with us into this world, so do the same always abide in us, and even as a spring do always bring something forth in act with us, notwithstanding the continual fight of God's Spirit in us against it.

1 hea-  
thenish  
Amos 3  
Lam. 3  
Matt. 10.  
Esa. 9.

Psa. 51.  
Heb. 12.  
Gal 5.

1 *advan-  
tage*

Psa. 51.

Gen. 8.

Jer. 17.

Ephes. 2.

1 Kings 8.

Gen. 42.

The first commodity<sup>1</sup> therefore that the cross bringeth, is knowledge, and that double: of God, and of ourselves. Of God, that he is just, pure, and hateth sin. Of ourselves, that we are born in sin, and are from top to toe defiled with concupiscence and corruption, out of the which hath sprung all the evils that ever at any time we have spoken and done. The greatest and most special whereof, by the cross, we are occasioned to call to mind; as did the brethren of Joseph, their evil fact against him, when the cross once came upon them. And so by it we come to the first step, to get health for our souls; that is, we are driven to know our sins, original and actual, by God's justice declared in the cross.

James 1.

Secondly, the end wherefore God declareth his justice against our sin original and actual, and would by his cross have us to consider the same, and to call to mind our former evil deeds—the end hereof, I say, is this; that we might lament, be sorry, sigh, and pray for pardon, that so doing we might obtain the same, by the means of faith in the merits of Jesus Christ his dear Son; and further, that we being humbled because of the evil that dwelleth in us, might become thankful for God's goodness and love in continual watching and wariness to suppress the evil which lieth in us, that it bring not forth fruits to death at any time. This second commodity<sup>1</sup> of the cross, therefore, must we not count to be a simple knowledge only, but a great gain of God's mercy; with wonderful rich and precious virtues of faith, repentance, remission of sins, humility, thankfulness, mortification, and diligence in doing good. Not that properly the cross worketh these things of itself, but because the cross is the mean and way by the which God worketh the knowledge and feeling of these things in his children: as many, both testimonies and examples, in Scripture are easily found of them, that diligently weigh what therein they read.

Rom. 1.

To these two commodities<sup>1</sup> of the cross, join the third, of God's singular wisdom, that it may be coupled with his justice and mercy. On this sort therefore let us conceive, when we see the gospel of God and his church persecuted and troubled, as now with us it is; that, because the great learned and wise men of the world use not their wisdom to love and serve God, as to natural wisdom and reason he openeth himself manifestly by his visible creatures, therefore doth God justly infatuate and make them foolish, giving them up to insensibleness, especially herein. For on this manner reason they, concerning the affliction which cometh for the gospel. If, say they, this were God's word; if these people were God's children, surely God would then bless and prosper them and their doctrine. But now, in that there is no doctrine so much hated, no people so much persecuted as they be, therefore it cannot be of GOD. Rather this is of God, which our queen and old bishops have professed. For how hath God pre-

served them and kept them? What a notable victory hath GOD given unto her, where it was impossible that things should so have come to pass as they have done? And did not the great captain confess his fault, that he was out of the way, and not of the faith which these gospellers profess? How many are come again, from that which they professed to be God's word? The most part of this realm (notwithstanding the diligence of preachers to persuade them concerning this new learning, which now is persecuted,) never consented to it in heart, as experience teacheth. And what plagues have come upon this realm since this gospel, as they call it, came in amongst us? Before we had plenty, but now there is nothing like as it was. Moreover, all the houses of the parliament have overthrown the laws made for the establishing of this gospel and religion, and new laws are enacted for the continuance of the contrary. How miraculously doth God confound their doctrine and confirm ours! For how was Wyat overthrown! How prosperously came in our king! How hath God blessed our queen with fruit of womb! How is the pope's holiness restored again to his right! All these do teach plainly, that this their doctrine is not God's word. Thus reason the worldly wise, which see not God's wisdom. For else if they considered, that there was with us unthankfulness for the gospel, no amendment of life, but all kind of contempt of God, all kind of shameless sinning ensued the preaching of the gospel, they must needs see that God could not but chastise and correct; and as he let Satan loose, after he had bound him a certain time, for unthankfulness of men, so to let these champions of Satan run abroad, by them to plague us for our unthankfulness. Great was God's anger against Ahab, because he saved Benhadad king of Syria, after he had given him into his hands, and afterwards it turned to his own destruction. God would that double sorrow should have been repaid to them, by cause of the sorrow they did to the saints of God: read the 18th of the Revelation. Apoc. 20.

As for the victory given to the queen's highness; if men had any godly wit, they might see many things in it. First, God hath done it to win her heart to the gospel. Again, he hath done it, as well because they that went against her put their trust in horses and power of men, and not in God, as because in their doing they sought not the propagation of God's gospel; which thing is now plainly seen. Therefore no marvel why God fought against them: they were hypocrites, and, under the cloak of the gospel, would have debarred the queen's highness of her right; but God would not so cloak them. 1 Kings 20.

Now for the relenting, returning, and recanting of some from that which they once professed or preached; alas, who would wonder at it? for they never came to the gospel, but for commodity and gain's sake; and now for gain they leave it. The multi-

tude is no good argument to move a wise man. For who knoweth not more<sup>1</sup> to love this world better than heaven? themselves better than their neighbours? Wide is the gate, saith Christ, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. But strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. All the whole multitude cry out upon Jesus, Crucify him, truss him up! but, I trow, not because they were the bigger part, therefore they were to be believed. All Chaldæa followed still their false gods; only Abraham followed the true God. And where they say that greater plagues are fallen upon the realm, in poverty and such other things, than before, is no argument to move others than such as love their swine better than Christ. For the devil chiefly desireth his seat to be in religion. If it be there, then he will meddle with nothing we have; all shall be quiet enough. But if he be raised thence, then will he beg leave to have at our pigs. Read Matthew 8. of the Gergesites. As long as with us he had the ruling of religion, which now he hath gotten again, then was he Robin Goodfellow: he would do no hurt. But when he was tumbled out of his throne by preaching of the gospel, then ranged he about as he hath done, but secretly. Finally, effectual he hath not been, but in the children of unbelief. Them indeed hath he stirred up to be covetous, oppressors, blasphemers, usurers, whoremongers, thieves, murderers, tyrannous; and yet perchance he suffered them to profess the gospel, the more thereby to hinder it, and cause it to be slandered. How many now do appear to have been true gossellers? As for the parliament and statutes thereof, no man of wisdom can think otherwise, but that, look what the rulers will, the same must there be enacted. For it goeth not in those houses by the better part, but by the bigger part. And it is a common saying, and no less true, Major pars vincit meliorem; the greater part overcometh the better. So they did in condemning Christ, not regarding the counsel of Nicodemus. So they did also in many general councils. But all wise men know, that acts of parliament are not for God's law in respect of God's law, but in respect of the people. Now what we are God knoweth, and all the world seeth—more meet a great deal to have the devil's decrees than God's religion, so great is our contempt of it: and therefore justly for our sins, as Job saith, God hath set hypocrites to reign over us, which can no more abide God's true religion, than the owl the light, or bleared eyes the bright sun; for it will have them to do their duties, and walk in diligent doing of the works of their vocation. If God's word, I mean, had place, bishops could not play chancellors and idle prelates as they do: priests should be otherwise known, than by their shaven crowns and tippets. But enough of this. As for miracles, of success against Wyat and other, of the king's coming

i.e. more  
persons  
Matt. 7.

Gen. 12.

Matt. 8.

Eph. 2.

John 7.

Job 34.

in, &c. I would to God men would consider two kinds of miracles ; one to prepare and confirm men in the doctrine which they have received, and another to prove and try men how they have received it, and how they will stick unto it. Of the former, these miracles be not, but of the second. Now by this success given to the queen, God trieth whether we will stick to his truth, simply for his truth's sake, or no. This is a mighty elusion<sup>1</sup> which God sendeth <sup>1 delusion</sup> to prove his people, and to deceive the hypocrites which receive not God's truth simply, but in respect of gain, praise, estimation. Read how Ahab was deceived. 2 Thess. 2. Deut. 13.

But I will now return to the third commodity<sup>2</sup> coming by the <sup>2 benefit</sup> cross. Here let us see the wisdom of God in making the wisdom of the world foolish, which knoweth little of man's corruption, how foul it is in the sight of God, and displeaseth him ; which knoweth little the portion of God's people to be in another world ; which knoweth little the patron of christians, Christ Jesus ; which knoweth little the general judgment of GOD, the great malice of Satan to God's people, the price and estimation of the gospel ; <sup>Luke 12.</sup> and therefore in the cross seeth not, as God's wisdom would we should see, namely, that God, in punishing them which sin least, would have his anger against sin seen most, and to be better considered and feared. In punishing his people here, he kindleth their desire towards their restful home. In punishing his servants in this life, he doth conform and make them like to Christ ; that, as they be like in suffering, so shall they be in reigning. In <sup>Phil. 1.</sup> punishing his church in the world, he doth give a demonstration of his judgment which shall come on all men : when the godly shall there find rest, though now they be afflicted ; and the wicked, now wallowing in wealth, shall be wrapped in woe and smart. In punishing the professors of his gospel on earth, he setteth forth the malice of Satan against the gospel and his people : for the <sup>Acts 16.</sup> more confirming of their faith, and the gospel to be God's word indeed, and they be God's people ; for else the devil would let them alone. In punishing the lovers of his truth more than others which care not for it, he putteth them in mind how they have not had in price, as they should have had, the jewel of his word and gospel. Before such trial and experience came, perchance they <sup>Psa. 119.</sup> thought they had believed and had had faith ; which now they see was but a lip-faith, a mock faith, or an opinion. All which things, we see, are occasions for us to take better heed, by means of the cross. Therefore, thirdly, let us consider the cross to be commodious for us, to learn God's wisdom, and what is man's foolishness, God's displeasure at sin, a desire to be with God, the conformity with Christ, the general judgment, the malice of Satan, hatred of sin, the gospel to be God's word, and how it is to be esteemed, &c. Thus much for this.

Now will, I fourthly, briefly shew you the cross or trouble to be

profitable for us, to learn and behold better the providence, presence, and power of God, that all these may be coupled together as in a chain to hang about our necks; I mean, God's justice, mercy, wisdom, power, presence, and providence. When all things be in rest, and men be not in trouble, then they are forgetful of God commonly, and attribute too much to their own wisdom, policies, providence, diligence; as though they were the procurers of their own fortune, and workers of their own weal. But when the cross cometh, and that in such sort, as their wits, policies, and friends cannot help; though the wicked despair, run from God to saints, and such other unlawful means, yet do the godly therein behold the presence, the providence, and power of God. For the Scripture teacheth all things to come from God, weal and woe; and that the same should be looked upon as God's work, although Satan the devil be often an instrument by whom God worketh justly and mercifully. Justly to the wicked, and mercifully to the godly: as, by the examples of wicked Saul and godly Job, easily we may see God's work, by Satan, his instrument in them both. The children of God therefore, which before forgot God in prosperity, now in adversity are awaked to see God in his work, and no more to hang on their own forecasts, power, friends, wisdom, riches, &c. but learn to cast themselves on God's providence and power: whereby they are so preserved and governed, and very often miraculously delivered, that the very wicked cannot but see God's providence, presence, and power in the cross and affliction of his children, as they, (his children I mean,) to their joy do feel it, thereby learning to know GOD to be the governor of all things. He it is that giveth peace; he it is that sendeth war; he giveth plenty and poverty; he setteth up and casteth down; he bringeth to death, and after giveth life; his presence is everywhere; his providence is within and without; his power is the pillar whereby the godly stand, and to it they lean, as to the thing no less able to set up, than to cast down: which thing full well the apostle saw in his afflictions, and therefore rejoiced greatly in them, that *eminentia virtutis Dei*, God's power might singularly be seen therein. Concerning this thing, I might bring forth innumerable examples of the affliction of God's children, both in the Old and New Testament; wherein we may see how they felt God's presence, providence, and power plentifully. But I will omit examples, because every one of us, that have been or be in trouble, cannot but by the same remember God's presence, which we feel by his hand upon us; his providence, which leaveth us not unprovided for, without any of our own provision; and his power, which both preserveth us from many other evils which else would come upon us, and also maketh us able to bear more than we thought we could have done. So very often doth he deliver us, by such means as have been thought

Amos 3.

Lam. 3.  
Esa. 45.  
Matt. 10.Esa. 45.  
Hos. 1.  
1 Sam. 2.  
Luke 1.  
Psa. 139.  
1 Pet. 5.

2 Cor. 4.



most foolish, and little to have been regarded; and therefore we shake off our sleep of security and forgetting of God, our trust and shift in our own policies; our hanging on men or on our own power. So that the cross, you see, is commodious, fourthly, for to see God's presence, providence, and power, and our negligence, forgetfulness of God, security, self-love, trust, and confidence in ourselves, and things in this life to be cast off, as the other are to be taken hold on.

And this shall suffice for the commodities<sup>1</sup> which come by <sup>1</sup> *benefits* the cross, wherethrough we may be in love with it for the commodities' sake; which at length we shall find, though presently in sense we feel them not. No castigation or punishment is sweet for the present instant, saith the apostle, but afterwards <sup>Heb. 12.</sup> the end and work of the thing is otherwise. As we see in medicines, the more wholesome that they be, the more unpleasant is the taste thereof, as in pills, potions, and such like bitter stuff: yet we will on the physician's word drink them gladly, for the profit which cometh of them. And, dearly beloved, although to lose life and goods or friends for God's gospel's sake, it seem a bitter and sour thing, yet in that our physician, which cannot lie, (Jesus Christ, I mean,) doth tell us that it is very wholesome, howsoever it be loathsome, let us with good cheer take the cup at his hand, and drink it merrily. If the cup seem unpleasant and the drink too bitter, let us put some sugar therein, even a piece of that <sup>Ex. 15.</sup> which Moses cast into the bitter water, and made the same pleasant; I mean an ounce, yea, a dram, of Christ's afflictions and cross, which he suffered for us. If we call this to mind, and cast <sup>1</sup> *Pet. 4.* of them into our cup (considering what he was, what he suffered, of whom, for whom, to what end, and what came thereof), surely we cannot loath our medicine, but wink and drink it lustily. Lustily therefore drink the cup which Christ giveth, and will give unto you, my good brethren and sisters: I mean, prepare yourselves to suffer whatsoever God will lay upon you, for the confessing of his holy Name. If not because of these three things, that ye are not of this world—ye suffer not alone—your trouble shall not hurt you; yet for the commodities' which come of the cross, I beseech you heartily to embrace it. The fight is but short; the joy is exceeding great. *Oportet semper orare*; we must pray alway. Then shall we undoubtedly be directed in all things by God's Holy Spirit, which Christ hath promised to be our doctor, teacher, and comforter: and therefore we need not to fear what man or devil can do unto us, either by false teaching or cruel persecution; for our pastor is such a one, that none can take his sheep out of his hands. <sup>John 14. 15. 16.</sup>

Thus much, my dear brethren and sisters in our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I thought good to write unto you for your comfort; from the which if ye for fear of man, loss of goods, <sup>Psa. 27. Heb. 12. 1</sup> friends, or life, do swerve or depart, then ye depart and swerve <sup>Pet. 2.</sup>

1 intangle  
John 10.  
1 Pet. 5.  
Acts. 2.  
Ex. 20.  
2 hesitate from Christ, and so snarl<sup>1</sup> yourselves in Satan's sophistry to your utter subversion. Therefore, as St. Peter saith, Watch and be sober, for as a roaring lion he seeketh to devour you. Be strong in faith, that is, mammer<sup>2</sup> not nor waver not in God's promises, but believe certainly that they pertain to you; that God is with you in trouble; that he will deliver you, and glorify you. But yet see that ye call upon him; specially, that ye enter not into temptation, as he taught his disciples even at such time as he saw Satan desire to sift them, as now he hath done to sift us. O dear Saviour, prevent him now, as thou didst then, with thy prayer, I beseech thee, and grant that our faith faint not, but strengthen us to confirm the weak, that they deny not thee and thy gospel, that they return not to their vomit, stumbling on those sins from the which there is no recovery, causing thee to deny them before thy Father, making their latter end worse than the beginning, as it chanced to Lot's wife, Judas Iscariot, Frances Spira, and to many others. But rather strengthen them, and us all, in thy grace, and in those things which thy word teacheth, that we may here hazard our life for thy sake, and so shall we be sure to save it; as, if we seek to save it, we cannot but lose it; and, that being lost, what profit can we have if we win the whole world. Oh set thou always before our eyes (not, as reason doth, this life, the pleasure of the same, death of the body, and imprisonment, &c., but) everlasting life, and those unspeakable joys which undoubtedly they shall have, which take up the cross and follow thee; and eternal hell-fire, and destruction of soul and body for evermore, which they must needs at length fall into, the which are afraid for the hoar-frost of adversity, that man or the devil stirreth up to stop or hinder us for going forward our journey to heaven's bliss;—to the which do thou bring us, for thy name's sake. Amen.

2 Pet. 2.  
Matt. 10.  
Heb. 6. 10.  
Mark 8.  
Luke 21.

Matt. 6.

Your own in the Lord,

John Bradford.

**To my dear friend and brother in the Lord, Master George Eaton.**

Almighty God, our dear Father, give to you daily more and more the knowledge of his truth, and a love and life to the same for ever in all things, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I should begin with thanksgiving to God, and to you as his steward, for the great benefits I have oftentimes received from you, and specially in this time of my most need, far above my expectation: but because thankfulness lieth not in words or letters, and because you look not to hear of your well-doing of man, I am purposed to pass it over with silence, and to give myself presently to that which is more profitable unto you; that is, as God

shall lend me his grace, briefly to labour, or at least to shew you my good will, to help you in God's gift to me, as you, by your doing the like in God's gift unto you, have, as already done, so occasioned me greatly hereto. I would gladly have done it heretofore, but I have been discouraged to write unto you, lest hurt thereby might come unto you; which is the only cause I have not hitherto written, nor now would not have done, but that I stand in a doubt whether ever hereafter I shall have liberty to write unto you. And therefore whilst I something may, I thought good to do thus much; to declare unto you, how that as I think myself much bound to God for you, so I desire to gratify the same, as God should enable me.

The days are come, and more and more do approach, in the which trial will be of such as have unfeignedly read and heard the gospel; for all others will abide no trial, but as the world will. But of you because I have better hope, I cannot but, as pray to God in him to confirm you, so to beseech you of<sup>1</sup> the same. I know it will be a dangerous thing in deed to declare that which in word you have confessed, and in heart have believed, specially concerning the papistical mass: but notwithstanding, we must not for dangers depart from the truth, except we will depart from God. For inasmuch as GOD is the truth, and the truth is God, he that departeth from the one departeth from the other. Now what a thing it is to depart from God, I need not to tell you; because you know it is no less than a departing from all that good is, and not only so, but also a coupling of yourself to all that evil is: for there is no mean;<sup>2</sup> either we depart from God and stick to the devil, or depart from the devil and stick to God. Some men there be, which, for fear of danger and loss of that they must leave, (when, where, and to whom, they know not,) do deceive themselves after the just judgment of God, to believe the devil, because they have no lust to believe God; in hearkening to Satan's counsel of parting stake<sup>3</sup> with God, as, to be persuaded that it is not evil, or else no great evil, inwardly in heart to conceal the truth, and outwardly in fact to betray it. And therefore, though they know the mass to be abomination, yet they make it but a straw in going to it as the world doth: in which thing the Lord knoweth they deceive themselves to damnation, dream they as they lust.<sup>4</sup> For surely the body, departing from the verity, and so from God, will draw and drown in damnation the soul also. For we shall receive according to that we do in the body, good or bad. And therefore the matter is more to be considered than men make of it—the more it is to be lamented. But, I trust, my right dearly beloved, you will consider this with yourself, and call your conscience to account, as God's word maketh the charge. Beware of false auditors; which, making a false charge, can get no quietness of the conscience after God's word. Therefore cast your charge;<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> *intreat you to do*

<sup>2</sup> *middle way*

<sup>3</sup> *dividing allegiance*

<sup>4</sup> *will*

<sup>5</sup> *count the cost*

there shall you see, that no belief of the heart justifieth, which hath not confession of the mouth to declare the same. No man can serve two masters. He that gathereth not with Christ, (as no mass-seer unreproving it doth,) scattereth abroad. God's chosen are such as not only have good hearts, but also kiss not their hands, nor bow their knee, to Baal. Christ's disciples are none but such as deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. He that is ashamed of Christ and his truth in this generation, must look that Christ will be ashamed of him in the day of judgment. He that denieth Christ before men, shall be denied before God. Now two kinds of denial there be, yea, three kinds; one in heart, another in word, and the third in deed. In the which kinds all mass-gospellers be so bitten, that all the surgeons in the world can lay no healing plaister thereto, till repentance appear, and draw out the matter of using the evil and resorting to the mass. For pure should we be from all spots, not only of the flesh, but also of the spirit. And our duty is to depart, not only from evil, that is, from the mass, but also from the appearance of evil, that is, from coming at it. Woe unto them that give offence to the children of God; that is, which occasion by any means any to tarry in the church at mass-time—much more then they which occasion any to come thereto—most of all, they which enforce any thereto. Assuredly a most heavy vengeance of God hangeth upon such. Such as decline to their crookedness God will lead on with wicked workers, whose portion shall be snares, fire, brimstone, and stormy tempests; whose palace and home shall be hell-fire and darkness; whose cheer shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; whose song shall be Woe, woe, woe;—from the which the Lord of mercy deliver us.

My dearly beloved, I write not this as one that thinketh not well of you, but as one that would you did well, and therefore to help you thereto I write as I write; beseeching God to open your eyes to see the dangers men be in, that dissemble with God and man, to the end you do not the like; and also to open your eyes to see the high service you do to God, in adventuring yourself and that you have for his sake. Oh that men's eyes were opened, to see that the glory of God resteth upon them that suffer any thing for his sake. Oh that we considered that it is happiness to suffer any thing for Christ's sake, which have deserved to suffer so much for our sins and iniquities. Oh that our eyes were opened, to see the great reward they shall have in heaven, which suffer the loss of any thing for God's sake. If we knew the cross to be as a purgation most profitable to the soul, as a purifying fire to burn the dross away of our dirtiness and sins, as an oven to bake us in to be the Lord's bread, as soap to make us white, as a stew<sup>1</sup> to mundify and cleanse us, as God's framehouse to make us like to Christ here in suffering, that we may be so in reigning, then

Psa. 11.

<sup>1</sup> bagnio,  
hot-bath

should we not so much care for this little short sorrow which the flesh suffereth in it: but rather, in consideration of the exceeding endless joy and comfort which will ensue, we should run forward in our race, after the example of our captain Christ; who comfort us all in our distress, and give us the Spirit of prayer, therein to watch and pray, that we be not led into temptation—which God grant to us for ever. Amen.

And thus much I thought good to write to you at this present, to declare my carefulness for the well doing of you and all your family; whom I commend, with you, into the hands and tuition of God our Father. So be it.

Your own in the Lord,

John Bradford.

### Another Letter to Master George Eaton.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, recompence abundantly into your bosom, my dearly beloved, here and eternally, the good which from him by you I have continually received, since my coming into prison. Otherwise can I never be able to requite your loving-kindness here, than by praying for you; and after this life by witnessing your faith, declared to me by your fruits, when we shall come and appear together before the throne of our Saviour Jesus Christ—whither, I thank God, I am even now a going, ever looking when the officers will come and satisfy the precept of the prelates; whereof though I cannot complain, because I have justly deserved a hundred thousand deaths at God's hands by reason of my sins, yet I may and must rejoice, because the prelates do not persecute in me mine iniquities, but Christ Jesus and his verity; so they persecute not me, they hate not me, but they persecute Christ, they hate Christ. And because they can do him no hurt (for he sitteth in heaven and laugheth them and their devices to scorn, as one day they shall feel), therefore they turn their rage upon his poor sheep, as Herod their father did upon the infants; Matt. 2. Great cause therefore have I to rejoice, that my dear Saviour Christ will vouchsafe amongst many to choose me to be a vessel of grace, to suffer in me (which have deserved so often and justly to suffer for my sins), that I might be most assured I shall be a vessel of honour, in whom he will be glorified.

Therefore, my right dear brother in the Lord, rejoice with me, give thanks for me; and cease not to pray that God, for his mercies' sake, would make perfect the good he hath begun in me. And as for the doctrine which I have professed and preached, I unto you do confess in writing, as to the whole world I shortly

shall by God's grace in suffering, that it is the very true doctrine of Jesus Christ, of his church, of his prophets, apostles, and all good men; so that if an angel should come from heaven and preach otherwise, the same were accursed. Therefore waver not, dear heart in the Lord, but be confirmed in it; and as your vocation requireth, when God so will, confess it, though it be perilous so to do. The end shall evidently shew another manner of pleasure for so doing, than tongue can tell. Be diligent in prayer, and watch therein. Use reverend reading of God's word. Set the shortness of this time before your eyes, and let not the eternity that is to come depart out of your memory. Practice in doing, that<sup>1</sup> you learn by reading and hearing. Decline from evil and pursue good. Remember them that be in bonds, especially for the Lord's cause, as members of your body and fellow-heirs of grace. Forget not the afflictions of Sion, and the oppression of Jerusalem: and God our Father shall give you his continual blessing, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who guide us as his dear children for ever. Amen. And thus I take my *Vale* and farewell with you, dear brother, for ever in this present life, till we shall meet in eternal bliss; whither our good God and Father bring us shortly. Amen. God bless all your babes for ever. Amen.—Out of prison, this 8th of February.

Your afflicted brother for the Lord's cause,

John Bradford.

### A Letter written to his Mother,

As a Farewell, when he thought he should have suffered shortly after.

The Lord of life and Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, bless you and comfort you, my good and dear Mother, with his heavenly comfort, consolation, grace, and Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

If I thought that daily, yea, almost hourly, you did not cry upon God the Father through Jesus Christ, that he would give me his blessing, even the blessing of his children, then would I write more hereabouts. But forasmuch as herein I am certain you are diligent, (and so I beseech you, good mother to continue,) I think it good to write something whereby this your crying might be furthered. Furthered it will be, if those things which hinder it be taken away. Among the which in that I think my imprisonment is the greatest and chiefest, I will thereabouts spend this letter; and that briefly, lest it might increase the let,<sup>2</sup> as my good brother this bringer can tell you. You shall know therefore, good mother, that for my body, though it be in an house out of the which I cannot come when I will, yet in that I have conformed

<sup>1</sup> that  
which

<sup>2</sup> hin-  
drance  
He mean-  
eth the  
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more strait  
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ment that  
might  
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follow.

my will to God's will, I find herein liberty enough, I thank God. And for my lodging, bedding, meat, drink, godly and learned company, books, and all other necessaries for mine ease, comfort, and commodity, I am in much better case than I could wish, and God's merciful providence here is far above my worthiness. Worthiness, quoth I? Alas, I am worthy of nothing but damnation. But besides all this, for my soul I find much more commodity.<sup>1</sup> For God is my Father, I now perceive, through Christ: therefore in prisoning me for his Gospel, he maketh me like to the image of his Son Jesus Christ here, that, when he cometh to judgment, I might then be like unto him, as my trust and hope is I shall be. Now maketh he me like to his friends the Prophets, Apostles, the holy Martyrs and Confessors. Which of them did not suffer, at the least, imprisonment or banishment for his Gospel and word? Now, mother, how far am I unmeet to be compared to them—I (I say) which always have been and am so vile an hypocrite and grievous a sinner! God might have caused me long before this time to have been cast into prison as a thief, a blasphemer, an unclean liver, and an heinous offender of the laws of the realm: but, dear mother, his mercy is so great upon both you and me and all that love me, that I should be cast into prison as none of these, or for any such vices, but only for his Christ's sake, for his Gospel's sake, for his Church's sake; that hereby, as I might learn to lament and bewail my ingratitude and sins, so I might rejoice in his mercy, be thankful, look for eternal joy with Christ, for whose sake (praised be his name for it!) I now suffer, and therefore should be merry and glad. And indeed, good mother, so I am, as ever I was; yea, never so merry and glad was I, as I now should be, if I could get you to be merry with me, to thank God for me, and to pray on this sort. 'Ah good Father, which dost vouchsafe that my son, being a grievous sinner in thy sight, should find this favour with thee, to be one of thy Son's captains and men of war, to fight and suffer for his Gospel's sake, I thank thee, and pray thee in Christ's name, that thou wouldest forgive him his sins and unthankfulness, and make perfect in him that good which thou hast begun: yea, Lord, I pray thee, make him worthy to suffer not only imprisonment, but even very death, for thy truth, religion, and Gospel's sake. As Hannah did apply and give her first child Samuel unto thee; so do I, dear Father, beseeching thee for Christ's sake to accept this my gift: and give my son, John Bradford, grace always, truly to serve thee and thy people, as Samuel did. Amen, amen.'

If on this sort, mother, from your heart you would pray, as I should be the most merriest man that ever was, so am I certain the lets<sup>2</sup> of your prayer for<sup>3</sup> my imprisonment would be taken away. Good mother, therefore, mark what I have written, and learn this prayer by heart, to say it daily; and then I shall be

<sup>2</sup> hindrances  
<sup>3</sup> on account of

merry, and you shall rejoice—if that you continue, as I trust you do, in God's true religion; even the same I have taught you, and my father Traves, I trust, will put you in remembrance of: my brother Roger also, I trust, doth so daily. Go to, therefore, and learn apace. Although the devil cast divers lets<sup>1</sup> in the way, God, in whom you trust, will cast them away, for his Christ's sake, if you will call upon him; and never will he suffer you to be tempted above that he will make you able to bear. But how you should do herein, the other letter I have written herewith shall teach you; which I would none should read, till my father Traves have read it, and he will give you, by God's grace, some instructions. Now, therefore, will I make an end, praying you good Mother, to look for no more letters: for if it were known that I have pen and ink and did write, then should I want all the fore-said commodities I have spoken of concerning my body, and be cast into some dungeon in fetters of iron: which thing I know would grieve you; and therefore, for God's sake, see that these be burned, when this little prayer in it is copied out by my brother Roger—for perchance your house may be searched for such gear,<sup>2</sup> when you think little of it. And look for no more, sweet Mother, till either God shall deliver me and send me out, either<sup>3</sup> you and I shall meet together in heaven, where we shall never part asunder. Amen.

I require you, Elizabeth and Margaret my sisters, that you will fear God, use prayer, love your husbands, be obedient unto them, (as God willeth you,) bring up your children in God's fear, and be good housewives. God bless you both, with both your husbands my good brethren; whom to do good because I now cannot, I will pray for them and you. Commend me to my sister Anne, Mother Pike, T. Sorrocold and his wife, R. Shalcross and his wife, R. Bolton, J. Wilde, M. Vicar, the parson of Mottram, Sir Lawrence Hall, with all that love and (I trust) live the Gospel: and God turn Sir Thomas his heart. Amen. I will daily pray for him. I need not to set my name; you know it well enough.

Because you should give my letters to father Traves to be burned, I have written here a prayer for you to learn, to pray for me, good Mother, and another for all your house in your evening prayer, to pray with my brother. These prayers are written with mine own hand: keep them still, but the letters give to father Traves to burn, and give father Traves a copy of the latter prayer.

1 hin-  
drances

This letter  
cometh not  
to our  
hands.

2 things

3 or



## Another Letter to his Mother,

As his last Farewell unto her in this world, a little before he was burned.

God's mercy and peace in Christ be more and more perceived of us. Amen.

My most dear Mother in the bowels of Christ, I heartily pray and beseech you to be thankful for me unto God, which thus now taketh me unto himself. I die not, my good Mother, as a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, &c. ; but I die as a witness of Christ his Gospel and verity, which hitherto I have confessed (I thank God) as well by preaching, as by prisonment, and now even presently I shall most willingly confirm the same by fire. I knowlege<sup>1</sup> that <sup>I own</sup> God most justly might take me hence simply for my sins (which are many, great, and grievous ; but the Lord for his mercy in Christ, hath pardoned them all, I hope,) but now dear Mother, he taketh me hence by this death, as a confessor and witness that the religion taught by Christ Jesu, the Prophets, and the Apostles, is God's truth. The prelates do persecute in me Christ whom they hate, and his truth which they may not abide, because their works are evil, and may not abide the truth and light, lest men should see their darkness. Therefore, my good and most dear Mother, give thanks for me to God, that he hath made the fruit of your womb to be a witness of his glory ; and attend to the truth which (I thank God for it) I have truly taught, out of the pulpit of Manchester. Use often and continual prayer to God the Father, through Christ. Hearken, as you may, to the Scriptures : serve God after his word and not after custom : beware of the Romish religion in England, defile not yourself with it : carry Christ's cross, as he shall lay it upon your back : forgive them that kill me : pray for them, for they know not what they do : commit my cause to God our Father : be mindful of both your daughters, to help them as you can. I send all my writings to you by my brother Roger : do with them as you will, because I cannot as I would : he can tell you more of my mind. I have nothing to give you, or to leave behind me for you : only I pray God my Father, for his Christ's sake, to bless you and keep you from evil. He give you patience ; he make you thankful, as for me so for yourself, that will take the fruit of your womb to witness his verity : wherein I confess to the whole world, I die, and depart this life in hope of a much better ; which I look for at the hands of God my Father, through the merits of his dear Son Jesus Christ. Thus, my dear Mother, I take my last farewell of you in this life, beseeching the almighty and eternal Father by Christ, to grant us to meet in the life to come ; where we shall

give him continual thanks and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.  
 Out of prison, the 24th of June, 1555.

Your son in the Lord,

John Bradford.

**To one, by whom he had received much comfort and relief  
 in his trouble and imprisonment.**

The mercy of God in Christ, peculiar to his children, be ever more felt of you, my dearly beloved in the Lord. Amen.

When I consider with myself the benefits which God hath shewed unto me by your means, if I had so good and thankful a heart as I would I had, I could not with dry eyes give him thanks: for certainly they are very many and great. And now, being yet still the Lord's prisoner, I perceive from him more benefits by you. For the which I think myself so much bound to you, my good brother (although you were but the instrument by whom God wrought and blessed me), that I look not to come out of your debt by any pleasure or service that I shall ever be able to do you in this life. I shall heartily pray unto God, therefore, to requite you the good you have done to me for his sake: for, I know, that which you have done, you have done it simply in respect of God and his word. He therefore give you daily more and more to be confirmed in his truth and word; and so plentifully pour upon you the riches of his Holy Spirit, and heavenly treasures laid up in store for you, that your corporal and earthly riches may be used of you as sacraments and significations thereof—the more to desire the one, that is the heavenly, and the less to esteem the other, that is the earthly. For Satan's solitation<sup>1</sup> is, so to set before you the earthly, that therein and thereby you should not have access to the consideration of the heavenly; but, as one bewitched, should utterly forget them, and altogether become a lover and worshiper of the earthly Mammon, and so to fall to covetousness and a desire to be rich, by that means to bring you into many noisome and hurtful lusts: as now-a-days I hear of many, which have utterly forsaken God and all his heavenly riches, for Antichrist's pleasure and the preserving of their worldly pelf, which they imagine to leave to their posterity: whereof they are uncertain; as they may be most certain they leave to them God's wrath and vengeance, in his time to be sent by visitation, if they in time heartily repent not, and prevent not the same by earnest prayer. Wherein, my good brother, if you be diligent, hearty, and persevere, I am sure God will preserve you from evil, and from yielding yourself to do as the world now doth, by allowing in bodily fact, in the Romish service, that which the inward cogitation

<sup>1</sup> perhaps,  
 custom

and mind doth disallow. But if you be cold in prayer, and come into consideration of earthly and present things simply, then shall you fall into faithless follies, and wounding of your conscience : from which God evermore preserve you, with your good wife and your babe Leonard and all your family, to the which I wish the blessing of God, now and for ever, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

I pray you give thanks for me to your old bed-fellow, for his great friendship for your sake shewed to me, when I was in the Tower.

John Bradford.

*To my dearly beloved Sister Mistress A. W.*

The everlasting peace of Christ be more and more lively felt in our hearts, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. Amen.

Although I know it to be more than needeth, to write any thing unto you, good Sister, being (as I doubt not you be) diligently exercised in reading of the Scriptures, meditating the same, and hearty prayer to God for the help of his Holy Spirit, to have the sense and feeling especially of the comforts you read in God's sweet book ; yet, having such opportunity, and knowing not whether hereafter I shall have the like (as this bringer can declare), I thought good in few words to take my farewell in writing, because otherwise I cannot. And now methinks I have done it. For what else can I, or should I say unto you, my dearly beloved in the Lord, but Farewell, farewell, dear Sister, farewell? Howbeit in the Lord, our Lord, I say, Farewell. In him shall you farewell ; and so much the better, by how much in yourself you fare evil, and shall fare evil. When I speak of yourself, I mean also this world, this life, and all things properly pertaining to this life. In them as you look not for your welfare, so be not dismayed, when accordingly you shall not feel it. To the Lord our God, to the Lamb our Christ, which hath borne our sins on his back, and is our Mediator for ever, do I send you. In him look for welfare, and that without all wavering, because of his own goodness and truth, which our evilness and untruth cannot take away. Not that therefore I would have you to flatter yourself in any evil or unbelief ; but that I would comfort you, that they should not dismay you. Yours is our Christ wholly : yours, I say, he is, with all that ever he hath. Is not this welfare, trow you? Mountains shall move, and the earth shall fall, before you find it otherwise—say the liar Satan what he list. Therefore, good Sister, farewell, and be merry in the Lord : be merry, I say, for you have good cause. If your welfare, joy, and salvation hanged upon any other thing, than only God's mercy

and truth, then might you well be sad, heavy, and stand in a doubt. But in that it hangeth only upon these two, tell Satan he lieth, when he would have you to stand in a mammering,<sup>1</sup> by causing you to cast your eyes, (which only in this case should be set on Christ your sweet Saviour,) on yourself in some part. Indeed look on yourself, on your faith, on your love, obedience, &c. to awake you up from security, to stir you up to diligence in doing the things appertaining to your vocation : but, when you would be at peace with God, and have true consolation in your conscience, altogether look upon the goodness of God in Christ. Think on this commandment, which precedeth all others, that you must have no other gods but the Lord Jehovah, which is your Lord and God ; the which he could not be, if that he did not pardon your sins in very deed. Remember that Christ commandeth you to call him *Father* for the same intent. And hereto call to mind all the benefits of God, hitherto shewed upon you : and so shall you feel in very deed, that which I wish unto you now, and pray you to wish unto me, farewell or welfare in the Lord Jesus ; with whom he grant us shortly to meet as his children, for his name and mercies' sake, to our eternal welfare. Amen, amen.

Your own in the Lord,

John Bradford.

### Another Letter to Mistress A. W.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for his Christ's sake, increase in us faith, by which we may more and more see what glory and honour is reposed and safely kept in heaven, for all them that believe with the heart, and confess Christ and his truth with the mouth. Amen.

My dearly beloved, I remember that once heretofore I wrote unto you a *Vale* or a farewell upon conjecture : but now I write my farewell to you in this life indeed, upon certain knowledge. My staff standeth at the door. I continually look for the Sheriff to come for me ; and I thank God, I am ready for him. Now go I to practise that which I have preached. Now am I climbing up the hill : it will cause me to puff and blow before I come to the cliff. The hill is steep and high : my breath is short, and my strength is feeble : pray therefore to the Lord for me, that as I have now, through his goodness, even almost come to the top, I may by his grace be strengthened, not to rest till I come where I should be. Oh loving Lord, put out thy hand and draw me unto thee : for no man cometh, but he whom the Father draweth. See, my dearly beloved, God's loving mercy : he knoweth my

short breath and great weakness. As he sent for Elias a fiery chariot, so sendeth he for me: for by fire my dross must be purified, that I may be fine gold in his sight. Oh unthankful wretch that I am: Lord do thou forgive me mine unthankfulness. Indeed I confess, right dear to me in the Lord, that my sins have deserved hell-fire; much more then this fire. But lo, so loving is my Lord, that he converteth the remedy for my sins, the punishment for my transgressions, into a testimonial of his truth, and a testification of his verity; which the prelates do persecute in me, and not my sins: therefore they persecute not me, but Christ in me, which I doubt not will take my part unto the very end. Amen.

Oh that I had so open an heart, as could so receive, as I should do, this great benefit and unspeakable dignity, which God my Father offereth to me. Now pray for me, my dearly beloved, pray for me that I never shrink. I shall never shrink, I hope; I trust in the Lord, I shall never shrink: for he that always hath taken my part, I am assured, will not leave me when I have most need, for his truth and mercy's sake. Oh, Lord, help me: into thy hands I commend me wholly. In the Lord is my trust; I care not what man can do unto me. Amen. My dearly beloved, say you *Amen* also, and come after if so God call you. Be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, but keep company with him still. He will never leave you, but in the midst of temptation will give you an outscapè, to make you able to bear the brunt. Use hearty prayer: reverently read and hear God's word; put it in practice; look for the cross; lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh; know that the death of God's saints is precious in his sight: be merry in the Lord; pray for the mitigation of God's heavy displeasure upon our country. God keep us for ever: God bless us with his spiritual blessings in Christ. And thus I bid you farewell for ever, in this present life. Pray for me, pray for me, for God's sake, pray for me. God make perfect his good work begun in me. Amen.—Out of prison, this 7th of February.

Yours in the Lord,

John Bradford.

### To certain Godly Men,

Relievers and helpers of him and others in their imprisonment.

The peace of Christ which passeth all pleasure and worldly felicity, be daily more and more felt in your hearts, my right dearly beloved in the Lord, by the inward working of the Holy Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance and guider of God's elect;

with the which God our dear Father more and more endue us all unto the end, for his beloved Son's sake, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Praised be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is a Father of mercy and a God of all consolation, that hath blessed you with the knowledge and love of his truth; not only to your own comforts, but also the great ease and comfort of many, which, without the help of God by you hitherto, had been in much more misery. By your relieving the Lord's prisoners, I am brought to see the root whereof the work doth spring, even the knowledge and love of God's truth, wherefore we are in bands. The which knowledge and love, in that it is a blessing of all blessings the greatest, (for it is even eternal life, John 17.) I cannot but praise God for you on this behalf, that it hath pleased him to vouch you worthy so excellent and singular a benefit, which is more to be esteemed, desired, and cared for, than any thing else. The world, for all that ever it hath, cannot attain by any means to this blessing; which God our Father hath given you freely of his own good will through Christ, even before ye were purposed to desire it. Therefore I beseech you all to be thankful with me, and to rejoice in the Lord. For if he has given us such a gift unasked, undesired, yea, unthought upon, how can it be that he will deny us any good thing now, which may be necessary for us? Will he, trow ye, sow his seed in the ground of your hearts, and not keep away the fowls from picking it up? Would he so bestow his seed in you as he hath, if that he would not hedge in your hearts his field from common paths, and from breaking in of beasts to destroy it? Will he be more careless than a good husbandman, to weed out the weeds which are in us, lest they should overgrow the corn of his word? Will not he bestow muck and marl upon us, that we may bring forth more fruit? If in a good husbandman this be not lacking, alas, how should we think then but that the Lord God, a good husbandman, and nothing but good, and only good; how, I say, should it be, but that he is most careful to keep his seed, already sown in your hearts by the ministry of us and other his preachers, and that to the bringing forth of just and full fruits? He that hath begun with you, doubt not, my dearly beloved, but that he will happily make an end with you. He hath begun to sow his seed in you, as I dare say ye feel it; be sure then that all this will follow. First, he will have scare-crows in your hearts; I mean, such sparkles of his fear will he drop, yea, already he hath dropped into you, that the birds of the air, vain and evil cogitations, shall not be cherished of you, but expelled by crying to the Lord for his help. Secondly, he will make such hedges, as shall keep you, as well from by-paths of all evil customs and usages, as also preserve you from the power of evil and dominion of sin, which would have the upper

hand of you. Thirdly, he will doubtless pour such showers upon you to supple you, so weed you, so muck and marl you by temptation and other exercises, that the sunshine of persecution shall make more to the ripening of his seed in you, than to the withering of it away.

These things, my dearly beloved, the Lord God, which hath begun them in you and for you, will continue with you; that in the end you may be brought into his barn, there to rest with him in eternal felicity. For God's sake, therefore, wait and look for no less than I have told you, at his hands: a greater service can you not give him. If God keep not the order I have told you, but perchance begin to muck and marl you, to pour his showers upon you, to nip you with his weeding tongs, &c.; rejoice and be glad that God will do that in you and with you at once, which a long time he hath been a-working in and for others. Now undoubtedly great showers are fallen to supple our hearts, that God's word might enter therein and take root. Now the Lord goeth a weeding, to weed out of us our carnality, security, covetousness, self-love, forgetfulness of God, love of this world. Now the Lord doth muck and marl us, loading us with heaps and burdens of crosses, that our hearts might be made good ground to bring forth fruit to God's glory by patience; as well in suffering inward temptations and griefs, (whereof we must complain to the Lord, for his scarecrows to drive them forth of us,) as also in suffering outward assaults, for the which we must cry to our master for his hedges and defence: which hath two parts, the one concerning us, to help and deliver us, and the other concerning our, or rather his, obstinate adversaries, to take vengeance upon them—which he will do in his time.

Therefore let us by patience possess our souls; knowing, that they which persevere to the end shall be saved. Let us not be weary of well-doing, for in our time we shall reap the fruits thereof. But rather, whiles we have time, let us redeem it in doing well to all men, but specially to the household of faith, which thing hitherto you have done, (the Lord therefore be praised, and in the day of his coming he recompence you!) and in the rest I hope well: I mean, that you have declared no less in confessing the truth planted in your hearts, by your words and works after your vocation, to the glory of God. I hope you have godly behaved yourselves, not being, as too many be now-a-days, even mongrels, giving half to God and half to the world, halting on both knees, going two ways; I mean it of the mass-gospellers, which are worse than any papists. In this point I hope well of you, my dearly beloved, that you have not contaminated yourselves; that you have both confessed the truth, as often as need hath required, and also have refrained from coming to church now, where is nothing but idolatrous service. I hope

you have glorified God, both in soul and body. I hope you have gathered with Christ, and not scattered abroad. I hope you have drawn no yoke with unbelievers, nor communicated with other men's sins, but have abstained from all appearance of evil, confessing in heart, confessing in tongue, confessing in deed and act, the true knowledge of God; which he hath of his great mercy given unto you, not to be as a candle under a bushel, but upon the candlestick to give light, that men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. All this I hope of you, my beloved, and also of all purity of life and godly conversation; not doubting but, in this behalf also, you have declared God's verity in your heart, and for the Lord's sake do so still in all points; that is, in your vocations be diligent and righteous, towards yourselves be sober and pure, towards your neighbours be charitable and just, towards God be faithful and thankful, loving and obedient. Use earnest and often hearty prayer. Meditate much upon, and often hearken to, the word of God. If you be called, give with modesty an account of the hope which is in you. Be not ashamed of God's true service; allow not that with your presence, which is contrary to God's will. Make not the members of Christ's church, that is, yourselves, members of Antichrist's church. Be not ashamed of the gospel, or of such as be bound therefore, but rather be partakers thereof; first, inwardly, by compassion, prayer, &c.; then outwardly, by giving according to that the Lord hath lent you to that end; and last of all, by suffering with us, if God so will, and if it be needful for you. For, my dearly beloved, be certain that no man can touch you or lay hands upon you, but by the will of God; which is all good towards you, even as the will of a most dear father, which cannot always be angry, or otherwise use his rod, than only to chastise and correct, not to destroy his children. Again, be certain that no cross shall come unto you before you need it. For God is our physician; and when he seeth our souls in peril, he preventeth the peril by purgation, and ministering physic, which is the cross. As therefore, for the body, we follow the advice of the physicians for the health thereof, thankfully using their counsel and obeying their precepts, so, for God's sake, let us for our souls, being sick, thankfully receive the heavenly physician's physic and diet; so shall we wax strong men in GOD, and in his Christ. Which thing I beseech thee, O Holy Spirit, to work in us all. Amen.

Phil. 4. My dearly beloved, this have I briefly written unto you, not as one that seeketh any gifts, as Paul saith, but as one that seeketh abundant fruits on your behalf, and to your commodity. For it is better to give than to receive, saith Christ by his apostle St. Paul; who testifieth that according to that we sow, so shall we reap. He that soweth little, shall reap little; he that soweth



much, shall reap much. Never should we forget, how that the Lord Jesus being rich, for our sakes became poor, that we might be made rich by him. Again, never should we forget, that we are dead to sin, and alive to righteousness. Therefore should we live wholly unto God and for God, and not for ourselves. In all things therefore we must avoid the seeking of ourselves, as well in doing, as in leaving things undone. If the cross come upon us therefore, then are we happy; for the Spirit of God, and the glory of God resteth upon us. Therefore rejoice, saith Christ, for your reward is great in heaven. In this we are made like to Christ here; therefore we shall be so elsewhere, even in eternal joy and endless glory. The high way to heaven, you know, is affliction; so that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. If we were of the world, the world would love us; but we are not of the world but bear witness against the world, and therefore the world doth hate us. But let us rejoice, our Lord hath overcome the world. He suffered out of the city, bearing our rebuke, saith the apostle. Let us then go out of our tents and bear his rebuke; that is, let us deny ourselves, take up our cross, which is his also, and follow him. Let us know and esteem this more riches than all the treasures of the world, as Moses did. Let us know, that he that saveth his life shall lose it. Let us know, that the way to salvation is a strait way, and a way wherein we cannot carry our bags and chests with us. Let us know, that no excuse of wife, farm, house, or children will excuse us. Let us know that in this case we must be so far from loving father, mother, wife, and children, that we must hate them and our own selves also. Though this is a hard saying, yet we must not leave our load's man for a little foul way: yea rather, we should know indeed, that it is but hard to the flesh, which, if she be handled daintily, will be imperious; under must she be kept, that the spirit, which is a precious thing in God's sight, may have her commodities. If we should follow the fancy of the flesh, we could not please God. Against it we have made a solemn profession, as also against the devil and the world, in our baptism. And shall we now look for easy things of our enemies? Shall we not look rather to be hardly entreated of them? Oh that we considered often and in deed, what we have professed in baptism; then the cross and we should be well acquainted together. For we are baptized into Christ's death, that is, as to be partakers of the benefit of his death, which is remission of sins, so to be made like thereunto continually, by dying to sin. Oh that we considered what we be, where we be, whither we are going, who calleth us, how he calleth us, to what felicity he calleth us, whereby he calleth us! then, my dear hearts in the Lord, we should say to all worldly persuasions and persuaders, Follow me, Satan; thou savourest not those things that be of God, but the things that be of

2 Cor. 9.

Matt. 55.

John 15.

Heb. 13.

Luke 14.

men. Shall we not drink the cup, which our heavenly Father hath appointed for us? O Lord God, open thou our eyes, that we may see the hope whereunto thou hast called us. Give us eyes of seeing, ears of hearing, and hearts of understanding. In the favour thou bearest to thy people, remember us, visit us with thy saving health, that we may see the good things thou hast prepared for thy elect children; that we may have some sight of thy heavenly Jerusalem, and have some taste of the sweetness of thy house. O dear Father, kindle in us an earnest desire to be with thee in soul and body, to praise thy name for ever, with all thy saints, in thy eternal glory. Amen.

John Bradford.

To my dear fathers, Doctor Cranmer, Doctor Ridley, and  
Doctor Latimer.

Jesus, Emmanuel. My dear fathers in the Lord, I beseech God our sweet Father, through Christ, to make perfect the good he hath begun in us all. Amen.

*I stood*

I had thought that every of your staves had stand<sup>d</sup> next the door; but now it is otherwise perceived. Our dear brother Rogers hath broken the ice valiantly; and as this day, I think, or tomorrow at the uttermost, hearty Hooper, sincere Saunders, and trusty Taylor, end their course and receive their crown. The next am I, which hourly look for the porter to open me the gates after them, to enter into the desired rest. God forgive me mine unthankfulness for this exceeding great mercy, that amongst so many thousands it pleaseth his mercy to choose me to be one, in whom he will suffer. For although it be most true that justepator (for I have been a great hypocrite and a grievous sinner; the Lord pardon me, yea, he hath done it, he hath done it indeed), yet, hic autem quid mali fecit? Christ, whom the prelates persecute, his verity, which they hate in me, hath done no evil, nor deserveth death. Therefore ought I most heartily to rejoice of this indignation and tender kindness of the Lord towards me, which useth the remedy for my sin as a testimonial of his testament, to his glory, to my everlasting comfort, to the edifying of his church, and to the overthrowing of Antichrist and his kingdom. Oh, what am I, Lord, that thou shouldst thus magnify me, so vile a man and miser, as always I have been? Is this thy wont, to send for such a wretch and an hypocrite as I have been, in a fiery chariot, as thou didst for Elias? Oh, dear fathers, be thankful for me, and pray for me, that I still may be found worthy in whom the Lord would sanctify his Holy Name. And for your parts, make you ready, for we are but your gentlemen-ushers. Nuptiæ Agni paratæ sunt; venite ad nuptias. I now go to leave

This is a singular mercy of God, to have death which is a due punishment for sin, turned into a demonstration and testification of the Lord's truth.  
2 Kings 2.

my flesh there, where I received it. I shall be conveyed thither, as Ignatius was to Rome, Leopardis, by whose evil I hope to be made better. God grant, if it be his will that I ask, it may make them better by me. Amen. For my farewell, therefore, I write and send this unto you, trusting shortly to see you, where we shall never be separated. In the mean season I will not cease, as I have done, to commend you to our Father of heaven. And that ye would so do by me, I most heartily pray every one of you: you know, now I have most need. But fidelis Deus, qui nunquam sinet nos tentari supra id quod possumus. He never did it hitherto; nor now, I am assured, he will never do. Amen. A dextris est mihi; non movebor. Propter hoc lætabitur cor meum, quia non derelinquet animam meam in inferno, nec dabit me, sanctum suum, per gratiam in Christo, videre corruptionem. E carcere raptim, expectans omni momento carnificem. The 8th of February, anno 1555.

He meaneth that he should be conveyed by the queen's guard into Lancashire to be burnt, as the adversaries had once determined, like as Ignatius was by a company of soldiers conveyed to Rome, and cast to the Leopards. Ec. hist. lib. 3, cap. 36.

John Bradford.

### To the Lady Vane.

Our dear and most meek Father always be with us, for his Christ's sake; and as his children guide us for ever. Amen.

Your comfortable and necessary letters last sent to me, right worshipful and dearly beloved, do deserve at my hands, as other your benefits have done, that which I cannot give. The Lord my God recompence you, as he can, and will undoubtedly. Now am I going to my good Father and your Father; now am I going to my Christ and your Christ; now am I going to my home and your home. I go before, but you shall follow; howbeit, when or which way, I know not; the Lord knoweth. Unto his providence and will commend yourself. For as it cannot but come to pass, so there is nothing so good to us as it is. Happy were we that ever we were born, that God might set forth his glory by us, howsoever he do it. Though I am led, as to Peter was said, whither I would not, yet with me and for me give thanks, that it pleaseth my Father thus to lead me. I have deserved, yea, even since I came into this prison, many a shameful death; such and so great is my ingratitude and sins. But, lo! the tender kindness of my Father doth correct me as a child and son, making the remedy for my sins an occasion of his glory, a witnessing of his verity, a confirmation of his true religion, heretofore set forth and preached by me. Wherein, good madam, persist, and you shall be safe. Be not now ashamed of it; for though it seem to be overcome, yet by suffering it overcometh: that God's wisdom, which is foolishness to the world, God's power, which is weakness to the reason of man, may triumph and confound that which with the world is

wise and mighty. Now do I begin to be Christ's disciple; now I begin to be fashioned like to my Master in suffering, that so I may be in reigning; now do I for ever take my farewell of you for this life; now commend I myself into the hands of my Father, by whose providence I came into this world, by whose providence I have been kept in this world, and by whose providence I do depart hence. And as his providence is towards me, so doubt you nothing but it is towards you; though not in such sort exteriorly, yet in such love, solicitude, and carefulness for you interiorly. God, our God, and Father of mercy, for the blood of his Christ, wash away all our sins, comfort his church, strengthen the weak, convert or confound, as may make most to his glory, his enemies, and be with us, Emmanuel, for ever. Amen, amen.

In haste, out of prison, the 5th of February, 1555.

John Bradford.

### To my good brother, Augustine Bernher.

Mine own good Augustine, the Lord of mercy bless thee, my dear brother, for ever. I have good hope that, if you come late at night, I shall speak with you; but come as secretly as you can. Howbeit, in the mean season, if you can, and as you can, learn what Master H. hath spoken to Doctor Story and others. The cause of all this trouble, both to my keeper and me, is thought to come by him. It is said that I shall be burned in Smithfield, and that shortly. Domini voluntas fiat. Ecce ego, Domine; mitte me. Ah, mine own sweet friend, I am now alone, lest I should make you and others worse. If I should live, I would more warily use the company of God's children, than ever I have done. Iram Domini portabo, quoniam peccavi ei. Commend me to my most dear sister, for whom my heart bleedeth; the Lord comfort her, and strengthen her unto the end. I think I have taken my leave of her for ever in this life; but in eternal life we shall most surely meet, and praise the Lord continually. I have now taken a more certain answer of death than ever I did, and yet not so certain as I think I should do. I am now as a sheep appointed to the slaughter. Ah, my God, the hour is come: glorify thy most unworthy child. I have glorified thee, saith this my sweet Father, and I will glorify thee. Amen. Ah, mine own bowels, praise God for me, and pray for me, for I am his hope: I hope he will never forsake me, though I have above all other most deserved it. I am the most singular example of his mercy: praised be his name therefore for ever. Cause Mistress Perpoint to learn of the sheriff, Master Chester, what they purpose to do with me; and know, if you can, whether there be any writ forth for me. Factus sum sicut nycticorax in domicilio, et passer solitarius in tecto.

Ah, my Augustine, how long shall God's enemies thus triumph?

I have sent you this of the baptism of children to write out, when this is done, you shall have other things. Pray, pray, mine own dear heart, on whom I am bold. The keeper telleth me, that it is death for any to speak with me; but yet I trust that I shall speak with you.

John Bradford.

To mine own good Augustine.

Dear brother Augustine, I cannot but be bold of you in my need, and therefore I write as I do. Come hither betimes, I pray you, in the morning, and use so to do, for then I think you shall speak with me. Also use to come late in the evening, and let me know whether in the day-time I may send for you. Pray Walsh to steal you in, as I hope he will do. If he do bring you in, then shall this which followeth not need: but doubting the worst, this do I write. First, will<sup>1</sup> my man William to make all things ready <sup>1 desire</sup> for me, for I am persuaded I shall into Lancashire, there to be burnt; howbeit, first, they say, I must to the Fleet. Then will him to hearken early in the morning, whether I be not conveyed <sup>2 are a-</sup> away before men beware.<sup>2</sup> Also I pray you will Robert Har-<sup>ware</sup> rington, who I hope will go with me, to look for that journey. Visit often my dear sister; and although I cannot now write unto her as I would (for all things are more strange here, and cases more and more perilous,) yet tell her that I am careful for her; desire her to be of good comfort; God shall give us to meet in his kingdom. In the mean season I will pray for her as my dearest sister. Of truth I never did love her half so well as I now do, and yet I love her not half so well as I would do; she is the very daughter of Abraham. I pray thee heartily be merry, my good brother, and desire all my friends so to be; for, I thank God, I feel a greater benefit than all the bishops in England can take from me. Praise God and pray for me, mine own dear heart in the Lord, whom I hope I shall never forget.

Your poor brother in the Lord,

John Bradford.

To certain men,

Not rightly persuaded in the most true, comfortable, and necessary doctrine of God's holy election and predestination.

Grace, mercy, and peace, with increase of all godly knowledge and living, from God the eternal Father of all consolation, through

the bloody death of our alone and full Redecmer Jesus Christ, by the mighty and lively working and power of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, I wish unto you now and for ever. Amen.

Although I look hourly for officers to come and have me to execution, yet can I not but attempt to write something unto you, my dearly beloved (as always you have been, howsoever you have taken me); to occasion you the more to weigh the things wherein some controversy hath been amongst us, especially the article and doctrine of predestination. Whereof I have written a little treatise; therein, as briefly shewing my faith, so answering the enormities gathered of some, to slander the same necessary and comfortable doctrine. That little piece of work I commend unto you, as a thing whereof I doubt not to answer to my comfort before the tribunal seat of Jesus Christ: and therefore I heartily pray you and every of you, for the tender mercies of God in Christ, that you would not be rash to condemn things unknown; lest God's woe should fall upon you, for calling good evil and evil good. For the great love of God in Christ, cavil not at things that be well spoken, nor construe not things to the evil part, when ye have occasion otherwise. Do not suppose that any man, by affirming predestination (as in that book I have truly set it forth according to God's word, and the consent of Christ's church), either to seek carnality, or to set forth matter of desperation. Only by the doctrine of it, I have taught, as to myself, so to others, a certainty of salvation, a setting up of Christ only, an exaltation of God's grace, mercy, righteousness, truth, wisdom, power, and glory, and a casting down of man and all his power, that he that glorieth may glory, only, and altogether, and continually in the Lord.

Man consisteth of two parts, the soul and the body; and every man of God hath, as a man would say, two men, an outward or old man, and an inward or new man. The devil's drift is, to bring the one into a carnality, and the other into a doubt, and so to despair, and hatred of God: but God, for remedy hereof, hath ordained his word, which is divided into two parts; the one is a doctrine which demandeth of us our duty, but giveth no power thereto, the other is a doctrine which not so much demandeth as giveth. The former is called the law; which hath his promises, conditionals, and comminations, or threats accordingly. The other is called the gospel, or rather the free promises; hanging, not on conditions on our behalf, but simply on God's verity and mercy, (although they require conditions, but not as hanging thereon); of which promises the gospel may well be called a publication. The former, that is, the law with her promises and comminations, tell man what he is, and shew him what he can do. The latter, that is, the gospel and free promises, tell and set forth Christ, and what mercy at God's hand through Christ we have offered and given unto us. The former part serveth to keep the

old man from carnality and security, and to stir him up to diligence and solicitude. The latter part serveth how to keep the new and inward man from doubting and despair, and to bring us into an assured certainty and quietness with God, through Christ. The old man, and the field he resteth in, may not be sown with any other seed than is agreeable to the former doctrine. The new man, and the field he resteth in, may not be sown with any other than is agreeing to the latter doctrine. By this means man shall be kept from carnality, and from desperation also, and brought into diligence and godly peace of conscience. It is forbidden in the old law to sow two kinds of seeds in one field, to wear linsey-woolsey petticoats, or to eat beasts that did not cleave the hoofs. Deut. 22. God grant us to be wise husbandmen, to sow according as I have said. God grant us to be wise tailors, to cut our coats for two men of one whole cloth, as is declared. GOD grant us to be clean beasts, to cleave the hoofs accordingly, that is, to give the old man meat, meet for the mowers, that is, the law with his appurtenances, conditionals, promises, and comminations; and to give to the new man the gospel and sweet free promises, as appertaineth; and then doubtless we shall walk in the right high-way unto eternal life, that is, in Christ Jesus, the end of the law and the fulfilling of the promises, in whom they be yea and Amen. Deut. 14.

If this my poor advice be observed, my dear brethren in the Lord, I doubt not but all controversies for predestination, original sin, free-will, &c. shall so cease, that there shall be no breach of love, nor suspicion amongst us, which GOD grant for his mercies' sake. I am persuaded of you that you fear the Lord, and therefore I love you, and have loved you in him, my dear hearts; though otherwise you have taken it without cause on my part given, so far as I know. For hitherto I have not suffered any copy of the treatise above specified to go abroad, because I would suppress all occasions so far as might be. Now am I going before you to my God and your God, to my Father and your Father, to my Christ and your Christ, to my home and your home. I go before; but you shall come after, sooner or later. Howbeit, I could not but, before I go, signify thus much unto you, as I have done; that you might see my love, and thereby be occasioned to increase in love, and learn rather to bear than break.—My poor and most dear sister to me that ever I had, with whom I leave this letter, I commend unto you all and to every of you; beseeching you, and heartily praying you in the bowels and blood of Jesus Christ, to care for her, as for one which is dear in God's sight, and one which loveth you all in GOD, and hath done, as I can and do bear her witness; although, in the point of predestination, it hath pleased God by my ministry to open unto her his truth. Wherein as she is settled, and I trust in God, confirmed, so if you cannot think with her therein as she doth, I

heartily pray you, and, as I can, in God's behalf charge you, that you molest her not, nor disquiet her, but let love abound, and therein contend who can go most before. I commend also unto you my good sister M. C., making for her the like suit unto you all.

Ah, dear hearts, be not faint-hearted for these evil days, which are come to try us and purify us, that we may the more be partners of God's holiness: as to ourselves, so to the world we shall be better known. Continue to walk in the fear of the Lord, as ye have well begun. Keep yourselves pure, as I hope you do, from this rotten, Romish, yea, antichristian religion. Reverently read God's word, thereto joining prayer; that as you hear in reading God speak unto you, so in praying you may speak unto him. Labour, after your callings, to help other. As you have done, do still; and I pray God give you grace to continue, as I doubt not but he will, for his goodness sake. At the length we shall meet together in Christ's kingdom, and there never part asunder, but praise the name of our good God and Father, with the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, angels, archangels, and all the saints of God. Oh joyful place! oh place of all places desired! My brethren, I think myself more happy than you, by how much I am now more near unto it. Elias' chariot I hourly look for, to come and catch me up. My cloak, that is, my carcase, I shall leave behind me in ashes; which, I doubt not, my Lord will raise up and restore to me again in the last day, glorified even like unto his own most glorious body. The portion of the good Spirit, which my Father hath lent me, I wish, yea, double and treble unto you all. God, the Father of mercy in the blood of his Christ, give to every of you, my dear hearts, in him, his blessing, and pour plentifully upon you his Holy Spirit; that you may increase in all godly knowledge and godliness, to your own comfort and the edification of many others. Amen. Yet once more I commend unto you my foresaid most dear and beloved sister in the Lord, who always be unto her a most loving Father, spouse, and pastor. Amen, amen. Out of prison, the 16th of Feb. 1554.

Your own heart,

John Bradford.

### To Crew and Abington,

With other of their company, teachers and maintainers of the error of man's free-will.

Yet once more, beloved in the Lord, before pen and ink be utterly taken from me, as I look it to be this afternoon, I thought good to write unto you, because I stand in a doubt whether at



any time hereafter I shall see or speak with you; for within this sevensnight my Lord Chancellor bade look for judgment.\* God knoweth I lie not; I never did bear you malice, nor sought the hindrance of any one of you, but your good both in soul and body; as, when we shall all appear together before God, I am certain you shall then know, though now you doubt it, and that causless, I am right well assured. For mine own conscience can and doth bear witness with me, that I never defrauded you or any of you, of the value of one penny or pennyworth of any thing, but have sought with that which hath been given, not only in common, but also unto me and to mine own use, discretion and distribution, to do you good. Therefore disdain not the good will of your lover in God. And in hope that you will not, I have eftsoons<sup>1</sup> even now sent unto you 13s. 4d., If you need as <sup>1</sup> again much more, you shall have it, or any thing else I have, or can do for you. Though in some things we agree not,† yet let love bear the bell away, and let us one pray for another, and be careful one for another; for I hope we be all Christ's. As you hope yourselves to pertain to him, so think of me; and as you be his, so am I yours.

John Bradford.

\* Read the 1 Cor. 13, and compare these spirits with the spirit of humbleness, unity, and love, which here you see in this man of God, doing good even to his adversaries; and then judge of them and their doctrine.

† He meaneth concerning free will, original sin, predestination, &c., wherein they are plain Pelagians and Papists.

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At this letter these men were so sore offended, because he said he had hindered himself to further them, as though he had thereby upbraided them, that in displeasure they sent it to him again. Whereupon he wrote unto them as followeth.

He that seeketh not to hinder himself temporally, that he may further his brother in more need, the same wanteth true love. I have done, do, and will, (except you refuse it,) hinder myself this way that I may further you, and indeed myself also, that way wherein I desire to be furthered.\* If I would seek mine own gains temporally, then could I have taken and used many portions of money, which have been given to me for mine own use. I never minded<sup>2</sup> to upbraid you: but that which I did write of mine <sup>2</sup> meant own hindrance, was that you might see I loved you, and sought

\* Though he distributed to them, amongst other prisoners there, not only that which was given in common, but also to his own use, yet they suspected him of evil dealing. Thus do not they, in whom the love of God dwelleth.

your weal, as I do, and will be glad to do it continually. The Lord of mercy hath forgiven us all; wherefore henceforth let us rather bear than break.

Yours in the Lord,

John Bradford.

*A Letter,*

Which he set as a preface before a supplication sent to Queen Mary, her Council, and the whole Parliament, which supplication cometh not yet to our hands.

In most humble wise complaineth unto your Majesty and honours a poor subject, persecuted for the confession of Christ's verity: the which verity deserveth at your hands to be maintained and defended, as the thing by the which you reign, and have your honour and authorities. Although we that be professors, and, through the grace of GOD, the constant confessors of the same, are, as it were, the outswEEPINGS of the world; yet, I say, the verity itself is a thing not unworthy for your ears to hear, for your eyes to see, and for your hands to handle, help, and succour, according to that the Lord hath made you able, and placed you where you are for the same purpose. Your highness and honours ought to know, that there is no innocency in words or deeds, where it is enough and sufficeth only to accuse. It behoveth kings, queens, and all that be in authority, to know, that in the administration of their kingdoms they are God's ministers. It behoveth them to know, that they are no kings but plain tyrants, which reign not to this end, that they may serve and set forth God's glory, after true knowledge. And therefore it is required of them, that they would be wise, and suffer themselves to be taught, to submit themselves to the Lord's discipline, and to kiss their Sovereign lest they perish: as all those potentates, with their principalities and dominions, cannot long prosper but perish indeed, if they and their kingdoms be not ruled with the sceptre of God, that is, with his word; which whoso honoureth not, honoureth not GOD; and they that honour not the Lord, the Lord will not honour them, but bring them into contempt, and at the length take his own cause, which he hath most chiefly committed unto them to care for, into his own hands, and so overthrow them, and set up his truth gloriously; the people also perishing with the princes, where the word of prophecy is wanting, much more is suppressed, as it is now in this realm of England; over which the eyes of the Lord are set to destroy it, your highness, and all your honours, if in time you look not better to your office and duties herein, and not suffer yourselves to be slaves and hangmen to antichrist and his prelates, which have brought your highness and honours already to let Barabbas loose, and to hang up Christ. As

by the grace and help of God I shall make a<sup>1</sup>, well in preserving would please your excellent majesty, and all you did the sun shine to heart God's doctrine, which rather through t<sup>1</sup>, overcome his pharisees, I mean the bishops and prelates, than you for Hezekiah is oppressed; and not, for our contemptible and exec<sup>1</sup> the history the sight of the world, to pass the less of it.<sup>1</sup> For it, t<sup>1</sup>. I mean, is higher and of more honour and majesty, than the star whole world. It standeth invincible above all power, being t<sup>1</sup>. In doctrine, but the doctrine of the ever living GOD and o<sup>1</sup>. The Christ, whom the Father hath ordained king, to have dominio<sup>1</sup> from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the world. And truly so doth he and will there reign, that he will shake all the whole earth with his iron and brazen power, with his golden and silvery brightness, only by the rod of his mouth, to shivers in such sort, as though they were pots of clay, according to that which the prophets do write of the magnificence of his kingdom. And thus much for the thing, I mean the doctrine; and your duties to hearken, to propagate, and defend the same.

But now will our adversaries mainly cry out against us, (because no man may be admitted once to whist<sup>2</sup> against them,) that we pretend falsely the doctrine and word of God, calling us the most wicked contemners of it, and heretics, schismatics, traitors, &c. All which their sayings, how malicious and false they are, though I might make report<sup>3</sup> to that which is written by those men whose works they have condemned, and all that retain any of them, publicly by proclamation; yet here will I occasion your majesty and honours, by this my writing, to see that it is far otherwise than they report of us. God our Father, for his holy name's sake, direct my pen to be his instrument to put into your eyes, ears, and hearts, that which most may make to his glory, to the safeguard of your souls and bodies, and preservation of the whole realm. Amen.

John Bradford.

**To a faithful and dear Friend of his,**

Entreating<sup>4</sup> of this place of St. Paul to the Romans: The fervent desire of the creature waiteth when the children of God shall be delivered.

Grace and peace, with increase of all godliness in Christ, I wish unto you, my dearly beloved.

Because this morning I had some knowledge, more than before I had, how that my life stood in great danger, and that even this week, so far as men might, both by the doings and sayings of such as be in authority attempted and spoken concerning me, judge and perceive: I thought good (my right dearly beloved in the Lord) to go about something which might be on my behalf,

your weal, as I do, an antio, a Swan's song, and towards you, both a of mercy hath forg'kind of my love, and also a help, or at the least bear than break. you to profit, in that which I bear you record

re, I mean everlasting life and the state thereof.

and [did] I attempt upon the last talk we had betwixt us,

and were here with me. I know you have not forgotten

talked together of that place of St. Paul to the Rom. 8.

Which concerning the groanings of the creature, and his desire of there-  
 tion of the children of God. You demanded whether this word

*creature* was to be understood of man or no : and I told you that, though some did take *creature* there for man, because there is no kind of creature which may not be acknowledged in man : yet (said I) the text itself, considered with that which the Apostle writeth of Christ, Eph. 1. Col. 1. the restorer and reformer of all things that be both in heaven and in earth, and with the argument which St. Paul presently hath in hand there, doth enforce a godly mind to take every creature there (as also St. Chrysostom and St. Ambrose do) for the whole world, and every creature both heavenly and earthly. All things I told you, were made for man ; and according to man's state, so are they. When man was without sin and in God's favour, there was no malediction, curse, or corruption. But when man by sin was cast out of favour, then was the earth cursed. For the wickedness of the inhabitants, fruitful lands are turned into salt ground ; as for their piety, barren countries are made fruitful. Psa. 107. The angels themselves do rejoice over one sinner that repenteth ; thereby giving us notice that, in their kind, they lament over the impenitent. In reading the prophets, you may see how that all things do depend of man. When they prophecy any great blessing or plague to come to God's people, they do communicate the same both to heaven and earth, and to every thing else. As, for example, when the prophets do foreshow the overthrows of realms and people, how do they say that the whole shape of the world shall be moved thereat. Look upon Esay, how he, when he prophesieth the fall of Babylon, doth say that the stars shall not shine from heaven, the sun shall be darkened in his rising, the moon shall not give her light. And afterwards he saith, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall be moved out of his place. Esay. 13. But the histories do witness, that there are wonderful changes of all creatures, both heavenly and earthly, in the overthrows and destructions of realms and people.

Again when Esay doth prophesy of the kingdom of Christ, he doth promise new heavens and new earth, and that so excellent and new, that he sheweth the former heavens and earth to be utterly forgotten. Esay. 63. Whereto the apostle agreeth, making Christ the repairer of all things in heaven and in earth. Eph. 1 Col. 1. How did both heaven and earth give their service

to the Israelites coming forth of Egypt, as well in preserving them, as in destroying their enemies. How did the sun shine longer than it was wont to do, for Joshua to overcome his enemies. How did even the very angels fight for Hezekiah against the Assyrians: read the 30th Esay. And behold the history of Christ: consider how the angels rejoiced; how the star brought the wise men to Christ; how the angels were ministers unto him in the wilderness: how the devils confessed him. In his death, how did all the whole world shew compassion. The sun was darkened; the earth did quake: the rocks clave asunder: the vail of the temple rent asunder. When he arose, both heaven (for the angels with great heavenly brightness appeared,) and earth which was moved, did rejoice: the Angels were preachers of it. In his ascension also: did not a bright cloud receive him and take him up? did not the angels testify of his return? When he sent the Holy Ghost and made his new covenant of grace, did not all the whole world serve thereto by thunder, smoke, fire, earthquake? Now, how wonderfully they will do their service to Christ coming to judgment, it is more plain than I need to rehearse. And inasmuch as we are the members of Christ, he being our head, we may soon see how that all things have a certain compassion<sup>1</sup> with man, and do, after their kind, as the apostle writeth, look for a deliverance from vanity, which they shall obtain in their restoration. I therefore told you, how that I do take the apostle to mean, by *every creature*, simply even all the whole shape and creatures in the world. He doth attribute unto them, how that they look for the perfection of our salvation; how that they are subject to vanity; how that they are subject in hope; how that they groan and travail; attributing these things unto the senseless creature, by translation from man, to signify the society, cognation,<sup>2</sup> and consent, which all and every creature hath with man: that, as every and all things were made for man, so, by the man Christ, all and every thing both earthly and heavenly shall be restored.

<sup>1</sup> sympathy

<sup>2</sup> affinity

These things, you know, in effect I spake unto you, to stir up both myself and you to a deeper consideration of our blessed state, which now we enjoy in hope, which will never deceive us; the more to occasion us to desire the full fruition of the same. But I do remember that you were something troubled with some doubtfulness hereabout. Therefore I purpose now to write of this matter more at large, thereby to occasion us both to see better, through the help of God's Spirit, that which we desire and I pray God grant unto us both for his mercies sake—I mean, the felicity of his children, and the happy state which one day in very deed (my dear heart) we shall fully possess, and both together praise the Lord with all his saints, world without end, Amen, amen.

This was your doubt: If so be that St. Paul did mean, by *all*

*creatures*, simply (as I have spoken) that they shall be delivered from corruption into such a state as shall adorn the freedom of God's children; whether that plants, beasts, and other things having life, shall be restored. If yea: then you would know whether all things that have been, shall be restored also. And after this you will perchance ask, in what place they shall be, what they shall do, and so forth. As I think upon this matter, and as I am accustomed to answer such questions coming to me, I will here write for an answer unto you also: not doubting but that therewith you will be satisfied, because I know your heart is satisfied with godly and sufficient answers. Thus I think: All and every creature groaneth and travaileth as yet, hoping and looking for my [our] restoration: for they be subject to corruption for my [our] sins' sake; but they all shall be delivered, by my [our] Christ, from the bondage of corruption, then when he shall restore us his members. This will I muse on, and weigh with myself; that I may duly know, both in me and in all other things, the atrocity and bitterness of sin which dwelleth in me, and so may the more heartily give over myself wholly to the Lord Christ my Saviour; that he may, with what cross soever shall please him, slay sin in me, and bring me, after his own will and way, to newness of life; whereunto that I, for my part, may faithfully and with all my whole heart do my diligence, in mortifying the desires of my flesh, and in labouring to obey the desires of the spirit to live a life acceptable to him, I beseech him of his grace. And that I may do this cheerfully, and continue in this purpose and diligence, I will fasten my mind, as much as the Lord shall enable me, to consider this my so great happiness whereunto I shall be restored in the resurrection: the which resurrection doubtless shall be adorned, by the whole shape of the world delivered from corruption. These things will I think on, these things will I pause on: herein will I, as it were, drown myself, being careless of this—I mean, what parts of the world the Lord Christ will restore with me, or how he will do it, or what state of condition he will give it. It is enough and enough for me, that I, and all the whole world with me, shall be much more happy than now I can by any means conceive. By reason hereof I will praise and glorify my Lord, and by his grace I will study to please him with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, singing unto him, that he both doth well, and hath done and made all things well: to him be eternal glory for ever. This is my cogitation in this matter; and not mine only, but the cogitation of one which was my father in the Lord, and now,

I am assured, with the Lord at home, where<sup>1</sup> we yet are from home by reason of this, our corruptible habitacles, wherein we abide the Lord's leisure.

He mean-  
eth that  
most godly  
and learn-  
ed father  
M. Mar-  
tin Bucer.

<sup>1</sup> whereas

If you would know the reason that moveth me to answer as I

have done to the foresaid doubt or questions, it is this. You see that the apostle, in this place to the Romans, speaketh of the deliverance of every creature from the bondage of corruption, and that to the beautifying of the glory of God's children. This is so manifest, that no man can well deny it. It is but a simple thing to say, that the apostle doth mean in this place by *every creature*, man only. He is not wont to speak on that sort. Neither dare I say, that the apostle speaketh here hyperbolically or excessively: although some think so. But as I said, I say again, that the apostle doth here simply affirm, that there shall be a renovation and a deliverance from corruption, not only of man, but also of all and of every part of the whole world: of every part, I say, meaning parts indeed, and not such as be rather vices and added for plagues, than for parts. For by reason of sin, many spots and corruptions are come into the world, as is all that is hurtful and filthy in the creatures. Also, all that cometh of hurtful, as perchance fleas, vermin, and such like.

This renovation of all things the prophets do seem to promise, when they promise new heavens and new earth: for a new earth seemeth to require no less renovation of earthly things, than new heavens do of heavenly things. But these things the apostle doth plainly affirm that Christ will restore, even whatsoever be in heaven and in earth. Col. i. Therefore methinks it is the duty of a godly mind, simply to acknowledge, and thereof to brag in the Lord, that in our resurrection all things shall be so repaired to eternity, as for our sin they were made subject to corruption.

The ancient writers, out of Peter, have, as it were, agreed to <sup>2 Pet. 3.</sup> this sentence, that the shape of this world shall pass away through the burning of earthly fire, as it was drowned with the flowing of earthly waters. These be St. Augustine's words. <sup>August. de civitate Dei c. 6.</sup> Whereto I will add these which he there writeth: The qualities (saith he) of the corruptible elements which agreed with our corruptible bodies, shall utterly be burned with that same worldly conflagration and burning, as I said; but the substance itself shall have those qualities, which do agree by a marvellous change to our bodies; that the world, changing into the better, may openly be made meet to man, returned, even in the flesh, into the better. These be his words. Whereby it is plain, that this good man did believe that the elements should be renewed; but of other things he meddled not, except it be of the sea, by the occasion of that which is in the Apocalypse: howbeit, so he speaketh, that he cannot well tell whether it also shall be changed into the better; adding these words, But we read that there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. For he did understand the place of Esay concerning the new heaven and new earth, simply: of other things he expresseth nothing.

But Thomas Aquinas treateth this question more exactly, or

rather curiously : affirming the celestial bodies, the elements, and mankind to be renewed, but in no wise beasts plants, &c. to be so ; and this is his principal reason. The renovation of the world shall be for man : therefore such shall be the renovation, as shall be conformable to the renovation of man. But the renovation of man shall be from corruption to incorruption ; from moving to rest : the things therefore that shall be renewed with man, must be brought also to incorruption. Now, the celestial bodies and the elements were made to incorruption ; the one wholly and in every part, the other, that is the elements, though in part they are corruptible, yet concerning the whole they are incorruptible, as man is incorruptible concerning part, that is the soul. But beasts, plants, &c. are corruptible both wholly and in every part ; therefore they were not made to incorruption, and so are they not conformable to the renewing ; that is, they are not receiveable of incorruption, and therefore they shall not be restored.

This reason is true in this part, that it affirmeth things shall be restored with man, and with him shall be brought to perpetuity, and, as the apostle saith, to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Again, his reason is true herein also, that man's reason may soon be persuaded the things now partly incorruptible, shall be restored altogether to incorruption. But now to say that by no reason those things may be brought to perpetuity, which now both wholly and partly be temporal and momentane, how can he prove it ? in that the nature and being of all things dependeth on the omnipotence of God, which after his own pleasure doth give to things which he hath made their being, and all is one to him, to make a thing temporal and to make it eternal. For he made all things of nothing ; and therefore heaven and the celestial bodies have no more of themselves that they be perpetual, than have those things that last but a day. Wherefore this reason which Thomas maketh is not firm, in that it wholly leaneth to that which now seemeth and appeareth in things. Indeed (as I said) it hath some shew or probability, that these things shall be renewed to eternity for the glory of God's children, which now something are partakers of the same. But now, seeing that both it which they now have, and also shall have, dependeth upon the beck and pleasure of God, whom hath God made of counsel with him concerning the renovation of the world and of all things, that he can tell what parts of things and what kind of things he will renew ? Yea, even Aristotle did acknowledge that *Physice* or natural knowledge, because it bringeth his reasons from the disposition and nature of things, hath not full necessity of his reasons. For nature is nothing else than the ordinary and wonted will of God ; as a miracle, portent, or monster, is the rare and unwonted will of God. We say that the nature of stones, and all heavy things, is to sink down-



ward; which is nothing else but the pleasure of God so depelling them and putting them down: for else of themselves nothing is either heavy or light; all is alike to be carried downwards or upwards. Who may make God subject to his work? cannot he that made all things of nothing, give hereafter to the things that he hath made, that whereof now in themselves they have no capacity?

These things I do therefore rehearse, to the end I might declare, that when we dispute what God will do concerning his works, how that it is not seemly for us to conclude according to that which seemeth and appeareth to us in things; but rather, as godliness requireth, to refer all things to the will of God. This will, if it be expressed in Holy Scripture, then may we simply determine that which we read expressed there. But if it be not so, then ought we freely to confess our ignorance, and not prescribe to God what he ought to do of his works, by that which already he hath done. God is of power infinite; and of nothing did he not only make all things, but also will do what pleaseth him both in heaven and in earth, saith David.

The foresaid Thomas bringeth forth also other reasons, but which he himself counteth not for invincible. One is, If beasts and plants shall be restored, either all or some shall be restored. If all shall be restored, then must the resurrection be communicate unto them, that the same in number be restored: which is not convenient. If some shall be restored, there appeareth no reason why these should be restored more than other: therefore saith he, they shall not be restored. But here, what would he answer, if one should ask him how he knoweth it is not convenient that either all in number be restored, as man shall arise, either<sup>1</sup> only some? in that this thing wholly resteth in the hand and will of God. Another reason he maketh out of Aristotle, and out of a ground which is uncertain. Aristotle affirmeth the perpetuity of things to hang on the continual moving of heaven. Thomas now hereto gathereth thus: But the moving of heaven shall cease; therefore he concludeth that in these inferior things no perpetuity may be looked for. But here, what answer will he make, if a man shall say that all things hang at the beck and pleasure of God, who now, for the conservation of his creatures, which now arise and spring, and now die and fall down, useth the moving of heaven, and can afterwards not use it for this purpose? This is a truth, that all things of themselves are nothing: much more then can they not do anything. Now, men may conjecture that the moving of heaven shall cease, but yet by the certain word of God they cannot prove it. In like manner is his last reason which he maketh of the end of beast and plants but which end he knoweth not. Beasts and plants, saith he, were made for the sustentation of the mutual<sup>2</sup> life of man: but this life <sup>2 natural</sup>

shall cease; therefore shall they also. But here hath he no answer, if a man should demand, Who knoweth whether GOD have made them to none other end or use?

Seeing therefore these things be as you see, I suppose it not to pertain to a godly man, to deny the beasts and plants to be restored; in that the Apostle doth here expressly say, that every creature which is now subject to vanity, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. In that the Holy Ghost doth affirm this of every creature, by what reason dare a godly mind exempt any part from this deliverance to come? Howbeit, neither will the godly mind contend whether every creature shall be renewed. For the Holy Ghost spake of the creature generally, and not particularly; and therefore we may not otherwise affirm, because we must not speak but God's word. Therefore it is the part of a godly man, and of one that hangeth in all things upon the word of God, to learn out of this place, that whatsoever corruption, death, or grief he seeth in anything, wheresoever it be, that (I say) he ascribe that wholly unto his sins, and thereby provoke himself to true repentance. Now as soon as that repentance compelleth him to go to Christ, let him think thus: But this my Saviour and my head, Jesus Christ, did for my sins; and therewith, as he took away death, so hath he taken away all the corruption and labour of all things, and will restore them in his time, whether soever they be in heaven or in earth. Now every creature travaileth and groaneth with us; but, we being restored, they also shall be restored. There shall be new heavens, new earth, and all things new.

Thus I wish that our minds might stay in this generality of the renovation of the world, and not curiously to search what parts of the world shall be restored, and what shall not, or how all things shall be restored: much more then I would not have us curious nor inquisitive of their place where they shall be, of their action what they shall do, or of their properties, and such like. For if to have foreknown these things would have made much to godliness, surely the Holy Ghost would most plainly have told them. For, according to Christ's promise, he bringeth us into all truth—all truth, I say, such as the knowledge of it would profit us. All the Scripture is given to us for this purpose, that the man of God might be made perfect, and instructed to all good works: and truly that can be no good work which we do, except God teach us the same. He hath prepared the good works wherein we walk. Ephesians 2. But the certain and bottomless fountain of these good works is, in all things to hang on the beck and pleasure of God; and, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to look for, with remission of sins, life everlasting, and the glory of the resurrection. To the end, therefore, that we may more fully know our sins, and more make of our redemption from them by Christ, let us set before our eyes, death the hire of sin; and that, not only

in ourselves, but also in every creature of the world. Howbeit, this let us do with a hope of so ample a restoration, and never enough to be marvelled at, which shall be even in all things, for our renovation by the Lord Jesus Christ, the renewer of all things, whatsoever be in heaven or in earth.

He that with true faith weigheth and considereth these things, will be, as it were, swallowed up in the admiration of so exceeding great benevolence and love of God our heavenly Father; that he can never admit to yield to this curiosity of searching what kind of things shall be renewed, and how they shall be renewed, or what state or condition they shall be in when they are renewed. These be things of the life to come, whereof this foreknowledge is sufficient, that all these things shall be more perfect and happy, than the reach of reason is able to look upon the glory of them. For the eye hath not seen, nor the ear hath heard, nor it cannot ascend into man's heart, that God hath prepared for them that love him. For concerning our resurrection, what other thing do we know beforehand, but that we shall be most happy? Even so therefore let us not doubt, but that there shall be a deliverance of the creature from the servitude of corruption. And let us consider these things so, that we wholly may bend ourselves to put away all the oldness of our flesh, whence indeed corruption and death doth come, and that we may provoke ourselves to the newness of the spirit, and the life of Christ, wherein is all incorruption, and the true taste of the resurrection; for to this end the Holy Ghost did write this by the Apostle. That therefore this Spirit might lead us hereunto, let us pray; and then we shall understand this place of Paul with profit.

If perchance it will move you, that the Apostle speaketh not of this deliverance of the creature from corruption, in any other place but here, neither any other holy writer: I would you would think that the mystery of the restoration of Israel, also of Antichrist, is not expounded but in the Apostle's writings, and that but in one place; yea, the manner of our resurrection is not written but in two places. We ought to know that they are the words of the Lord, whatsoever the Apostle hath left to us written. Again, the simplicity of this place (Rom. 8.) is plain.—And thus, my dearly beloved, I have written to you so much as I think is sufficient about this matter, and therefore need not to tarry herein any longer, or to spend any more time about the answering of that which is but curiosity. God our Father give us now his Holy Spirit, to lead us into this and all other necessary truth, in such sort that we may have a lively feeling of eternal life begun in us; that we may become first new, and so look for new heaven and earth, wherein righteousness dwelleth: which God impute to us, and begin in us, for his Christ's sake. Amen, amen.

Your own for ever in the Lord,

John Bradford.

## CERTAIN LETTERS OF MASTER WHITTELL,

A godly and a faithful Minister and Preacher of God's word; who, after he had relented by the tyranny and cruell dealing of Bonner, returned again with great constaney, and stood to the defence of the truth unto the fire, the 12th of January, in the year of our Lord 1556.

To my beloved Friend, and faithful brother in Christ,  
John Careless,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

The peace of God, in Christ, be with you continually, dearly beloved brother in Christ, with the assistance of God's grace and Holy Spirit, to the working and performing of those things, which may comfort and edify his church (as ye daily do,) to the glory of his name, and the increase of your joy and comfort of soul in this life, and also your reward in heaven with Christ our Captain, whose faithful soldier you are, in the life to come. Amen.

I have greatly rejoiced, my dear heart, with thanks to God for you, since I have heard of your faith and love towards God and his saints, with a most godly ardent zeal to the verity of Christ's doctrine and religion; which I have heard by the report of many, but especially by the declaring of that valiant captain in Christ's church, that stout champion in God's cause, that spectacle to the world, I mean our good brother Philpot, who now lieth under the altar, and sweetly enjoyeth the promised reward. And specially I and my condemned fellows give thanks to God, for your loving and comfortable letter, in the deepness of our trouble after the flesh, sent unto us to the consolation of us all, but most specially to me, most sinful miser on mine own behalf, but happy (I hope) through God's lovingkindness in Christ shewed unto me; who suffered me to faint and fail through human infirmity, by the working of the arch-enemy, in his sworn soldiers the bishops and priests. In whom so lively appeareth the very visage and shape of Satan, that a man (if it were not prejudice to God's word,) might well affirm them to be devils incarnate, as I by experience do speak. Wherefore, whoso shall for conscience matters come into their hands, had need of the wiliness of the serpent to save his head, though it be in the wounding of his body; and to take diligent heed how he consenteth to their wicked writings, or setteth his hand to their covenants. Sore did they assault me, and craftily tempt me to their wicked ways, or at least to a denegation of my faith and true opinions, though it

were but by colour and dissimulation : and (alas) something they did prevail. Not that I had anything at all like their opinions and false papistical religion, or else doubted of the truth wherein I stand ; but only the infirmity of the flesh beguiled me, desiring liberty by an unlawful means. God lay it not to my charge at that day ; and so I desire you heartily to pray. Howbeit, uncertain I am whether more profit or disprofit came thereby ; profit to me, in that God suffered Satan to buffet me by his foresaid ministers of mischief, showing me mine infirmity, that I should not boast nor rejoice in myself, but only in the Lord. Who when he had led me to hell in my conscience, through the respect<sup>1</sup> *prospect* of his fearful judgments against me for my fearfulness, mistrust, and crafty cloaking in such spiritual and weighty matters, (in the which mine agony and distress, I found this old verse true, Non patitur ludum fama, fides, oculus) yet he left me not there ; but brought me from thence again, to the magnifying of his name, suspecting of flesh and blood, and consolation of mine own soul ; and also that I might feel the disprofit in offending the congregation of God, which peradventure will rather adjudge my fall to come of doubtfulness in my doctrine and religion, than of human imbecility. Well, of the importune burden of a troubled conscience for denying or dissembling the known verity, I by experience could say very much more, which perhaps I will declare by writing to the warning of other, if God grant time : for now am I and my fellows ready to go hence, even for Christ's cause ; God's name be praised, who hath hitherto called us. Pray, I pray you, that we may end our course with joy ; and at your appointed time, you shall come after. But as the Lord hath kept you, so will he preserve your life still, to the intent you should labour (as you do) to appease and convince these ungodly contentions and controversies which now do too much reign, brawling about terms to no edification. GOD is dishonoured, the church disquieted, and occasion to speak evil of the Gospel ministered to our adversaries. But such is the subtilty of Satan, that whom he cannot win with gross idolatry in open religion, them he seeketh to corrupt and deceive in opinions, in a private profession.

But here I will abruptly leave, lest, with my rudeness and simplicity, I should be tedious to you ; desiring you (my loving brother) if it shall not seem grievous unto you, to write unto me and my fellows yet once again, if you may have leisure, and we time to the same, and send me word if you can hastily. Provide me Master Philpots's nine examinations for a friend of mine, and I shall pay you therefore by the leave of Almighty GOD our heavenly Father ; who correcteth all his dear children in this world, that they should not be damned with the world, and trieth the faith of his saints through many tribulations, that

being found constant to the end, he may crown his own gifts in them, and in heaven highly reward them. Whither I trust to go before, looking for you to follow, my faithful friend; that we may sing perpetual praise to our loving Lord God, for victory over Satan and sin, won for us by Jesus Christ, God and man, our only sufficient Saviour and advocate. Amen. Farewell, and pray in faith.

Yours, Thomas Whittell, Minister, and now condemned to die for the Gospel's sake. Anno 1555. January 21.

To my dear Friend and brother Thomas Went,

And other his prison-fellows in Lollard's Tower.

Act. 16. He that preserved Joseph prisoner in Egypt, fed Daniel in the lions' den, and delivered Paul, Peter, and the other apostles out of prison, vouchsafe of his goodness to keep, save, and deliver you, my good brother Went, with the other our fellow soldiers, your prison-fellows, as may be most to his glory, to your consolation, and the edification of his church.

I cannot but praise God most earnestly, when I hear of your constancy in the faith, and joy in the cross of Christ, which you now bear and suffer together with many other good members of Christ; which is a token that by Christ ye are counted worthy the kingdom of God, as Paul saith. And though the world counteth the yoke and cross of Christ as a most pernicious and hurtful thing, yet we which have tasted how friendly the Lord is, cannot but rejoice in this persecution as touching ourselves, inasmuch as the cause for the which we suffer is the Lord's cause, and not altogether ours; at whose hand, if we endure to the end, we shall receive, through his liberal promise in Christ, not only a great reward in heaven, but also the kingdom of heaven itself; and also in the mean season be sure to be defended and cared for, so that we shall lack no necessary things, neither a hair of our heads shall perish without his knowledge. Oh what is he that would mistrust or not gladly serve so loving a Father! Oh how unhappy are they that forsake him, and put their trust in man! But how blessed are they that, for his love and for his holy word's sake, in these troublesome days, do commit their souls and bodies into his hands with well-doing, counting it greater happiness and riches to suffer rebuke with Christ and his church, than to enjoy the pleasures of this life for a little short season! This cross that we now bear, hath been common to all the faithful from Abel hitherto, and shall be to the end; for because the devil, having great wrath against God and his Christ, cannot abide that he should for his manifold mercies be lauded and magnified, and

2 Thes. 1.  
1 Pet. 2.  
Matt 10.  
1 Pet. 4.  
Heb. 11.  
Apoc. 12.

Christ to be taken and believed upon, for our only and sufficient Redeemer, Saviour, and Advocate; and therefore, because we will not deny Christ, nor dissemble with our faith, but openly protest and profess the same before the world; he seeketh by all means to stir up his wicked members, to persecute and kill the bodies of the true Christians: as John saith, the devil shall cast Apoc. 2. some of you into prison. And David saith, I believed, and Psa. 115. therefore have I spoken, but I was sore troubled. This notwithstanding, go forward, dear brethren, as ye have begun, to fight the Lord's battle, considering Christ the captain of your war, who will both fight for you, give you victory, and also highly reward your pains. Consider, to your comfort, the notable and chief shepherds and soldiers of Christ, which are gone before us in these days; I mean, those learned and godly bishops, doctors, and other ministers of God's word: whose faith and examples we that be inferiors ought to follow, as Paul saith. Heb. 13. Remember them that have declared unto you the word of God, the end of whose conversation see that ye look upon, and follow their faith.—The grace and blessing of God, with the ministry of his holy angels, be with you for ever, Amen. All my prison-fellows greet you.

From the Coalhouse this 4th of December. By your poor brother Thomas Whittell, an unworthy minister of Christ, now his prisoner for the Gospel's sake, Amen.

**To all the professors and lovers of God's holy Gospel,  
within the City of London.**

The same faith for the which Abraham was counted righteous, Rom. 4. and Mary blessed, the Lord God increase and make stable in Luke 1. your hearts, my dear and faithful brethren and sisters of London, for ever and ever, Amen.

Dearly beloved, be not troubled in this heat which is now come amongst you to try you, as though some strange thing had 1 Pet. 4, happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's passion; that when his glory appeareth, ye may be merry and glad, &c. Out of these words of St. Peter, I gather most specially these four notes. First, the persecution happeneth to Christ's church for their trial, that is, for the probation and proof of their faith: which faith, like as it is known with God in the depth of our hearts, so will he have it made manifest to the whole world through persecution; that so it may evidently appear that he hath such a church and people upon earth, which so trusteth in him and feareth his holy name, that no kind of persecution, pains, nor death shall be able to separate them from Rom. 8. the love of him. And thus was Abraham tried and Job tempted; Gen. 22. that their faith, which before lay hid almost in their hearts, might Job 1.

Rom. 9.  
2 Cor. 11  
Acts 16.  
Gen. 4.  
2 Macc. 6,  
Acts 7.  
Mat. 17.  
James 4.

be made known to the whole world to be so steadfast and strong, that the devil, natural love, nor no other enemy could be able to bereave them thereof. Whereby also God was to be magnified, who both trieth his people by many tribulations, and also standeth by them in the midst of their troubles to deliver them, by life or death, as he seeth best; like as he assisted Lot, and delivered him out of his enemies hands, Joseph out of the hands of his brethren and out of prison, Paul from his enemies in Damascus, and the apostles out of the stocks and prison. These, with many more, he delivered to life; and also he delivered Abel, Eleazar, Stephen, and John Baptist, with other many, by death, and hath also by the trial of their faith made them good precedents and examples to us and all that come after, to suffer affliction in the like cause, as St. James saith. Take, my brethren, saith he, the prophets for an example of suffering adversity and of long patience, which speak unto you in the name of the Lord; behold, we count them happy which endure. We have heard of the patience of Job, and have known what end the Lord made with him; for the Lord is very pitiful and merciful. Also the Lord trieth us, to let us see our own hearts and thoughts, that no hypocrisy nor ambition deceive us, and that the strong in Christ may pray that he fall not, but endure to the end; and that those that fall through fearful infirmities, might speedily repent and rise again with Peter, and also that the weak ones might bewail their weakness, and cry with David, Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for all my bones are vexed.

Psalm 5.

Luke 2.

Of this opening of the heart by persecution spake holy Simeon to Mary, Christ's Mother, when he said, The sword, that is, the cross of persecution shall pierce thy soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be opened. For like as a king that should go to battle, is compelled to look in his coffers what treasure he hath, and also what number and puissance of men and weapons, so that if he see himself unready and unarmed to bicker with his enemy, he surceaseth and taketh truce for a time; even so we by persecutions have our hearts opened, that we may look therein, to see what faith in Christ we have, and what strength to withstand the enemies and to bear the cross; that if we be rich in these treasures, we might rejoice and valiantly go to battle; or if we want these things, with all speed to call and cry upon him, which giveth all good gifts to those that ask them. Item, the cross trieth the good people from the bad, the faithful from the worldlings and hypocrites, and also cleanseth and scoureth the faithful hearts from all corruption and filthiness, both of the flesh and the spirit. And even as an iron, except it be often scoured, will soon wear rusty; so except our sinful hearts and flesh be often scoured with the whetstone of the cross, they will soon corrupt and overgrow with the rust of all filthiness and sin.



And therefore it is meet and good for us (as the Wise man saith) Wisdom 2. that, as gold and silver are tried in the fire, so should the hearts of acceptable men be tried in the furnace of adversity. Abide the trial, dear friends, that ye may obtain the crown of life. Fight manfully in this the Lord's cause, that ye may obtain a glorious victory here, and receive a great reward in heaven hereafter. As ye are called Christians, and would be angry to be called Jews or Turks, so declare your Christianity by following the steps of Christ, whose name ye bear; suffer with him and for his Gospel's sake, rather than to deny him, or to defile your faith and conscience, with false worshipping or Romish religion. Take up your cross, my dear hearts, now when it is offered you, and go up with Christ to Jerusalem amongst the bishops, priests, and rulers (if GOD call you thereto,) and they will anon send you to Calvary; from whence (dying in the cause of the Gospel, wherein our good preachers and brethren have given their lives), your souls, I warrant you, though Christ Jesus, shall ascend to GOD Eccle. 22. that gave them, and the body shall come after the last day, and so shall ye dwell with the Lord for ever, in unspeakable joy and bliss. Oh, blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness sake, as Christ's people in this Jewish England now doth; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Oh, my beloved, set your minds on this kingdom where Christ our head and King is; considering that, as the brute beast looketh downwards with the face towards the earth, so is man made contrary-wise with his face looking upwards towards the heavens; because his conversation should be in heaven and heavenly things, and not upon the earth and earthly things, as St. Paul saith; Set your minds on things Col. 3. which are above, where Christ is. And again he saith, Our Phil. 3. conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for our Saviour, who will change our vile bodies, and make them like to his glorious body. Oh the glorious estate that we be called unto; the Lord preserve us blameless to his eternal kingdom, through Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

The second thing that I note in the aforesaid words of Peter, is that he calleth persecution no strange thing. And truth it is: for which of the prophets were not persecuted, with Christ and his apostles, and some of them in the end cruelly killed for the truth's sake? Cain killed Abel. Isaac was persecuted of Ishmael. 1 Kings. Jacob was hated of Esau. Joseph was imprisoned and set in the 2 Kings. stocks. The prophet Esaias was cut in two with a saw. Jeremy was stoned. Micah was buffeted, and fed with bread and water. Elias was sore, persecuted. Eleazar, and the woman with her 2 Mac. 6.7. seven sons were cruelly killed. What Christ and the apostles suffered is well known; so that by many tribulations, as Paul saith, we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All the holy Acts 14. prophets, Christ, and his apostles, suffered such afflictions, not for

evil doing, but for preaching God's word, for rebuking the world of sin, and for their faith in Jesus Christ. This is the ordinance of GOD, my friends, this is the high way to heaven, by corporal death to eternal life; as Christ saith, He that heareth my words, and believeth in him that sent me, hath eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but is escaped from death to life. Let us never fear death, which is killed by Christ, but believe in him and live for ever; as Paul saith, There is no damnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

John 5. And again, Paul saith, Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which hath given us victory through Jesus Christ. Besides this, ye have seen and daily do see, the blood of your good preachers and brethren, which hath been shed in the gospel's cause in this sinful Sodom, this bloody Jerusalem, this unhappy city of London. Let not their blood be forgotten, nor the blood of your good Bishop Ridley, who, like a good shepherd, to your comfort and example, hath given his life for his sheep. St. Paul saith, Remember them that have spoken to you the word of God, and look upon the end of their conversation, and follow their faith. The devil ever stirreth up false teachers, as he hath done now over all England, as Peter, Paul, and Jude prophesied it should be, to poison and kill our souls with false doctrine. And where he faileth his purpose that way, then moveth he his members to persecute the seely<sup>1</sup> carcasses of the saints; because they will not deny nor dissemble their pure faith in our living Christ, and confess a dead bready Christ, and honour the same as Christ, God and man, contrary to God's commandments. This is the working of Satan; who, knowing his own just damnation, would all mankind to be partakers with him of the same, such a mortal hatred beareth he against God and his people.

John 10. And therefore when this wicked tempter could not kill Christ with subtle temptation to fall down and worship him, then he stirred up his servants, the bishops and pharisees, to kill his body; whereby, notwithstanding, the devil lost his title and interest which he had to man's soul, and man by his precious passion and death was ransomed from the devil, death, and hell, to immortality and life everlasting: and so when Satan thought to have won all, in killing of Christ he lost all; and so shall he do in us, if we abide constant and strong in the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ unto the end. God grant it, for his mercies' sake in Christ; blessed are all they that put their trust in him. Amen.

Wherefore, my heartily beloved brethren and sisters, be of good comfort through Jesus Christ; for he that is in us is stronger than he that is in the world. Therefore draw ye near to God and he will draw near to you. Resist the devil, and he will, as St James saith, flee from you. Beware of the leaven of the pharisees. Touch not pitch, lest ye be defiled therewith. Eat no swine'

James 2.

Matt. 16.

flesh, for it is against the law; I mean, defile not yourselves neither inwardly nor outwardly with this false and wicked religion of antichrist, for it is nothing else but pitch and swine's flesh. Beware of the beast's mark, lest ye drink of the cup of God's wrath. If God have given you knowledge and faith, dissemble not therewith. Deny not the known verity before men, lest Christ deny you before his Father. Come away from Babylon, as John biddeth you; and touch no unclean thing, but separate yourselves from the company of the ungodly, as Paul commandeth you. Whatsoever ye have done amiss heretofore, now repent and amend; for with the Lord there is mercy, and plenteous redemption.

Apo. 13, 14  
Apo. 8.  
2 Cor. 6.

Psa. 130

The third thing and note which I gather out of the aforesaid words of Peter is this; that he saith, Rejoice because ye are partakers of Christ's passions. Our sufferings, my well-beloved, are Christ's sufferings: and that injury that is done to us for his sake, he reckoneth it to be done to himself; as he said to Paul, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Therefore we ought to rejoice in our sufferings, as Paul writeth, which we suffer with Christ and one with another, as Peter saith; and so to fulfil that which is behind of the passions of Christ in our flesh, which Christ hath by his passion fully redeemed and saved us in his own person. Howbeit, his elect must suffer with him and for him unto the world's end, that he may be glorified in them, and they thereby corrected and cleansed from sin in this world, and be made more meet temples for the Holy Ghost, and also obtain a great reward in heaven for their suffering for righteousness sake, according to his promise. And therefore I say, my brethren, Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. Let us rejoice in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the word is crucified to us, and we to it. And why should we so greatly rejoice in the cross of Christ, which we now suffer? Because, saith Peter, when his glory appeareth, we may be merry and glad. And this is the fourth note that I gather out of his words above written; wherein is set out the reward of suffering, not to be had in this world, but at his coming to judgment, when we shall be raised again, and then shall they that have sown in tears, reap in joy; as Christ saith, Blessed are they that weep here, for they shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men hate you, and thrust you out of their company, railing on you, and abhorring your name as an evil thing, for the Son of man's sake; rejoice ye in that day and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.

Acts 9.

Col. 1.

Matt. 5.

Phil. 3.

Gal. 6.

Luke 6.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, through hope of this heavenly joy and reward, which he that cannot lie hath promised, which joy is so great that no ear hath heard, nor eye hath seen, nor the heart can think, where we shall dwell for ever in the heavenly city, the celestial Jerusalem, in the presence of God the Father, and Jesus Christ our Mediator, as Paul saith, and in the company

1 Cor. 2.

Heb. 12.

of innumerable angels, and with the spirits and souls of all faithful and just men, rejoice and be glad: and since ye be called to so great glory, see that ye make your election and vocation sure by good works, and specially by suffering adversity for the gospel's sake; for it is given us of God, saith Paul, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. Continue in prayer, and pray for me that I may end my course with joy. Have brotherly love amongst yourselves, which is a token that ye be Christ's disciples. Edify and comfort one another in the word of the Lord; and the God of peace and love be with you always. Amen.—For your liberality and kindness shewed upon the prisoners and afflicted people of God in this time of persecution, the Lord will reward you, when he cometh to reward every man according to their deeds; and will not leave a cup of cold water, bestowed upon his faithful people, unrewarded. God make you rich in all grace, that ye always having sufficient, may be rich unto all manner of good works. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you always. Amen.

Your brother, now in bonds for the gospel,

Thomas Whittell.

To my loving and faithful brother, John Careless,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

The same faith for the which Abraham was accounted just, and Mary blessed, whereby also all just men live, the Lord God our loving Father increase and establish in you and me, to the obtaining of eternal life in our alone and sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

I cannot worthily and sufficiently praise God, my heartily beloved brother, for the consolation and joy that I received by reason of your loving letters; repenting me much that I, being so long so near you, did not enterprise to stir up familiarity and communication between us by writing, to our mutual consolation in Christ. For what is there upon earth wherein to rejoice (where all things are transitory and vain, yea, man himself, respecting this life,) but, as David saith, the saints that dwell upon the earth, and such as excel in virtue? But here now I consider, that if the fellowship, love, and joy of faithful men and children of God, being as we now be in double bondage, the body within clay walls, and the soul within these frail earthly bodies, be so great and comfortable, how unspeakable will those joys be, when we shall be delivered from all corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; where we shall be present together continually

in our glorified bodies, beholding the face of our Father presently (whom now we see but in the glass of faith), with his dear Son Christ our Redeemer and brother, and the blessed company of angels, and all faithful saved souls! Oh the incomparable good things and heavenly treasures laid up for us in heaven by Christ Jesus. For the obtaining whereof, we ought to set light by all temporal griefs and transitory afflictions so much the more, in that our good God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength; and that, namely, in the end of our life, when the tree where it falleth lieth still, as the preacher saith; when every one causâ sua dormit et causâ sua resurget: for else before the end he suffereth his sometimes to fall, but not finally to perish; as Peter sunk upon the sea, but yet was not drowned, and sinned grievously upon the land, through infirmity denying his Master, but yet found mercy; for the righteous falleth oftentimes. And Christ's holy apostles are taught to say, Remitte nobis debita nostra; yea, though the righteous fall, saith David, he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. Oh the bottomless mercy of God toward us miserable sinners. He vouchsafe to plant in my heart true repentance, and faith, to the obtaining of remission of all my sins, in the mercies of God, and merits of Christ his Son; and thereto I pray you say, Amen. Oh, my heartily beloved, it grieveth me to see the spoil and havoc that Saul maketh with the congregation of Christ; but what remedy? This is God's will and ordinance, that his people shall here both be punished in the flesh and tried in their faith, as it is written, Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of all; for by a strait path and narrow door must we enter. Whither? Into the joyful kingdom of heaven. Therefore blessed are you, and other that suffer persecution for Christ's sake, for the possession of the same. Pray for me and my fellows, good brother, that we may fight a good fight, that we may keep the faith, and end our course with joyful gladness; for now the time of our deliverance is at hand. The Lord guide, defend, and keep us and you, and all his people in our journey, that we may safely, through a short death, pass to that long lasting life.

Farewell, my dear and loving brother and fellow soldier in Christ; farewell, I say, in him: who receive our souls in peace when they shall depart from these tabernacles, and he grant us a joyful resurrection, and a merry meeting at the last day, and continual dwelling together in his eternal and heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yours, with my poor prayer; and other pleasure can I do you none.

Thomas Whittell, Minister.

To my dear brethren, Masters Filles and Cutbert.

My dear and well beloved brethren in Christ, Masters Filles and Cutbert, I wish you all welfare of soul and body. Welfare to the soul is repentance of sin, faithful affiance in Christ Jesus, and a godly life. Welfare to the body is the health of the same, with all necessary things for this bodily life. The soul of man is immortal, and therefore ought to be well kept, lest immortality to joy should turn to immortality of sorrow. As for the body, be it never so well kept and much made of, yet shortly by nature will it perish and decay. But those that are engrafted and incorporated into Christ by true faith, feeling the motion of God's Holy Spirit, as a pledge of their election and inheritance, exciting and stirring them not only to seek heavenly things, but also to hate vice and embrace virtue, will not only do those things, but also, if need require, will gladly take up their cross and follow their captain, their king, and their Saviour Jesus Christ; as his poor afflicted church of England now doth, against that false and anti-christian doctrine and religion now used, and especially that blasphemous mass, wherein Christ's supper and holy ordinance is altogether perverted and abused, contrary to his institution and to Paul's proceedings; so that that which they have in their mass is neither sacrament of Christ nor yet sacrifice for sin, as the priests falsely pretend. It is a sacrament, that is, as St. Augustine saith, a visible sign of invisible grace, when it is ministered to the communicants according to Christ's example, and as it was of late years in this realm. And as for sacrifice, there is none to be made now for sin; for Christ with one sacrifice hath perfected for ever those that are sanctified. Beware of false religion and men's vain traditions, and serve God with reverence and godly fear, according to the doctrine of his gospel; whereto cleave ye, that ye may be blessed, though of wicked men ye be hated and accursed. Rather drink of the cup of Christ with his church, than of the cup of that rose coloured-whore of Babylon, which is full of abominations. Rather strive ye to go to heaven by that path which is strait to flesh and blood with the little flock, than to go the wide way, following the enticements of the world and the flesh, which leadeth to damnation. Like as Christ suffered in the flesh, saith St. Peter, so arm ye yourselves with the same mind; for Christ suffered for us, leaving us example to follow his footsteps. Blessed are they that suffer for his sake; great is their reward in heaven. He that overcometh, saith St. John, shall eat of the tree of life; he shall have a crown of life, and not be hurt of the second death; he shall be clothed with white array, and not be put out of the book of life; yea, I will confess his name, saith

Matt. 26.

Mark 14.

Luke 22.

2 Cor. 11.

Heb. 9.10.

Luke 11.

Apo. 18.

Pet. 4. 3.

Apo. 2. 3.

Christ, before my Father, and before his angels; and he shall be a pillar in the house of God, and sit with me on my seat. And thus I bid you farewell, mine own brethren and dear fellows in Christ, whose grace and peace be always with you. Amen.

This world I do forsake;  
To Christ I me betake;  
And, for his gospel's sake,  
Patiently death I take.

My body to the dust  
Now to return it must;  
My soul, I know full well,  
With my God it shall dwell.

Thomas Whittell.

## LETTERS OF MASTER ROBERT SAMUEL,

A godly and learned Minister and Preacher of God's word, burnt at Ipswich for the faithful testimony of the same, the 18th of August, 1555; of whose strange torments and unmerciful handling, &c. read in the Book of Martyrs, folio 1270.

### An Exhortation

To the patient suffering of afflictions for Christ's cause, and the verity of his gospel.

A man knoweth not his time; but as the fish is taken with the angle, and as the birds are caught with the snare, even so are men caught and taken in the perilous time, when it cometh upon them. The time cometh, the day draweth near, Ezek. 7. Better it were to die, as the preacher saith, than to live and see the miserable works which are done under the sun; such sudden and strange mutations, such woeful, heinous, and lamentable divisions so fast approacheth, and none or very few thoroughly repenteth. Alas, for this sinful nation, a people of great iniquity and seed of ungraciousness, corrupting their ways. They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, and are gone backward. Who now liveth not in such security and rest, as though all dangers were clean overpassed? Who now blindeth and buffeteth not Christ, with 'seest me and seest me not?'<sup>1</sup> Yea, who liveth not now in such felicity, worldly pleasures, and joys, wholly seeking the world, providing and craftily shifting for the earthly clod and all carnal appetites, as though sin were clean forgotten, overthrown, and devoured? Like hoggish Gadarenes now are we more afraid and ashamed of

Eccles. 9.

Eccles. 4.

Esa. 1.

I an allusion to the game of blind-man's buff

Matt. 8. Christ our Messiah, fearing the loss of our filthy rags, I mean our transitory goods, and disquieting of our sinful and mortal bodies in this short, uncertain, and miserable life, than of a legion of devils seducing and driving us from hearing, reading, and believing  
 Mark 5. Christ, God's eternal Son, and his holy word, the power to save  
 Rom. 10. our souls, unto vanities, lies, and fables, and to this bewitching  
 1 fulness world. Oh perilous abundance of goods, to much saturity<sup>1</sup> of meats, wealth, and quietness, which destroyed with so many souls those goodly cities Sodom and Gomorrah. Jeroboam, so long as he was but a poor man, not yet advanced to his dignity, lived in the laws of God without reprehension; but, brought once to wealth and prosperous estate, he became a wicked and most shameful idolator. And what made the covetous young man so loth to follow Christ, when he was bidden to forsake the worldly wealth which he then enjoyed? Woe be unto these false elusions<sup>2</sup> of the world, baits of perdition, hooks of the devil, which have so shamefully deceived and seduced full many from the right path unto the Lord, into the high-ways of confusion and perpetual perdition.

We might now worthily, dear christians, lament and bewail our heavy state, miserable condition, and sorrowful chance; yea, I say, we might well accuse ourselves, and, with Job, curse these our troublous, wicked, and bloody last days of this world, were it not that we both see and believe, and find in God's sacred book, that a remnant God hath in all ages reserved; I mean the faithful, as many as have been, from the beginning of the world, exercised, whetted, and punished with divers afflictions, troubles, and tossings, cast and dashed against all perils and dangers, as the very dross and outcasts of the earth, and yet will in no wise halt between God and Baal: for God utterly abhorreth two men in one; he cannot away with them that are between both, but casteth them away as a filthy vomit. Christ will not part spoil with his mortal enemy the devil: he will have all or lose all: he will not permit the devil to have the service of the body, and he to stand contented with the heart and mind; but he will be glorified both in your bodies and in your spirits, which are his, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. 6. For he hath made all, bought all, and dearly paid for all, as St. Peter saith; with his own immaculate body hath he clean discharged your bodies from sin, death, and hell, and with his most precious blood paid your ransom and full price, once for all, and for ever. Now what harm, I pray you, or what loss sustain you by this? Why are you, O vain men, more afraid of Jesus your gentle Saviour, and his gospel of salvation, than of a legion of cruel devils, going about with false delusions utterly to destroy you both bodies and souls? Think you to be more sure than under your captain Christ? Do you promise yourselves to be more quiet in Satan's service, than in Christ's religion



Esteem you more these transitory and pernicious pleasures, than God and all his heavenly treasures? Oh palpable darkness, horrible madness, and wilful blindness without comparison, too much to be suffered any longer. We see and will not see; we know and will not know; yea, we smart and will not feel; and that our own conscience well knoweth. Oh miserable and brainless souls, which would for foolish pleasures and slippery wealth lose the royal kingdom and permanent joys of God, with the everlasting glory which he hath prepared for them that truly love him and renounce the world. The children of the world live in pleasure and wealth; and the devil who is their GOD and prince of this world, keepeth their wealth which is proper unto them, and letteth them enjoy it. But let us which be of Christ seek and inquire for heavenly things, which by God's promise and mercy in Christ shall be peculiar unto us. Let, I say, the Cretians, epicures, and such other beastly Belials and carnal people, pass for things that be pleasant for the body, and do appertain to this transitory life; yet shall they once, as the kingly prophet saith, run about the city of God to and fro howling like dogs, desiring one scrap of the joys of God's elect, but all too late, as the rich glutton. Let us therefore pass for those things that do pertain to the Spirit, and be celestial. We must be here, saith Paul, not as inhabitants and home-dwellers, but as strangers; not as strangers only, but, after the mind of Job, as painful soldiers appointed of our governor to fight against the governor of darkness of this world, against spiritual craftiness in heavenly things. The time is come, we must to it; the judgment must begin first at the house of God. Began they not first with the green and sappy tree? and what followed then on the dry branches? Jeremy, speaking in the person of God, saith, In the city wherein my name is invoke, will I begin to punish: but as for you, meaning the wicked, you shall be as innocents and not once touched; for the dregs of God's wrath, the bottom of all sorrows, are reserved unto them in the end, but God's household shall drink the flower of the cup of his mercy. And therefore let us say with Hezekias, Play the men and shrink not; let us comfort ourselves, for the Lord is with us our helper, and fighteth for us. The Lord is, saith he, with you when you be with him, and when you seek him he will be found of you; and again, when you forsake him he will forsake you.

Wherefore we ought not to be dismayed or discourage ourselves, but rather to be of good comfort; not to be sad but merry; not sorrowful but joyful; in that God of his goodness will vouchsafe to take us as his beloved children, to subdue our sinful lusts, our wretched flesh and blood, unto his glory, the promoting of his holy word, and edifying of his church. What if the earthly house of this our habitation (Paul meaning the body)

2 Cor. 4.

John 12.

1 value

Psa. 53.

Luke 16.

Col. 3.

Heb. 13.

Job 7.

Eph. 5.

1 Pet. 4.

Luke 14.

Jer. 15.

2Chron. 3.

2 Cor. 5.

be destroyed? We know assuredly we shall have a building of God, not made with hands, but everlasting in heaven, with such joys as faith taketh not, hope toucheth not, nor charity apprehendeth not. They pass all desires and wishes. Gotten they may be by Christ, esteemed they cannot be. Wherefore the more affliction and persecution the word of God bringeth, the more felicity and greater joy abideth in heaven. But the worldly peace, idle ease, wealthy pleasure, and this present and pleasant transitory life and felicity, which the ungodly foolishly imagine to procure unto themselves by persecuting and thrusting away the gospel, shall turn unto their own trouble, and at last unto horrible destruction and mutations of realms and countries; and after this life, if they repent not, into their perpetual infelicity, perdition, and damnation. For they had rather, with Nabal and his temporal pleasures, descend to the devil, than with poor Christ and his bodily troubles ascend into the kingdom of God his Father. But an unwise man, saith the Psalmist, comprehendeth them not, neither doth the foolish understand them—that is, these bloody persecutors, grown up and flourishing like the flower and grass in the field. But unto this end do they so flourish, that they might be cut down and cast into the fire for ever. For, as Job saith, their joy lasteth but the twinkling of an eye; and death shall lie gnawing upon them, as doth the flock upon the pasture; yea, the cruel worm, late repentance, as St. Mark saith, shall lie gnawing, tormenting and accusing their wretched conscience for evermore.

Let us therefore, good Christians, be constant in obeying God rather than men. For although they slay our sinful bodies, (yea, rather our deadly enemies,) for God's verity, yet can they not do it but by God's sufferance and good will, to his praise and honour, and to our eternal joy and felicity. For our blood, shed for the gospel, shall preach it with more fruit and greater furtherance, than did our mouths, lives, and writings; as did the blood of Abel, Stephen, with many other more. What though they laugh Christ and his word to scorn, which sit in the chair of perverse pestilent scorners? to whom, as to the wise Gentiles of the world, the gospel of Christ is but foolishness, as it was to the Jews a slander and a stumbling stone, whereat they now being fallen, have provoked the wrath and vengeance of God upon them. These are the days of vengeance, saith Luke, that all things written may be fulfilled. And surely it shall be no less than a huge storm of evils that shall come upon us: because that a long and a cursed obstinate maliciousness of us, hath gone before crying in the ears of the Lord GOD of hosts, who so many times and so many ways have been provoked<sup>1</sup> with the unspeakable riches of his goodness, his patience, and long suffering, to amendment, and have nevertheless contemned the same, and proceeded forward to worse and worse, provoking and stirring the presence of God's majesty unto

2 Sam. 25.

Job 21.

Psa. 40.

Mark 9.

Luke 20.

1 invited

Essay 3.

anger. Now therefore, saith God by the mouth of his prophet, I will come upon thee, and I will send my wrath upon thee, (upon thee, I say, O England,) and punish thee according to thy ways, and reward thee after all thine abominations. Thou hast kindled the fire of God's wrath, and hast stirred up the coals. For thou was once lightened, and hadst tasted of the heavenly gift, and wast become partaker of the Holy Ghost, and hadst tasted of the good word of God. Yea, it is yet in thy mouth, saith the prophet. Alas, O England, that knewest thy Lord and master's will, but didst nothing thereafter; thou must therefore (saith he) suffer many stripes and many sharper strokes, and walk on in the glittering and hot flame of thine own fire, and in the coals that thou hast kindled. This cometh to thee from my hand, saith the Lord; namely that thou shalt sleep in sorrow, yea, even so thou shalt. The plain truth telleth the tale; the immutable justice of the everliving God, and the ordinary course of his plagues from the beginning, confirmeth the same. The joy of our heart (saith Jeremiah) is gone, our glory is fallen away, our merry singing is turned into mourning, the garland of our head is fallen. Alas and weal<sup>1</sup> away that ever we sinned so sore! Woe worth all abominations, and wickedness!<sup>2</sup> Woe worth cloked hypocrisy! Woe worth our carnal liberty! Woe worth our most cursed idolatry. For because of these things, saith the Lord, ye shall perish with sword, hunger, and pestilence.

Wherefore, let all the wicked enemies of Christ, and all the unbelievers, be afraid to be tormented and vexed with all hellish furies, and clean without hope, at God's accounting day; which know not God in Christ to be their very righteousness, their life, their only salvation and alone Saviour, nor believe not in him. They must, saith St. John, needs abide and perish with their sins, in death and in eternal damnation. But we be the children of saints, as the elder Toby did answer; and look for another life, which God shall give to all them which change not their faith, nor shrink not from him. Rejoice therefore, ye Christian afflicted brethren, for they cannot take our souls and bodies out of the hands of the Almighty, which be kept as in the bosom of our most sweet and loving father: and if we abide fast in Christ, and turn not away like weathercocks, surely we shall live for ever; Christ affirming the same, saying, My sheep hear my voice, I know them, they hearken unto me and to no strangers, and I give them everlasting life, for they shall not be lost, nor no man shall pluck them out of my hands; no, nor yet this flattering world with all its vain pleasures, nor any tyrant with his great threats and stout brags can once move them out of the way of eternal life. What consolation and comfort may we have, more pleasant and effectuous than this? God is on our side, and fighteth for us: he suffereth, he smarteth, and is afflicted with us. As

Ezek.

Heb. 6.

Jere. 5.

<sup>1</sup> well-a-day.

<sup>2</sup> Saxon, for woes unto

John 6.

Matt. 10.

John 10.

Essay 4. the world can do nothing against his might, neither in taking away or diminishing of his glory, nor putting him from his celestial throne: so can it not harm nor hurt any one of his children without his good will; for we are members of his body, out of his flesh and of his bones, and as dear to him as the apple of his eye. Let us therefore, with an earnest faith, set fast hold and sure feeling upon the promises of God in the Gospel; and let us not be sundered from the same by any temptation, tribulation, or persecution. Let us consider the verity of God to be invincible, inviolable, and immutable, promising and giving us, his faithful soldiers, life eternal. It is he only that hath deserved it for us: it is his only benefit, and of his only mere mercy: unto him only must we render thanks. Let not therefore the vain

1 *baubles* phantasies and dreams of men, the foolish gauds<sup>1</sup> and toys of the world, nor the crafty delusions of the devil, drive and separate us from our hope of the crown of righteousness, that is laid up in store for us against the last day. Oh that happy and merry last day—I mean to the faithful—when Christ by his covenant shall grant and give unto them that overcome, and keep his words to the end, that they may ascend and sit in seat with him, as he hath

2 *Tim. 2* ascended and sitteth on the throne with his Father. The same body and soul that is now with Christ afflicted, shall then be with Christ glorified; now in the butchers' hands as sheep appointed to die, then sitting at God's table with Christ in his kingdom, as God's honorable and dear children: where we shall have, for

2 *fulness* earthly poverty, heavenly riches; for hunger and thirst, saturity<sup>2</sup>

Psa. 16. of the pleasant presence of the glory of God; for sorrows, troubles, and cold irons, celestial joys, and the company of angels; and for a bodily death, life eternal. Oh happy souls, oh precious death and evermore blessed; right dear in the eyes of God, to you the spring of the Lord shall ever be flourishing. Then, as saith Isaiah, the redeemed shall return—and come again into Zion, praising the Lord, and eternal mercies shall be over their heads; they shall obtain mirth and solace; sorrow and woe shall be utterly vanquished; yea, I am even he, saith the Lord, that in all things giveth you everlasting consolation. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory and praise for ever, Amen.

Robert Samuel.

Another letter written to the Christian congregation,  
called The Faith of Robert Samuel.

The belief of the heart justifieth, and to knowledge<sup>1</sup> with the mouth <sup>1</sup> *confess*  
maketh a man safe. Rom. 10.

Fear not the curse of men; be not afraid of their blasphemies and  
revilings: for worms and moths shall eat them up like cloth and wool.  
But my righteousness shall endure for ever, and my saving health  
from generation to generation. Isa. 51.

Considering with myself these perilous times, perishing days, <sup>2</sup> *Tim. 3.*  
and the unconstant and miserable state of man, the decay of our  
faith, the sinister report and false slander of God's most holy  
word, these urgent causes in conscience do constrain me to confess  
and acknowledge my faith and meaning in Christ's holy religion:  
as St. Peter teacheth me, saying, Be ready always to give an <sup>1</sup> *Peter 3.*  
answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that  
is in you, and that with meekness and fear; having a good  
conscience; that when they backbite you as evil doers, they may  
be ashamed, forasmuch as they have falsely accused your good  
conversation in Christ. As touching my doctrine, for that little  
talent that God hath given me, God I take to record, mine own  
conscience and mine auditory knoweth, that I neither in doctrine  
nor manners willingly taught any other thing, than I received of  
holy patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and his apostles. For it were  
not only sin, but also the very part of a cursed miscreant, to  
deny, to belie, or betray the innocent of that heavenly doctrine;  
or to be ashamed to confess and stand to the defence of the same, <sup>Mark 8.</sup>  
seeing that Christ planted it with his most precious blood; and  
all good men have more esteemed the true and infallible word of  
God, than all this transitory world, or their own mortal lives. And  
I believe this doctrine of the patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and his  
apostles, to be sufficient and absolutely perfect to instruct and  
teach me and all the holy church, of our duties towards God, the  
magistrates, and our neighbours.

First and principally, I do assuredly believe, without any doubting,  
that there is one Deity or divine Essence, and infinite substance;  
which is both called and is indeed God everlasting, unbodily,  
unpartable,<sup>2</sup> unmeasurable in power, wisdom, and goodness; the <sup>2</sup> *Indivi-*  
maker and preserver of all things, as well visible as invisible: <sup>s. ble</sup>  
and yet there be three distinct Persons, all of one Godhead or divine  
Being, and of all one power, co-equal, consubstantial, and co-  
eternal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. *I believe in God*  
*the Father Almighty, &c.* As touching God the Father of heaven,  
I believe as much as holy Scripture teacheth me to believe. The  
Father is the first Person in Trinity, first cause of our salvation,

Eph. 7. which hath blessed us with all manner of blessings in heavenly things by Christ; which hath chosen us before the foundations of the world were laid, that we should be holy and without blame before him; who hath predestinate us and ordained us to be his children of adoption, through Christ Jesus. In him, as it is said, Acts 17. we live, we move, and have our being: he nourisheth, feedeth, Psa. 136. and giveth meat to every creature. *And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.* I believe that the Word, that is, the Son of God, the second Person in Trinity, did take man's nature in the womb of the most blessed virgin Mary. So that there be in him, Heb. 1. two natures, a divine nature and an human nature, in the unity of person inseparable, conjoined and knit in one Christ, truly God and truly man, the express and perfect image of the invisible God; wherein the will of God the Father shineth apparently, and wherein man, as it were in a glass, may behold what he ought to do that may please God the Father. *Born of the virgin Mary; truly suffering his passion, crucified, dead and buried,* to the intent to bring us again into favour with God the Father Almighty, and to be a sacrifice, host and oblation, not only for original sin, but also Esa. 48. 43. Gen. 1. 22. Esa. 53. Acts 10. Matt. 8. for all actual sins of the whole generation of mankind. For all the works, merits, deservings, doings, and obedience of man towards God, although they be done by the Spirit of God in the grace of God, yet, being thus done, be of no validity, worthiness, nor merit before God, except God, for his mercy and grace, account them worthy for the worthiness and merits of Christ Jesus. *The same Christ went down to the hell's, and truly rose again the third day, and ascended into the heavens,* that he might there still reign, and have dominion over all creatures; and from thence shall come, &c.

*I believe in the Holy Ghost,* co-equal with God the Father and the Son, and proceeding from them both: by whose virtue, strength, and operation, the true catholic church, which is the communion and society of saints, is guided in all truth and verity, and kept from all errors and false doctrine, the devil, and all power of sin. Which church is sanctified and hallowed with the precious blood and Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ; which hath also her sign and mark, that she heareth and followeth the voice of her only and true pastor Christ, and no John 10. 3. Gal. 1. 1 Tim. 3. strangers. This church also is the house of God, the congregation of the living God, the pillar of truth, the lively body of Christ, a church both in name and in deed. *I believe the remission of sins* by the only means and merits of Christ's death and passion; who was made unto us of God that only sacrifice and oblation, offered once for all and for ever, for all them that be sanctified. *I believe the resurrection of the body;* whereby in the last day all men shall rise again from death, the souls joined again to the bodies, the good to everlasting life, the wicked to

everlasting pain and punishment. And nothing may more certainly stablish and confirm our faith that we shall rise again immortal, both in body and soul, than the resurrection of Christ, our Saviour, and first-fruits of the dead. Now that Christ our head is risen, we, being his body and members, must follow our head. Death, hell, and sin, cannot sunder nor pluck us from him. For as the Son cannot be divided nor sundered from the Father, nor the Holy Ghost from them both, no more may we, being the faithful members of Christ, be separated from Christ. And for a confirmation of our resurrection, Christ would be seen after his resurrection in his most glorious body, his wounds being handled and felt, speaking and teaching, eating and drinking, &c. We look, saith St. Paul, for Jesus Christ our Saviour, which shall transfigure our vile bodies, and conform them to his glorious body by the same power and virtue, wherewith he is able to subdue all things; even like as the grain of wheat sowed in the ground, is first putrified and brought as into a thing of nought, yet after that it springeth up freshly with a goodlier colour, form, and beauty than it had before. The body is sown in corruption and riseth in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, and riseth in honor. Thus I verily know and assuredly believe the resurrection of our bodies, and to have life eternal by Christ, and for Christ's sake. Verily, verily I say unto you (saith Christ), he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into damnation, but is escaped from death to life. It is Christ that died once for our sins, and is risen again, never more to die: it is he that swallowed up death, and hath cast it under his feet for ever. What now can death do unto us? Verily nothing else, but for a little time separate our precious souls from our wretched bodies, that divine substance from a mass of sin, that eternal life from a body of death, and so send our souls out of this miserable, wretched, and sorrowful life, cumbered with all calamities, unto that most blessed felicity and joys eternal.

As concerning the holy and reverend sacraments of Christ's church, which be in number two, the sacrament of baptism and the supper of the Lord, I believe them to be, as St. Paul calleth them, confirmations or seals of God's promises, which have added to them a promise of grace; and therefore they are called invisible signs of invisible grace. The sacrament of baptism is a mark of Christ's church, a seal and confirmation of our acceptance into the grace and favour of God, for Christ's sake. For his innocency, his righteousness, his holiness, his justice is ours, given us of God; and our sins and unrighteousness, by his obedience and abasing of himself to the death of the cross, are his, whereof baptism is the sign, seal, and confirmation. Baptism is also a sign of repentance, to testify that we be born to the waves of perils and changes of life, to the intent that we should die continually, as

John 10.

Phil. 3.

John 12.

1 Cor. 15.

John 5.

Rom. 10.

Hos. 10.

1 a mis-  
print for  
visible

long as we live, from sin, and rise again like new men unto righteousness. Rom. 6. The other sacrament, which is the Supper and holy Maundy<sup>1</sup> of our Saviour Christ, whereby the church of Christ is known, I believe it is a remembrance of Christ's death and passion, a seal and confirmation of his most precious body given unto death; even to the vile death of the cross, wherewith we are redeemed and delivered from sin, death, hell, and damnation. It is a visible word; because it worketh the same thing in their eyes, which the word worketh in the ears. For like as the word is a mean to the ears, whereby the Holy Ghost moveth the heart to believe, Rom. 10, so this sacrament is a mean to the eyes, whereby the Holy Ghost moveth the heart to believe; it preacheth peace between God and man; it exhorteth to mutual love and all godly life; and teacheth to contemn the world for the life to come, whenas<sup>2</sup> Christ shall appear, which now is in heaven, and no where else, as concerning this human body. Yet do I believe assuredly, that his very body is present in his most holy supper at the contemplation of our spiritual eyes, and so verily eaten with the mouth of our faith. For as soon as I hear these most comfortable and heavenly words spoken and pronounced by the mouth of the minister, This is my body which is given for you; when I hear, I say, this heavenly harmony of God's infallible promises and truth, I look not upon, neither do I behold, bread and wine, for I take and believe the words simply and plainly, even as Christ spake them. For, hearing these words, my senses be rapt and utterly excluded, (for faith wholly taketh place, and not flesh, nor the carnal imaginations of our gross, fleshly, and un-reverent eating, after the manner of our bodily food, which profiteth nothing at all, as Christ witnesseth, Joh. 6,) but with a sorrowful and wounded conscience, a hungry and thirsty soul, a pure and faithful mind, do fully embrace, behold, and feed, and look upon that most glorious body of Christ in heaven, at the right hand of God the Father, very God and very man, which was crucified and slain, and his blood shed for our sins, there now making intercession, offering and giving his holy body for me, yea, my body, my ransom, my full price and satisfaction, my Christ and all that ever he hath. And by this spiritual and faithful eating of this lively and heavenly bread, I feel the most sweet sap and taste of the fruits, benefits, and unspeakable joys of Christ's death and passion, fully digested into the bowels of my soul. For my mind is quieted from all worldly adversities, turmoilings and troubles; my conscience is pacified from sin, death, hell, and damnation; my soul is full, and hath even enough, and will no more; for all things are but loss, vile, dung and dross, vain vanity, for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Jesu my Lord and Saviour. Thus now is Christ's flesh my very meat indeed, and his blood my very drink indeed; and I am become flesh

<sup>1</sup> *Maunday-  
Thursday, the  
day of its  
institution;  
dies  
mandati*

*Acts 1. 3.  
2 when*

*Rom. 8.  
Heb. 9.*

*Rom. 5.*

*Phil. 3.*

*John 6.*

*Eph. 5.*



of his flesh, and bone of his bones. Now I live, yet not I, but <sup>Gal. 2</sup> Christ liveth in me; yea, I dwell in him and he in me; for through faith in Christ, and for Christ's sake, we are one, that is, of one consent, mind, and fellowship, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. John 17. Thus am I assured and fully persuaded; and on this rock have I builded, by God's grace, my dwelling and resting place for body and soul, life and death. And thus I commit my cause unto Christ, the righteous and just judge, who will another day judge these debates and controversies; whom I humbly beseech to cast his tender and merciful eyes upon the afflicted and ruinous churches, and shortly to reduce them into a godly and perpetual concord. Amen.

Thus do I believe, and this is my faith and my understanding in Christ my Saviour, and his true and holy religion. And this <sup>Mark 8.</sup> whosoever is ashamed to do, among this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

Robert Samuel.

## LETTERS OF MASTER JOHN HULLYER,

A true pastor and a faithful Minister in God's church; who, for the confirmation of that doctrine which he had most faithfully professed and taught, gave his body to be burned at Cambridge, the 16th day of April, anno 1556.

### A Letter written to the Christian Congregation,

Exhorting them constantly and faithfully to abide in the doctrine of the Lord.

It standeth now most in hand,<sup>1</sup> O dear Christians, all them that <sup>1 it</sup> look to be accounted to be of Christ's flock at that great and <sup>greatly</sup> terrible day, when a separation shall be made of that sort that shall <sup>concern-</sup> be received, from the other which shall be refused, faithfully in <sup>eth</sup> this time of great afflictions to hear our Master Christ's voice, the only true Shepherd of our souls, which saith, Whosoever shall <sup>Matt. 24.</sup> endure to the end, shall be safe. For even now is that great trouble in hand, as here in England we may well say, that our Saviour Christ spake of so long before, which should follow the true and sincere preaching of his gospel. Therefore in this time we must needs either make that we be his faithful soldiers, and

continue in his battle unto the end, putting on the armour of GOD, the buckler of faith, the breast-plate of love, the helmet of hope and salvation, and the sword of his holy word, which we have heard plentifully, with all instance<sup>1</sup> of supplication and prayer; or else if we do not work and labour with these, we are apostates and false soldiers, shrinking most unthankfully from our gracious and sovereign Lord and captain Christ, and leaning to Belial. For, as he saith plainly, Whosoever beareth not his cross and follow him, he cannot be his disciple. And, No man can serve two masters: for either he must hate the one and love the other, or else he shall lean to the one and despise the other. The which thing the faithful prophet Elias signified, when he came to the people and said, Why halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be GOD follow him; or if Baal be he, then follow him. Now let us not think but that the same was recorded in writing for our instruction, whom the ends of the world are come upon, as the apostle St. Paul saith, Whatsoever things are written aforehand, they are written for our learning. If Christ be that only good and true Shepherd that gave his life for us, then let us that bear his mark, and have our consciences sprinkled with his blood, follow altogether for our salvation his heavenly voice and calling, according to our profession and first promise. But if we shall not so do, certainly, say what we can, although we bear the name of Christ, yet we be none of his sheep indeed; for he saith very manifestly, My sheep hear my voice and follow me; a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger.

Therefore let every man take good heed in these perilous days, whereof we have had so much warning aforehand, that he be not beguiled by the goodly outward shew and appearance, as Eve was of our old subtle enemy: whose craft and wiliness is so manifold and diverse, and so full of close windings, that, if he cannot bring him directly and the plain straight way to consent to his suggestions, then he will allure him and wind him in by some other false ways, as it were by a train, that he shall not perceive it, to deceive him withal, and to steal from him that goodly victory of the uncorruptible and eternal crown of glory, which no man else can have but he that fighteth lawfully; as at this present day, if he cannot induce him thoroughly, as other do, to favour his devilish religion, and of good will and free heart to help to uphold the same, yet he will inveigle him to resort to his wicked and whorish schoolhouse, and, at the least-wise, to be conversant and keep company with his congregation there, and to hold his peace and say nothing whatsoever he think, so that he be not a diligent soldier and a good labourer on Christ's side to further his kingdom; by that subtle means flattering him that he shall both save his life, and also his goods, and live in quiet. But if we look well

Eph. 6.

1 Thes. 5.

1 earnest-  
ness

Luke 14.

Matt. 6.

1 Kings 18.

Rom. 15.

John 10.

2 Tim. 2.

on Christ's holy will and testament, we shall perceive that he came not to make any such peace upon earth, nor yet that he gave any such peace to his disciples. I leave peace with you, saith he, my peace I give you; not as the world giveth it, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor fearful; these things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye should have peace; in the world ye have affliction, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. The servant is not greater than his lord and master; if they have persecuted me, they shall also persecute you. If any man come to me, and hateth not his own father and mother, wife, children, sisters, yea and moreover his own life, it is not possible for him to be my disciple. Blessed be ye that now weep, for ye shall laugh; and woe be unto you that now laugh, for ye shall mourn and weep; he that will find his life, shall lose it. Therefore the God of that true peace and comfort, preserve and keep us that we never obey such false flattering: which at length will pay us home once for all, bringing for his temporal peace and quietness, everlasting trouble, vexation, and disquietness; for these vain and transitory goods, extreme loss and utter damage of the eternal treasure and inheritance; for this mortal life, deprivation of the most joyful life immortal; finally, the entrance into endless death most miserable, unmeasurable pain, and torment both of body and soul.

Matt. 10

John 14,  
15, 16.

Luke 6, 14.

Now, conferring these two schoolmasters together, let us consider the thing well, and determine with ourselves which way we ought to take; and not to take the common broad way which seemeth here most pleasant, and that the most part of people take. Surely I judge it to be better to go to school with our master Christ, and to be under his ferula and rod, although it seem sharp and grievous for a time, that at the length we may be co-heritors with him of everlasting joy; rather than to keep company with the devil's scholars, the adulterous generation, in his school that is all full of pleasure for a while, and at the end to be paid with the wages of continual burning in the most horrible lake, which burneth evermore with fire and brimstone without any end. What shall then these vain goods and temporal pleasures avail? Who shall then help when we cry incessantly, Woe, woe, alas, and weal away,<sup>1</sup> for unmeasurable pain, grief, and sorrow? Oh let us therefore take heed betime, and rather be content to take pains in this world for a time, that we may please God. Our Saviour Christ, the true teacher, saith, Every branch that bringeth not forth fruit in me, my Father will take away. It is also written not in vain, The children of the ungodly are abominable children, and so are they that keep company with the ungodly. What doth he else, I pray you, that resorteth to the ministration and service that is most repugnant and contrary to Christ's Holy Testament, there keeping still silence and nothing reproving the same, but in the

1 well-a-day

John 15.

Eccel. 41.

face of the world, by his very deed itself, declareth himself to be of a false, fearful, dissembling, feigned, and unfaithful heart, and to have laid away from him the armour of light; discouraging as much as lieth in him all the residue of Christ's host, and giving a manifest offence to the weak, and also confirming, encouraging, and rejoicing the hearts of the adversaries in all their evil doing? by which example he doth shew himself neither to love God, whom he seeth to be dishonoured and blasphemed of an anti-christian minister, nor yet his neighbour, before whom he should rebuke the evil, as it is expressly commanded in God's holy law, where it is said, Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, that thou bear not sin for his sake. Wherefore let such a one never phantasy to deceive himself, that his name is registered in the book of life, to have the stipend of Christ's soldier, except he do the duty and perform the part of a faithful and right true soldier, as other have done before. For such fearfulness cometh not from

Lev. 18. God, as testifieth St. Paul, saying, God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love. Be not ashamed, saith he, to testify our Lord, but suffer adversity also with the gospel through the power of God, which saved us, and called us with an holy calling. To be now fearful, when most need is that we should be of strong hearts, is utterly the rejecting of the fear of God, and plain unfaithfulness and disobedience to the express commandment of our Saviour Christ; which saith in his holy

2 Tim. 1. gospel, Fear not them that kill the body, &c. For what faithfulness do we express towards him, when he saith thus to us, and yet we declare in our doings the very contrary; being ever fearful, even as the unbelieving Israelites, which unfaithfully feared God's enemies the heathen Canaanites, whereas he had oftentimes given

Matt. 10. them commandment by his true prophet Moses to do the contrary? For the which cause, all the whole number of that sect were destroyed in process of time in the wilderness, and enjoyed not the pleasant land of promise; which was a bodily figure shewed before, and now agreeing to the promise of the heavenly inheritance, which shall be given to none other, but only to all such as with love unfeigned be wholly bent, without any fear of man, to fulfil God's holy will and pleasure. But all they that pertain to the lively faith to the winning of the soul, will faithfully stick to the commandment; trusting most firmly and faithfully, that he that gave the same, will also give strength plentifully to perform it, even in the weakest vessels of all, as we have heard and seen by many and divers examples—he only be praised therefore.

1 Pet. 3. St. Peter saith, Fear not, though they seem terrible unto you, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Only, saith St. Paul, let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. Continue in one Spirit, and in one

Phil. 1. soul, labouring (as we do) to maintain the faith of the gospel, and

in nothing fearing your adversaries, which is to them a token of damnation, and to you of salvation, and that of God; for unto you it is given, that not only ye should believe in Christ, but also suffer for his sake. Wherefore let us be right well assured, that we shall yield a most straight reckoning and account, if we transgress the said most wholesome precepts given us of our Master Christ and of his apostles, and now, in this troublesome time wherein the gospel is persecuted, shew ourselves fearful soldiers; as it is manifestly declared in the Revelation of St. John, where it is written, that the fearful shall have their part with the unbelieving and abominable, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Again, it is written in the same book for our warning, Because thou art betwixt both, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Apoc. 21.  
Apoc. 13.

Now therefore, good Christians, these true testimonies of God's lively word deeply considered and weighed, let us chiefly stand in awe of his most terrible judgments, and be not as they that presumptuously tempt him. Let him always be our fear and dread. He now chasteneth, he now nutureth us for our profit, delighting in us even as a loving Father in his beloved child, to make us perfect, and to have us to be partakers of his holiness. He now judgeth us, not utterly taking away his everlasting love and mercy from us, as he doth from the malignant and wicked, that we should not be condemned with the wicked world: but if we now refuse his most loving chastising, and follow the world, we must needs have our portion with the world. Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, which leadeth to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat. But strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it. Oh how much better is it to go this narrow way with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time. In consideration whereof, let us, without any more slacking and further delays in this great warning by God's loving visitation, submit ourselves betime under his mighty hand, that he may exalt us when the time is come. And thus I wholly commit you to him, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build further; beseeching you most heartily to pray for me, that I may be strong through the power of his might, and stand perfect in all things, being always prepared and ready, looking for the mercy of our Lord unto eternal rest; and I will pray for you as I am most bound. So I trust he will graciously hear us, for his promise sake made unto all, faithful in his dearly beloved Son Christ, our alone Saviour—whose grace be with your spirit, most dear Christians, for ever. So be it. Essay 6.  
Prov. 3.  
Heb. 12.  
1 Cor. 11.  
2 Sam. 7.  
Matt. 7.  
1 Peter 5.

By your Christian brother, John Hullyer,  
a prisoner of the Lord.

**John Hullyer, being of long time prisoner,**

And now openly judged to die for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, wisheth heartily to the whole congregation of God, the strength of his Holy Spirit, to their everlasting health, both of body and soul.

I now, most dear Christians, having the sweet comfort of God's saving health, and being confirmed with his free Spirit (be he only praised therefore), am constrained in my conscience, thinking it my very duty, to admonish you, as ye tender the salvation of your souls, by all manner of means to separate yourselves from the company of the Pope's hirelings; considering what

Apoc. 14. is said in the Revelation of St. John, by the angel of God, touching all men. The words be these: If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured into the cup of his wrath; and he shall be punished with fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up evermore. Mark well here, good Christians, who is this beast and worshippers, that shall be partakers of that unspeakable torment. This beast is none other but the carnal and fleshly kingdom of Antichrist, the Pope with his rabble of false prophets and ministers, as it is most manifest; which, to maintain their high titles, worldly promotions and dignities, do with much cruelty daily more and more set forth and establish their own traditions, decrees, and decretals, contrary to God's holy ordinances, statutes, laws, and commandments, and wholly repugnant to his sincere and pure religion and true worshipping. Now, what do they else but worship this

2 Peter 2. beast and his image, which after they had once already escaped from the filthiness of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are yet again tangled therein, and overcome, using dissimulation unfaithfully, for fear of their displeasure, doing one thing outwardly, and thinking inwardly another? so having them in reverence under a cloke and colour, to whom they ought not so much as to say God speed; and

3 John  
John 10.  
Ezek. 16. adjoining themselves to the malignant congregation, which they ought to abhor as a den of thieves and murderers, and as the brothel-house of most blasphemous fornicators; whose voices, being contrary to Christ's voice, if they were of his flock, they would not know, but would fly from them—as he himself, being the good

John 10. Shepherd of our souls, doth full well in his holy Gospel testify. Again, what do they else I pray you, but receive the beast's mark in their foreheads and in their hands, which do bear a fair face and countenance outwardly in supporting them as other do, being ashamed openly to confess Christ and his holy Gospel? But this

feignedness and dissimulation, Christ and his Gospel will in no wise allow : of whom it is said, Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels. Therefore, saith Almighty God by his prophet Malachi, Cursed be the dissemblers. Ye were once lightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were become partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted of the word of God, and of the power of the world to come. And our Saviour Christ saith, No man that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back, is apt for the kingdom of God. Therefore St. John the apostle useth this for a manifest token, that the backsliding from the true teachers of God's word declareth evidently, that they be not of the number of them. For saith he, They went out from us, but they were not of us : for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us. Surely, so long as we use dissimulation, and to play on both hands, we are not in the light. For whatsoever is manifest, the same is light, as the elect vessel of God, St. Paul, witnesseth.

Mark 16.

Luke 9.

Mal. 1.

Heb. 6.

Luke 9.

1 John 2.

Eph. 4.

Wherefore, good christians, for God's most dear love, deceive not yourselves through your own wisdom, and through the wisdom of the world which is foolishness before God ; but certify and stay your own conscience with the sure truth and faithful word of God, and with the infallible testimonies of holy Scripture. For although God's mercy is over all his works, yet it doth not extend but only to them that hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope unto the end, not being weary in well-doing, but rather wax every day stronger and stronger in the inward man. Therefore in the Revelation of St. John, where it is entreated of the beast and his image, it is also said, Here is the sufferance of saints, and here are they that keep the commandments, and the faith of Jesus Christ. Whereby Almighty God doth shew plainly, that he doth use those wicked men as instruments for a time, to try the patience and faith of his peculiar people; without the performer whereof we can have no part among the living, but as it is said in the same Revelation, The fearful shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

1 Cor. 3.

Psa. 145.

Heb. 3.

2 Cor. 4.

But peradventure ye will object and say unto me, What shall we do? Shall we cast ourselves headlong to death? I say not so. But this I say; that we are all bound (if ever we look to receive salvation at God's hand) in this case wholly to be obedient to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, expressed by the gift of the Spirit in holy Scripture; and then to cast all our care upon him, who worketh all in all for the best, unto them that love him, And thus he giveth commandment, saying, Come away from her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye

1 Cor. 12.

Rom. 8.

Apoc. 18.

receive not of her plagues. Now who, hearing this terrible voice of God, which must needs be fulfilled, will not with all speed and diligence apply himself to do thereafter, except such as will presumptuously tempt him? And as touching such, the wise man saith, He that loveth peril and danger shall perish therein: but they that be of the faith of Abraham, even as he did, so will they in all assays and trials be obedient to the heavenly voice, howsoever it seemeth contrary to their own natural will and carnal reason; according to the sure word of faith, which saith, Hope thou in the Lord and keep his way; hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him. Let not thy jealousy move thee also to do evil. Come out from among them, and join not yourselves to their unlawful assemblies: yea, do not once shew yourselves with the least part of your body, to favour their wicked doings; but glorify God (as most right is) so well in your whole body outwardly, as inwardly in your spirit, or else you can do neither of both well; for your body doth belong to God, so well as your spirit. At the dreadful day of judgment, we shall all receive the works of our bodies, according to that we have done, whether it be good or bad. Therefore whatsoever we do, we may not bring the spirit in bondage to the body, but contrariwise we must subdue the body and the will of the flesh to the spirit, that the spirit may freely accomplish the will of God in all things: for otherwise we shall never be partakers of his promise, with the true children of Abraham. For as St. Paul saith, They which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God: if we shall live according to the flesh, we shall die. For to be carnally minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: because that the fleshly minded is enmity to God; for it is not obedient to the law of God, neither can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Now choose you which way you will take: either the narrow way that leadeth unto life, which Christ himself and his faithful followers have gone through before; or else the broad pathway that leadeth to destruction, which the wicked worldlings take their pleasure in for a while. I for my part, have now written this short admonition unto you of good will (as God be my witness), to exhort you to that way which at length you yourselves should prove and find to be best, yea, and rejoice thereof. And I do not only write this, but I will also (with the assistance of God's grace) ratify, confirm, and seal the same with the effusion of my blood, when the full time shall be expired that he hath appointed; which (so far forth as I may judge) must needs be within these few days. Therefore I now bid you all most heartily farewell in the Lord; whose grace be with your spirit. Amen. Watch and pray, watch and pray, Pray, pray. So be it.

John Hullyer.



## LETTERS OF MASTER ROBERT GLOVER,

A gentleman of much godly learning, innocency and uprightness of life, and hearty zeal to the word of God; burnt at Coventry for the faithful testimony of the same, the 14, day of September, in the year of our Lord, 1555.

To my most entirely beloved wife, *Mary Glover.*

The peace of conscience which passeth all understanding, the sweet consolation, comfort, strength, and boldness of the Holy Ghost, be continually increased in your heart, through a fervent, earnest, and stedfast faith in our most dear and only Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

I thank you heartily, most loving wife, for your letters sent unto me in my imprisonment. I read them with tears, more than once or twice; with tears (I say) for joy and gladness, that God had wrought in you so merciful a work; first, an unfeigned repentance, secondly, an humble and hearty reconciliation, thirdly, a willing submission and obedience to the will of God in all things. Which when I read in your letters, and judged them to proceed from the bottom of your heart, I could not but be thankful to God, rejoicing with tears for you, and these his great mercies poured upon you. These your letters, and the hearing of your most godly proceedings and constant doings from time to time, have much relieved and comforted me at all times: and shall be a goodly testimony with you at the great day, against many worldly and dainty dames, which set more by their own pleasure and self in this world, than by God's glory; little regarding, as it appereth, the everlasting health of their own souls or others. My prayer shall be, whilst I am in this world, that God, which of his great mercy hath begun his good work in you, will finish it to the glory of his name; and by the mighty power and inspiration of his Holy Spirit so strengthen, establish, and confirm you in all his ways to the end, that we may together shew forth his praise in the world to come, to our unspeakable consolation everlastingly. Amen.

So long as God shall lend you continuance in this miserable world, above all things give yourself continually to prayer, lifting up, as St. Paul saith, clean or pure hands without anger, wrath, or doubting; forgiving (as he saith also), if you have any thing against any man, as Christ forgiveth us. And that we may be the better willing to forgive, it is good often to call to remembrance

the multitude and greatness of our own sins, which Christ daily and hourly pardoneth and forgiveth us; and then we shall, as

<sup>1 Peter 4.</sup> St. Peter affirmeth, be ready to cover and hide the offences of our brethren, be they never so many. And because God's word teacheth us, not only the true manner of praying, but also what we ought to do or not do in the whole discourse and practice of this life; what pleaseth or displeaseth God; and that, as Christ saith, the word of God that he hath spoken shall judge in the last day: let your prayer be to this end specially, that God of his great mercy would open and reveal more and more daily to your heart the true sense, knowledge, and understanding of his most holy word; and give you grace in your living to express the fruits thereof. And forasmuch as it is, as the Holy Ghost calleth it,

<sup>1 Cor. 1.</sup> the word of affliction, that is, it is seldom without hatred, persecution, peril, danger of loss of life and goods, and whatsoever seemeth pleasure in this world, as experience teacheth you in this time; call upon GOD continually for his assistance always, as Christ teacheth, casting your accounts what it is like to cost you, endeavouring yourself, through the help of the Holy Ghost, by continuance of prayer, to lay your foundation so sure, that no storm or tempest shall be able to overthrow or cast it down;

<sup>Luke 17.</sup> remembering always (as Christ saith) Lot's wife, that is, to beware of looking back to that thing that displeaseth GOD. And because nothing displeaseth GOD so much as idolatry, that is, false worshipping of God otherwise than his word commandeth; look not back (I say), nor turn not your face to their idolatrous and blasphemous massing, manifestly against the word, practice and example of Christ: as it is most manifest to all that have any taste of the true understanding of God's word, that there remaineth nothing in the church of England at this present, profitable or edifying to the church and congregation of the Lord; all things being done in an unknown tongue, contrary to the express commandment of the Holy Ghost.

They object that they be the church, and therefore they must be believed. My answer was, The church of GOD knoweth and acknowledgeth no other head but Jesus Christ the Son of GOD; whom ye have refused, and chosen the man of sin, the son of perdition, enemy to Christ, the devil's deputy and lieutenant, the pope. Christ's church heareth, teacheth, and is ruled by his

<sup>John 10.</sup> word; as he saith, My sheep hear my voice. If you abide in me and my word in you, you be my disciples. Their church repelleth God's word, and forceth all men to follow their traditions. Christ's church dare not add or diminish, alter or change his blessed testament: but they be not afraid to take away all that Christ instituted, and go a whoring (as the Scripture saith) with their own inventions, et lætari super operibus manuum suarum—to glory and rejoice in the works of their own hands. The

<sup>Acts 7.</sup>

church of Christ is, hath been, and shall be in all ages, under the cross, persecuted, molested, and afflicted; the world ever hating them, because they be not of the world. But these persecute, murder, slay, and kill such as profess the true doctrine of Christ, be they in learning, living, conversation, and other virtues, never so excellent. Christ and his church reserved the trial of their doctrine to the word of God, and gave the people leave to judge thereof by the same word; Search the Scriptures. But this church taketh away the word from the people, and suffer neither learned nor unlearned to examine or prove their doctrine by the word of God. The true church of God laboureth by all means to resist and withstand the lusts, desires, and motions of the world, the flesh and the devil. These, for the most part, give themselves to all voluptuousness, and secretly commit such things, which (as St. Paul saith) it is shame to speak of. By these and such like manifest probations, they do declare themselves to be none of the church of Christ, but rather of the synagogue of Satan. It shall be good for you oftentimes to confer and compare their proceedings and doings, with the practice of those whom the word of God doth teach to have been true members of the church of God; and it shall work in you both knowledge, erudition, and boldness to withstand with suffering, their doings. I likened them therefore to Nimrod, whom the Scripture calleth a mighty hunter or a stout champion; telling them that that which they could not have by the word, they would have by the sword, and be the church whether men will or no; and called them, with good conscience, as Christ called their forefathers, the children of the devil; and as their father the devil is a liar and murderer, so their kingdom and church (as they call it) standeth by lying and murdering.

Have no fellowship with them therefore, my dear wife, with their doctrine and traditions, lest you be partaker of their sins; for whom is reserved a heavy damnation, without speedy repentance. Beware of such as shall advertise you something to bear with the world, as they do, for a season. There is no dallying with God's matters; It is a fearful thing (as St. Paul saith) to fall into the hands of GOD. Remember the prophet Elias; Why halt ye on both sides? Remember what Christ saith: He that putteth his hands to the plough and looketh back, is not worthy of me. And seeing God hath hitherto allowed you as a good soldier in the foreward, play not the coward, neither draw back to the rearward. St. John numbereth among them that shall dwell in the fiery lake, such as be fearful in God's cause. Set before your eyes always the examples of such as have behaved themselves boldly in God's cause; as Stephen, Peter, Paul, Daniel, the three children, the widow's sons, and in your days Ann Askew, Laurence Saunders, John Bradford, with many other

Phil. 1. faithful witnesses of Christ. Be not afraid in nothing, saith St. Paul, of the adversaries of Christ's doctrine: the which is to them the cause of perdition, but to you, of everlasting salvation. Christ commandeth the same, saying, Fear them not. Let us not follow the example of him which asked time, first to take leave of his friends. If we so do, we shall find few of them that will encourage us to go forward in our business, please it God never so much. We read not that James and John, Andrew and Simon, when they were called, put off the time till they had known their fathers' and friends' pleasure: but the Scripture saith, They forsook all, and by and by followed Christ. Christ likened the kingdom of GOD to a precious pearl, the which whosoever findeth, selleth all that he hath for to buy it. Yea, whosoever hath but a little taste or glimmering how precious a treasure the kingdom of heaven is, will gladly forego both life and goods for the obtaining of it. But the most part, now-a-days, be like to Æsop's cock; which when he had found a precious stone, wished rather to have found a barley-corn. So ignorant be they how precious a jewel the word of God is, that they choose rather the things of this world; which, being compared to it, be less in value than a barley corn.

Matt. 13.

If I would have given place to worldly reasons, these might have moved me. First, the foregoing of you and my children: the consideration of the state of my children, being yet tender of age and young, apt and inclinable to virtue and learning, and so having the more need of my assistance, being not altogether destitute of gifts to help them withal: possessions above the common sort of men: because I was never called to be a preacher or minister: and (because of my sickness) fear of death in imprisonment before I should come to my answer, and so my death to be unprofitable. But these and such like, I thank my heavenly Father (which of his infinite mercy inspired me with his Holy Ghost, for his Son's sake, my only Saviour and Redeemer), prevailed not in me: but when I had, by the wonderful permission of GOD, fallen into their hands, at the first sight of the Sheriff, nature a little abashed; yet or ever<sup>1</sup> I came to the prison, by the working of God and through his goodness fear departed. I said to the Sheriff at his coming unto me, What matter have you, master Sheriff, to charge me withal? He answered, You shall know when you come before the masters; and so taking me with him, I looked to have been brought before the masters, and to have heard what they could have burdened me withal. But contrary to my expectation, I was committed forthwith to the jail, not being called to my answer, little justice being shewed therein. But the less justice a man findeth at their hands, the more consolation in conscience shall he find from God; for whosoever is of the world, the world will love him. After I came into prison, and

1 before

had reposed myself there a while, I wept for joy and gladness my-belly full, musing much of the great mercies of God, and as it were, saying to myself after this sort; O Lord, who am I, on whom thou shouldest bestow thus thy great mercy, to be numbered among the saints that suffer for thy Gospel's sake? And so, beholding and considering on the one side my imperfection, unableness, sinful misery, and unworthiness, and on the other side the greatness of God's mercy, to be called to so high a promotion, was, as it were, amazed and overcome for a while with joy and gladness, concluding thus with myself in my heart; O Lord, that shewest power in weakness, wisdom in foolishness, mercy in sinfulness, who shall let<sup>1</sup> thee to choose where and whom thou wilt? As I have zealously loved the confession of thy word, so ever thought I myself be most unworthy to be partaker of the affliction for the same. 1 hinder

Not long after, came unto me Master W. Brasbridge, Master C. Phinees, Master N. Hopkins, travailing with me,<sup>2</sup> to be dismissed upon bonds; to whom my answer was (to my remembrance) after this sort. Forasmuch as the Masters have imprisoned me having nothing to burden me withal, if I should enter into bonds, I should in so doing accuse myself. And seeing they have no matter to lay to my charge, they may all well let me pass without bonds, as with bonds. 2 persuading me Secondarily, if I shall enter into bonds, covenant, and promise to appear, I shall do nothing but excuse, colour, and cloke their wickedness, and endanger myself nevertheless, being bound by my promise to appear. They alleged many worldly persuasions unto me to avoid the present peril; and also how to avoid the forfeiture, if I break my promise. I said unto them, I had cast my pennyworth, by God's help. They undertook also to make the bond easy. And when they were somewhat importune, I said to Master Hopkins, that liberty of conscience was a precious thing; and took as it were a pause, lifting up my heart to God earnestly for his aid and help, that I might do the thing that might please him. And so, when they had let their suit fall, my heart, me-thought, was wonderfully comforted. Master Dudly communed with me in like manner; whom I answered in effect as I did before. Afterward debating the matter with myself, these considerations came to my head: I have from time to time with good conscience (God I take to record) moved all such as I had conference withal, to be no dalliers in God's matters; but to shew themselves, after so great a light and knowledge, hearty, earnest, constant, and stable in so manifest a truth, and not to give place one jot contrary to the same. Now, thought I, if I shall withdraw myself, and make any shifts to pull my own neck out of the collar, I shall give great offence to my weak brethren in Christ, and advantage to the

enemies to slander God's word. It will be said, He hath been a great boldener of others, to be earnest and fervent to fear no worldly perils or dangers; but he himself will give no such example.

Wherefore I thought it my bounden duty both to God and man, being (as it were) by the great goodness of GOD, marvelously called and appointed hereunto, to set aside all fear, perils, and dangers, all worldly respects and considerations: and like as I had heretofore, according to the measure of my small gift, within the compass of my vocation and calling, from the bottom of my heart unfeignedly moved, exhorted, and persuaded all that professed God's word, manfully to persist in the defence of the same, not with sword and violence, but with suffering and loss of life, rather than to defile themselves again with the whorish abomination of the Romish Antichrist; so, the hour being come, with my fact and example to ratify, confirm, and protest the same to the hearts of all true believers. And to this end (by the mighty assistance of God's Holy Spirit) I resolved myself, with much peace of conscience, willingly to sustain whatsoever the Romish Antichrist should do against me; and the rather, because I understood the bishop's coming to be at hand, and considered that poor men's consciences should be then sharply assaulted. So remained I prisoner in Coventry by the space of 10 or 11 days, being never called to my answer of the masters, contrary to the laws of the realm, they having neither statute, law, proclamation, letter, warrant, nor commandment for my apprehension. They would have laid all the matter upon the Sumner: who being examined, denied it before their faces, as one of my friends told me, saying, that he had no commandment concerning me, but for my elder brother. God lay not their extreme doings against me to their charge at the great day.

The second day after the bishop's coming to Coventry. Master Warren, came to the Guildhall, and willed the chief Jailor to carry me to the bishop. I laid to Master Warren's charge the cruel seeking of my death; and when he would have excused himself, I told him he could not wipe his hands so: he was as guilty of my blood before God, as though he had murdered me with his own hands. And so he departed from me, saying, I need not to fear, if I would be of his belief. God open his eyes, if it be his will, and give him grace to believe this, which he and all of his inclination, shall find (I fear) too true for their parts: that is, that all they which cruelly, maliciously, and spitefully persecute, molest, and afflict the members of Christ for their conscience sake, and for the true testimony of Christ's word, and cause them most unjustly to be slain and murdered; without speedy repentance, shall dwell with the devil and his angels in the fiery lake everlasting, where they shall wish and desire, cry and call, but in

vain (as their right companion *Epulo* did,)<sup>1</sup> to be refreshed of them, whom in this world they contemned, despised, disdained, as slaves, misers, and wretches.

<sup>1</sup> the rich glutton

Luke 16.

When I came before the bishop in one Denton's house, he began with this protestation, that he was my bishop for lack of a better, and willed me to submit myself. I said to him, I am not come to accuse myself: what have you to lay to my charge? He asked me whether I was learned? I answered, smally learned. Master Chancellor, standing by, said I was a master of arts. Then my Lord laid to my charge my not coming to the church. Here I might have dallied with him and put him to his proofs, forasmuch as I had not been for a long season in his diocese, neither was any of the citizens able to prove any such matters against me. Notwithstanding, I answered him through God's merciful help, that I neither had nor would come at their church, as long as their mass was used there, to save (if I had them) five hundred livs. I willed<sup>2</sup> him to shew me one jot or tittle in the Scripture for the proof and defence of the mass. He answered, he came to teach, and not to be taught. I was content (I told him) to learn of him, so far as he was able to teach me by the word of God. Who shall judge the word? said my Lord. I answered, Christ was content that the people should judge his doctrine by searching the Scriptures, and so was Paul: methinketh ye should claim no further privilege or pre-eminence, than they had. I offered him further, that I was content the primitive church next to the apostles' time, should judge betwixt him and me. He refused also to be judged by that. Then, he was my bishop, he said, and therefore I must believe him. If you say black is white (my lord), must I also say as you say, and believe the same, because you say it is so? Master Chancellor noted me to be arrogant, because I would not give place to my bishop. I said to my lord, If you will be believed because you be a bishop, why find you fault with the people that believed Master Latimer, Master Ridley, Master Hooper, and the residue of them that were bishops? He answered, Because they were heretics. And may not you err, quoth I, as well as they? I looked for learning at my lord's hand to persuade me, and he oppressed me only with his authority. He said I differed from the church, and asked me where my church was before king Edward's time. I desired him to shew me where their church was in Elias' time, and what outward shew it had in Christ's time. My lord said, that Elias' complaint was only of the ten tribes that fell from David's house, whom he called heretics. You be not able to shew, said I, any prophets that the other two tribes had at the same time. My lord making no answer to that, Master Rogers, one of the masters of the city cometh in the mean season, taking upon him as though he would answer to the text. But my lord

<sup>2</sup> desired

forthwith commanded me to be committed to some tower, if they had any besides the common jail; saying, he would, at the end of his visitation of his diocese, weed out such wolves. Master Rogers willed him to content himself for that night till they had taken further order for me. Even where it pleaseth you, said I to my lord, I am content; and so I was returned at that time to the common jail again, from whence I came.

On the Friday morning, being the next day after, I had warning by one of the prisoners to prepare myself to ride with my fellow prisoners the same day to Lichfield, there to be bestowed at the bishop's pleasure. Which tidings at the first something discouraged me; fearing lest I should, by the means of my great sickness through extreme handling, which I looked for, have died in the prison before I should come to my answer. But I rebuked immediately, with God's word, this infidelity in myself, and by the same corrected mine own mistrust and phantasy, after this manner: What make I of God? Is not his power as great in Lichfield as in Coventry? Doth not his promise extend as well to Lichfield as to Coventry? Was he not with Habakkuk, Daniel, Meshach, and Jeremiah in their most dangerous imprisonments? He knoweth what things we have need of. He hath numbered all the hairs of our head. The sparrow falleth not on the ground without our heavenly Father's will; much more will he care for us, if we be not faithless, whom he hath made worthy to be witnesses of his truth. So long as we put our trust in him, we shall never be destitute of his help, neither in prison, neither in sickness nor in health, neither in life nor in death, neither before kings nor before bishops; nor the devil himself, much less one of his ministers, shall be able to prevail against us. With such-like meditations, I waxed cheerful and of good consolation and comfort. So that hearing one say that they could not provide horses enough for us, I said, Let them carry us in a dungcart for lack of horses if they list: I am well content for my part. Notwithstanding, at the request of my friends, I wrote to Master Mayor and his brethren, briefly requiring them that I might make answer here to such things as should be laid to my charge; but I received no answer of my letters to nor fro. I conjectured that when the bishop and the chancellor had seen them, it moved them the rather to have had me away; being more desirous, as I suppose, to have had me dispatched privily in prison, than to come openly to my answer. The manner of entreating and using me, at my first coming to prison, did partly declare the same. Certain sergeants and constables of Coventry, being appointed to have the conveying of us to Lichfield, to be delivered there to one Jephcot the chancellor's man, sent from Coventry with us for the same purpose, we were commanded to horseback about 11 or 12 of the clock on Friday, being market-day, that



we might be the more gazed and wondered at. And to kindle the people's hearts more against us, they did proclaim a letter concerning a proclamation, made for calling in and disannulling of all such books as truly expound and interpret the Scriptures. We came to Lichfield about 4 of the clock at night, and had leave to repose ourselves our supper time: we inned at the sign of the Swan, where we were entertained friendly and gently. After supper Jephcot repaired to us; whom we intreated that upon sureties we might rest ourselves that night, being unprovided of any thing to help ourselves withal in the prison at that present. He was content at the first, as he seemed: but afterwards, (whether it was by persuasion, or rather, as it seemed to me, he did but of policy put off the time till he had gathered a multitude to stare and wonder upon us, and also that we should provide nothing to ease ourselves withal,) he revoked his promise, and so by consent we were had to the prison, the multitude wondering at us. I willed<sup>1</sup> Jephcot before, to execute his office with mercy; telling him, that they should have judgment without mercy, that shewed no mercy. And this mercy I found at his hand. He put me into a prison the same night, where I continued until I was condemned, a place next to the dounge, narrow of rooms, strong of building, and very cold, with small light; and there alloweth he me a bundle of straw instead of my bed, without chair, form, or any thing else to ease myself withal. God of his mercy gave me great patience through prayer that night; so that, if it had been his pleasure, I could have been contented to have ended my life. But Jephcot and one Percy the bishop's man, which afterwards was my continual keeper for the most part, came to me in the morning: to whom I said, This is great extremity, God send us patience; and no more. Then they were content that I should have a bed of mine own procurement. But I was allowed no help, neither night nor day, nor company of any man, notwithstanding my great sickness, nor yet paper, pen, or ink, or books, saving my New Testament in Latin, and a prayer book which I privily stole in.

Within two days after, Master Chancellor, and one Temsey a prebendary there, came to me into my prison. Master Chancellor exhorted me to conform myself to my lord and to the church. He wished to my soul no more hurt than to his own; belike because I had laid to his charge at Coventry the seeking of my blood unjustly and wrongfully. Now thus, the second time, I answered Master Chancellor to his exhortation; that I refused not to be ruled by that church, that was content to be ordered and governed by the word of GOD. He asked me how I knew the word of God, but by the church: the church sheweth which is the word of God, therefore the church is above the word of God. This is no good reason in learning, said I to Master Chancellor. For it is

like unto this : John shewed the people who was Christ, *ergo*, John was above Christ. Or else, I have a man that knoweth not the king, and I tell him who is the king ; am I therefore above the king ? Master Chancellor said, he came not to reason with me ; and so departed. So remained I without any further conference of any man by the space of 8 days, and till the bishop's coming ; in the which time I gave myself continually to prayer, and meditation of the merciful promises of God, made unto all without exception of person, that call upon the name of his dear Son Jesus Christ. I found in myself daily amendment of health of body ; increase of peace in conscience ; and many consolations from God, by the help of his Holy Spirit, and sometimes as it were a taste and glimmering of the life to come ; all for his only Son Jesus Christ's sake : to him be all praise for ever and ever. Amen.

The enemy ceased not, many times, sundry ways to assault me, oftentimes objecting to my conscience mine own unworthiness, through the greatness of the benefit, to be counted among the number of them that should suffer for Christ, or his Gospel's sake. Against him I replied with the word of God in this sort : What were all those whom God had chosen from the beginning, to be his witnesses, and carry his name before the world ? Were they not men, as Paul and Barnabas said, *similiter obnoxii peccato*, as well subject to wickedness, sin, imperfections, as other men be ? Even such were Noah, Abraham, David and all the rest. *Quis prior dedit illi ?* as St. Paul saith. Who gave first unto him ? And also, speaking to every man, What hast thou that thou receivedst not ? Likewise John, All have received of his fulness : they were no bringers of any goodness to God, but altogether receivers. They chose not God first, but he chose them. They loved not God first, but he loved them first. Yea, he both loved and chose them when they were his enemies, full of sin and corruption, and void of all goodness. *Est Dominus omnium, dives in omnes et super omnes invocantes eum.* He is and will be still the same God, as rich in mercy, as mighty, as able, as ready, as willing to forgive the sins, without respect of person, to the world's end, of all them that call upon him. *Prope est Dominus omnibus invocantibus eum.* God is near, he is at hand, he is with all ; with all (I say), and refuseth none, excepteth none, that faithfully in true repentance call upon him, in what hour, what place or what time soever it be. It is no arrogancy nor presumption in any man, to burthen God (as it were) with his promise, and of duty to claim and challenge his aid, help, and assistance in all our perils, dangers, and distress ; calling upon him, not in the confidence of our own godliness, but in the trust of his promises made in Christ ; in whom and by whom. and for whose sake, whosoever boldly approacheth to the mercy-seat of the Father, is sure to receive whatsoever is expedient or necessary

Acts 14.

Rom. 21.

Rom. 4.

John 2.

Rom. 10.

Psa. 145.

either for body or soul, in more ample ways and large manner, than he can well wish, or dare desire. His word cannot lie: Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will hear thee, and thou shalt praise me. Psa 50.

I answered the enemy also on this manner: I am a sinner, and therefore not worthy to be a witness of his truth. What then? Must I deny his word, because I am not worthy to profess it? What bring I to pass in so doing, but add sin to sin? What is greater sin, than to deny the truth of Christ's Gospel? As Christ himself beareth witness, He that is ashamed of me or of my words, of him I will be also ashamed before my Father and all his angels. I might also by like reason forbear to do any of God's commandments. When I am provoked<sup>1</sup> to pray, the enemy may say unto me, I am not worthy to pray, therefore I shall not pray. And so in like manner of all the commandments: I shall not forbear swearing, stealing, murdering, because I am not worthy to do any commandment of God. These be the delusions of the devil, and Satan's suggestions; which must be overcome by continuance of prayer, and with the word of God applied according to the measure of every man's gift, against all assaults of the devil.

At the bishop's first coming to Lichfield after mine imprisonment, I was called into a by-chamber next to my prison, to my lord. Before whom when I came, and saw none but his officers, chaplains, and servants, except it were an old priest, I was partly amazed, and lifted up my heart to God for his merciful help and assistance. My lord asked me how I liked my imprisonment. I gave him no answer touching that question. He proceeded to persuade me to be a member of his church, which had continued so many years. As for our church, as he called it, [it] was not known he said, but lately in king Edward's time. I profess myself to be a member of that church, said I, that is builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the head corner-stone; and so alleged the place of St. Paul to the Ephesians. And this church hath been from the beginning, said I, though it bear no glorious shew before the world, being ever for the most part under the cross and affliction, contemned, despised, and persecuted. My lord, on the other side, contended that they were the church. So cried all the clergy against the prophets at Jerusalem, saying, Templum Domini, templum Domini, the church, the church. And always when I was about to speak any thing, my lord cried, Hold thy peace, hold thy peace: I command thee by the virtue of obedience to hold thy peace:—calling me a proud, arrogant heretic. I willed<sup>2</sup> my lord to burthen me with some speciality, and then to convince me with some Scriptures and good learning. Then my lord began to move certain questions. I refused to answer him in corners, requiring 2 desired

that I might make my answer openly. He said I should answer him there. I stood with him upon that point, until he said I should to prison again, and there have neither meat nor drink till I had answered him. Then I lifted up my heart to God, that I might stand and agree with the doctrine of his most holy word.

The first question was this: How many sacraments Christ instituted to be used in the church. The sacrament of Baptism, said I, and the sacrament that he instituted at his last supper. No more? said he. To all those that declare a true and unfeigned repentance, a sure hope, trust, and confidence in the death of Christ, to such the ministers, I grant, have authority to pronounce, by the power of God's word, the remission of their sins. Here interrupting me, he would needs bear me in hand that I called this a sacrament. I would not greatly contend with him in that point, because the matter was of no great weight or importance; although he, in so doing, did me wrong, for I called it not a sacrament. He asked me further, whether I allowed their confession. I said, No. Then he would know my mind, what I thought of the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament. I answered, that their mass was neither sacrifice nor sacrament, because (said I) you have taken away the true institution; which when you restore again, I will tell you my judgment concerning Christ's body in the sacrament.

Here was he prevented that he could not make an end of this matter which he most godly had begun; by reason of the writ which came from London concerning his execution and martyrdom, which he suffered shortly after.

### To the Mayor of Coventry and his brethren.

I beseech you to understand, that it is not unknown, as well to the keeper of the jail, as to the inhabitants about me where I dwell, that I am a man subject to very great sickness, and have been by the space of seven years and more; so that it is not like that I shall be removed without peril and danger of my life. And because I was here committed to ward by your appointment, I would gladly here answer to such things as shall be laid to my charge. If I may obtain this of you, I have cause thankfully to reknowledge your indifferency: if otherwise, I pray God it be not laid to your charge at the great day, where every man shall have just judgment without respect of person.

Your prisoner in the Lord, always mindful of you in my poor prayer.

Robert Glover.

**To his Wife, Children and whole Family,**

As his last farewell to them for ever in this world.

The mighty consolation of the Holy Spirit, from our most loving and merciful Father, for his dear Son's sake Jesus Christ, continually dwell in your heart, my dear—and to the end, most faithful and godly—wife. His holy angels pitch their tents about you and your little ones, and suffer you not to be tempted above your strength—so to the end, that we may dwell all together with our loving and merciful God and Father, and sing praises to his name, with his angels and archangels, for ever and ever. Amen.

I bid you all farewell in the Lord. Continue in prayer, and rejoice in hope; be patient in your affliction; comfort your heart always with the life to come. For my departure, consider how often I have been going from you through my long sickness; and yet God, my most loving and merciful Father, marvellously hath reserved me to this high promotion, for the which you ought to give hearty thanks, if you love his glory, and my eternal joy and felicity. And if you shew yourselves obedient children to your heavenly Father, he will love you, keep you, help you, so that you shall lack nothing expedient for soul or body; and in the end, when his good will and pleasure is, you shall come to me, and perpetually enjoy me and I you, and we all shall have the fulness of that joy that shall never be taken from you.

Ye little ones, love your mother; yield reverend obedience unto her in all godliness. Be not unkind nor unthankful. Pray for her preservation and continuance amongst you. Pray that she may be an ensample to you in all the ways of the Lord. And how ye may behave yourselves towards God, your mother, and all other estates and degrees, let always God's word be your rule. Exercise yourselves therein night and day, joining always prayer therewith. God send you a good guide, and good passage, if it be his will, out of this idolatrous and bloody realm. And as Christ committed his mother to John, so I commit you in this world to the angel of God, Augustine Berneher. His advertisement<sup>1</sup> if you <sup>1 advice</sup> will follow, I trust you shall not decline from the fear of God. Be thankful for him, and cease not to pray for his preservation. And thus I commit all, as well servants as wife and children, to the merciful tuition<sup>2</sup> of our most merciful God and Father, and to his <sup>2 care</sup> dear Son our only Saviour Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; to him be all praise, now and for ever. Amen. I heartily forgive you all, and doubt not but that you do the same to me.

Robert Glover.

Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Apoc. 2.

[A full and interesting Narrative of the persecutions and sufferings of Robert Glover and his family has been published by the Rev. B. Richings.]

## LETTERS OF ROBERT SMITH,

One of the Chapel at Windsor ; who, as a true and constant witness of God's word, which he most faithfully had professed, was cruelly martyred at Uxbridge, the 14th day of August, in the year of our Lord 1555.

To all them which love God unfeignedly,

And intend to lead a godly life according to his Gospel, and to persevere in his truth unto the end, grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

This letter is thought of some to be Master Hooper's, partly for that in one copy amongst divers, it is entitled unto him, and also by the phrase and manner of writing, it may be well conjectured so to be.

Be not afraid, most dearly beloved in our Saviour Jesus Christ, at these most perilous days, wherein, by the sufferance of God, the prince of darkness is broken loose, and rageth in his members against the elect of God with all cruelty, to set up again the kingdom of Antichrist : against whom, see that ye be strong in faith, to resist his most devilish doctrine with the pure gospel of God ; arming yourselves with patience, to abide whatsoever shall be laid to your charge for the truth's sake, knowing that thereunto ye be called, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him. Oh how happy are ye, that in the sight of God are counted worthy to suffer for the testimony of Christ ! Quiet therefore yourselves, oh my loving brethren, and rejoice in him for whom ye suffer : for unto you do remain the unspeakable joys, which neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard, neither the heart of man is able to comprehend in any wise. Be not afraid of the bodily death, for your names are written in the book of life. And the prophet doth record, that, in the sight of the Lord, precious is the death of his saints. Watch therefore and pray, that ye be not prevented in the day of temptation. Now cometh the day of your trial, wherein the waters rage, and the stormy winds blow. Now shall it appear whether ye have builded upon the fleeting sand, or upon the unmoveable rock Christ, which is the foundation of the apostles and prophets ; whereon every house that is builded, groweth into an holy temple of the Lord, by the mighty working of the Holy Ghost. Now approacheth the day of your battle, wherein it is required that ye shew yourselves the valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ, with the armour of God, that ye may be able to stand fast against all the crafty assaults of the devil. Christ is your captain, and ye be his soldiers, whose cognizance is the cross, to the which he willingly humbled himself even unto the death, and thereby spoiled his enemies ; and now

Apo. 17.

Psa. 115.

Matt. 7.

Eph. 2

2 Tim. 2.  
Eph. 6.  
Phil. 2.  
Heb. 12.  
Col. 2.

triumpheth he over them in the glory of his Father, making intercession for them that here do remain to suffer the afflictions that are to be fulfilled in his mystical body. It behoveth therefore every one, that will be counted his scholar, to take up his own cross and follow him, as ye have him for an ensample; and I assure you that, he being on your side, nothing shall be able to prevail against you. And that he will be with you even to the world's end, ye have his promise in the 28th of Matthew. He will go forth with his host, as a conqueror to make a conquest. He is the man that sitteth on the white horse, crowned with immortality; and ye, brethren, are his fellowship, whereof he is the head. He hath your heart in his hand as a bow bent after his godly will; he shall direct the same according to the riches of his glory, into all spiritual and heavenly cogitations. He is faithful and will not suffer you to be further assaulted, than he will give you strength to overcome; and in the most danger he will make a way, that ye may be able to bear it.

Shrink not, therefore, dear hearts, when ye shall be called to answer for the hope that is in you; for we have the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, which was sent from the heavens to teach us. He shall speak in us, he shall strengthen us; what is he then that shall be able to confound us? Nay, what tyrant is he that now boasteth himself of his strength to do mischief, whom the Lord shall not with the same Spirit, by the mouth of his servants, strike down to hell-fire? Yea, suddenly will the Lord bring down the glory of the proud Philistines, by the hands of his servant David. Their strength is in spear and shield, but our help is in the name of the Lord, which made both heaven and earth. He is our buckler and our wall; a strong tower of defence. He is our God, and we are his people. He shall bring the counsels of the ungodly to nought. He shall take them in their own net. He shall destroy them in their own inventions. The right hand of the Lord shall work this wonder. His power is known among the children of men. Their fathers have felt it and are confounded. In like manner shall they know that there is no counsel against the Lord, when their secrets are opened to the whole world, and are found to be against the living God. Work they never so craftily, build they never so strongly, yet down shall their rabble fall, and the builders themselves shall then be scattered upon the face of the earth, as accursed of God. The just shall see this and be glad, and praise the name of the Lord, that so marvellously hath dealt with his servants, as to bring their enemies under their feet. Then shall the fearful seed of Cain tremble and quake. Then shall the mocking Ishmaelites be cast out of the door. Then shall the proud Nimrod see his labour lost. Then shall the beast of Babylon be trodden under foot. Then shall the Scribes and Pharisees for madness fret and rage. Then shall

Pet. 5.

Apoc. 6.

1 Cor. 1.

1 Cor. 16.

2 Peter 3.

Luke 13.

Acts 2.

Psa. 52.

1 Sam. 17.

Psa. 6.

2 Cor. 6.

Heb. 8.

Psa. 32.

Psa. 117.

Psa. 52.

Psa. 65.

Gen. 12.

Psa. 32.

Gen. 4.

Gen. 2.

Gen. 11.

Phil. 3.

Psa. 2.

1 Cor. 3. their painted wisdom be known for extreme folly. Then shall the  
 Psa. 74. bloody dragon be void of his prey. Then shall the whore of  
 Job 5. Babylon receive double vengeance. Then shall they scratch their  
 Apoc. 12. crowns for the fall of their master's harlot, whom they now serve  
 Apoc. 18. for filthy lucre, when no man will buy their wares any more.  
 1 well-a- Then shall the popish priesthood cry weal away<sup>1</sup> with care, even  
 day when the Lord shall help his servants, which day is not far off,  
 Psa. 145. the day wherein the kingdom of Antichrist shall have an end, and  
 never arise any more. In the mean time, abide in certain and  
 1 Cor. 6. sure hope, cleaving unto the promises of God, which in their own  
 1 Cor. 8. time shall be fulfilled. Acquit yourselves like men against the  
 Heb. 9. enemies of God, in all humbleness of mind, strong in spirit, to  
 acknowledge one God, one holy Saviour Jesus Christ, one only  
 everlasting and sufficient sacrifice for the remission of sins, even  
 the precious body of the Lord Jesus, once offered for all, and for  
 ever: which now sitteth on the right hand of God, and from  
 A cts 3. thence shall he come to judge both the quick and the dead at the  
 last day: and until that time occupieth that blessed body none  
 Heb. 1. other place to dwell in, to be kept in, to be closed in, but only in  
 1 Peter 3. the heavens, even in the glorious majesty of GOD, personally  
 Eph. 1. abiding there in the flesh, not coming down from thence till the  
 last hour. And as he never ceaseth to be man, so doth he never  
 Eph. 2. lose the similitude of man; his body there hath his lineaments, he  
 leaveth them not; so hath that body there his highness, and  
 shrinketh not, and his manly shape; he altereth not at any time.  
 He is in that he took of the Virgin Mary, a natural man in all  
 conditions except sin. And what he took of his blessed mother,  
 Rom. 1. by the working of the Holy Ghost, he took it for ever, and will  
 not exchange the same for any other. He took the shape of a  
 man with the substance of his manhood, in one sacred womb.  
 There were they coupled together by the Holy Ghost, never to be  
 Eph. 2. divided asunder. He retaineth the one with the other, insepara-  
 bly. As he will not alter the substance of his flesh into the  
 substance of bread, no more will he alter the shape of his body  
 into the form of bread. There cannot be a greater absurdity  
 against the truth, than to think that he would leave the shape that  
 he took in the Virgin's womb, being an accident unto his man-  
 hood, and join unto the same a wafer cake baked in an oven, or  
 1 John 2. between a pair of irons. As he is in heaven very man, one only  
 Mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus, he it  
 Col. 1. is that is the propitiation for our sins. Be bold, therefore, to con-  
 fess this most pure and apostolical doctrine; and also that all  
 1 Cor. 2. favour, mercy, and forgiveness cometh only by him. He only of  
 God the Father was made for us all, wisdom, righteousness, sanc-  
 tification, and redemption. All these are the gifts of God the  
 Eph. 2. Father, freely given unto us by Christ Jesus, God and man,  
 through faith in his blood, and not by the merits of men. Gifts



they are, I say, freely given unto us of favour, without our desert, by believing and not by deserving. To this do the law and the prophets bear witness. Hab. 2.  
Gal. 3.  
Acts 10.

This doctrine have all the blessed martyrs of Christ's church witnessed with their blood to be true. To this truth have all the consciences of all true believers subscribed, ever since the ascension of Christ. This witness is not of man but of God. What better quarrel can ye then have to give your lives for, than the truth itself? That man that giveth his life for the truth, taketh the readiest way to life. He that hath the pope's curse for the truth, is sure of Christ's blessing. Well then, my brethren, what shall now let,<sup>1</sup> but that ye go forward as ye have begun? Nay, rather run with the runners, that ye may obtain the appointed glory. Hold on the right way, look not back, have the eye of your heart fixed upon God, and so run that ye may get hold of it. Cast away all your worldly pelf, and worldly respects, as, the favour of friends, the fear of men, sensual affection, respect of persons, honour, praise, shame, rebuke, wealth, poverty, riches, lands, possessions, carnal fathers and mothers, wife and children, with the love of your own selves; and in respect of that heavenly treasure ye look for, let all these be denied and utterly refused of you, so that in no condition they do abate your zeal, or quench your love towards GOD. In this case make no account of them, but rather repute them as vile, in comparison of everlasting life. Away with them, as thorns that choke the heavenly seed of the gospel where they be suffered to grow. They are burdens of the flesh, which encumber the soul; exchange them therefore for advantage. Doth not he gain, that findeth heavenly and immortal treasure, for earthly and corruptible riches? Loses that man any thing, which of his carnal father and mother is forsaken, when therefore he is received of God the Father to be his child and heir in Christ? Heavenly, for earthly; for mortal, immortal; for transitory things, permanent; is great gains to a Christian conscience. Luke 9.  
1 hinder  
John 14.  
Psa. 15.  
Eph. 4.  
Col. 5.  
Matt. 10.  
Mark 8.  
Phil. 3.  
Luke 8. 14.  
Rom. 7.  
Eph. 1.  
Gal. 4.  
Phil. 3.

Therefore, as I began, I exhort you in the Lord not to be afraid. Shrink not, my brethren, mistrust not God, be of good comfort, rejoice in the Lord, hold fast your faith, and continue to the end. Deny the world, and take up your cross and follow him which is your loadsman, and is gone before. If you suffer with him, you shall reign with him. What way can you glorify the name of your heavenly Father better, than by suffering death for his Son's sake? What a spectacle shall it be to the world, to behold so godly a fellowship as you servants of God, (in so just a quarrel as the Gospel of Christ is, with so pure a conscience, so strong a faith, and so lively a hope,) to offer yourselves to suffer most cruel torments at the hands of God's enemies, and so to end Heb. 6.  
1 Cor. 2.

your days in peace, to receive, in the resurrection of the righteous, life everlasting?

Heb. 11.

Be strong, therefore, in your battle. The Lord God is on your side, and his truth is your cause: and against you be none, but the enemies of the cross of Christ, as the Serpent and his seed, the dragon with his tail, the marked men of the beast, the offspring of the Pharisees, the congregation malignant, the generation of vipers, murderers, as their father the devil hath been from the beginning. To conclude, such as they are the Lord God hath always abhorred, and in all ages resisted and overthrown. God, from whom nothing is hid, knoweth what they are. He that searcheth the hearts of men, he hath found them out to be crafty, subtle, full of poison, proud, disdainful, stiffnecked, devourers, ravengers and barkers against the truth, filthy and shameless: and therefore doth the Spirit of God, by the mouths of his holy Prophets and Apostles, call them by the names of foxes, serpents, cockatrices, lions, leopards, bulls, bears, wolves, dogs, swine, beasts; teaching us thereby to understand, that their natural inclination is to deceive, poison, and destroy (as much as in them lieth) the faithful and elect of God. But the Lord with his right arm shall defend his little flock against the whole rabblement of these worldlings, which have conspired against him: he hath numbered all the hairs of his children's heads, so that not one of them shall perish without his fatherly will. He keepeth the sparrows; much more will he preserve them whom he hath purchased with the blood of the immaculate Lamb. He will keep them unto the hour appointed, wherein the name of God shall be glorified in his saints. In the mean time let them work their wills, let them envy, let them malign, let them blaspheme, let them curse, ban, betray, whip, scourge, hang, and burn: for by these means God will try his elect as gold in the furnace, and by these fruits shall they also bring themselves to be known what they be, for all their sheep-skins. For as he that in suffering patiently for the Gospel of God, is thereby known to be of Christ: even so in like wise is the persecutor of him known to be a member of Antichrist. Besides this, their extreme cruelty shall be a mean, the sooner to provoke God to take pity upon his servants, and to destroy them that so tyrannously entreat his people: as we may learn by the histories, as well in the bondage of Israel under Pharaoh in Egypt, as also in the miserable captivity of Judah in Babylon. whereas,<sup>1</sup> when the people of God were in most extreme thralldom, then did the Lord stretch forth his mighty power to deliver his servants. Though God, for a time, suffer them to be exalted in their own pride, yet shall they not escape his vengeance. They are his rods; and when he hath worn them to the stumps then will he cast them into the fire: this shall be their fina

Phil. 3.

Matt. 3.  
John 8.

Psa. 34.  
Heb. 4.

Jude 1.

Psa. 76.

Matt. 20.  
Luke 21.  
Matt. 10.  
1 Pet. 2.

Matt. 10.  
Wisdom 2.

Psa. 7.

Exod. 13.  
Esa. 3, 13.  
1 where  
2 Mac. 7.  
Jam. 4.

1 Peter 5.  
Apoc. 9.

reward. Our duty is, in the meanwhile, patiently to abide the will of God, which worketh all things for the best.

Thus dealeth he with us, partly for our trial, and partly also for our sins, which we most grievously have committed, to the great slander of his Gospel, whereby the name of God was evil spoken of among his enemies; for the which he now punisheth us with his fatherly corrections in this world, that we should not be damned with the world. By this means seeketh he his sheep that were lost, to bring them home to the fold again. By this way seeketh he to reform us, that we may be like unto him, after the image of his Son Jesus Christ, in all holiness and righteousness before him. Finally, this way useth his godly wisdom, to make us thereby to know him, and ourselves in him, that aforetime had in a manner forgotten him praised be his name therefore. And as for these Balaamites, which now do molest us, commit them to the hands of God, give him the vengeance, and he will reward them. Fall ye to prayer, and let these belly-gods prate. For he is in heaven, and sleepeth not, that keepeth Israel. He is in heaven, that made the seas calm when the disciples were afraid. Let us now faithfully call upon him, and he will hear us. Let us cry unto the Lord, for he is gracious and merciful. When we are in trouble, he is with us, he will deliver us, and he will glorify us. If we come unto him, we shall find him turned unto us. If we repent us of our wickedness done against him, then shall he take away the plague that he hath devised against us.

Let us therefore earnestly repent, and bring forth the worthy fruits of repentance. Let us study to be his; then shall we not need to fear what these hypocrites do against us, which with their pretended holiness deceive the hearts of the simple, and abuse the authority of God in his princes, causing them (by their procurement) to testify their ambitious prelacy, and to erect up their idol again with the Romish mass. God, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, open the heart of the Queen's highness, to espy them out what they be, and so to weed them out, that they no longer be suffered to trouble the congregation of God, and to poison the realm with Pope-holy doctrine. God Almighty, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, deliver the Queen's highness and this her realm from these proud prelates; which are as profitable in the church, as a polecat in the midst of a warren of conies.

To conclude, my brethren, I commit you to God and to the power of his word, which is able to establish you in all truth. His Spirit be with you, and work alway that ye may be mindful of your duty towards him, whose ye are both body and soul. Whom see that ye love, serve, dread, and obey, above all worldly powers; and for nothing under the heavens, defile your conscience before God. Dissemble not with his word: God will not be mocked: nay, they that dissemble with him, deceive themselves.

Heb. 12.

Jam. 2.

2 Cor. 12.

Esdras 36.

Rom. 2.

1 Cor. 1.

Luke 15.

Eph. 4.

Hos. 13.

Rom. 12.

Phil. 2.

Luke 8.

Mark 4.

Psa. 8.

Psa. 4.

Jer. 12.

Jer. 18.

Matt. 12.

Job 12.

Pro. 15, 21.

Psa. 24, 30

78.

Mark 6.

*Matt. 10.* Such shall the Lord deny and cast out at the last day : such (I  
*Apoc. 5.* say) as bear two faces in one hood ; such as play on both hands ;  
 such as deny the known truth ; such as obstinately rebel against  
 him. All such, with their partakers, shall the Lord destroy. God  
*John 16.* defend you from all such, and make you perfect unto the end.  
 Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

### A Letter sent to a Friend of his.

The eternal God keep you in his fear. I have me heartily commended unto you and your husband, beseeching Almighty God to preserve you in well-doing, and in perfect knowledge of his Christ; that you may be found faultless in the day of the Lord. I have heard say, that my friend is given over to vanity. It breaketh my heart, not only to hear that he so doth, but also teacheth other, that it is unhurtful to go to all abominations, which now stand in the idol's temples. Nevertheless (dear friend) be not moved to follow sinners, for they have no inheritance with GOD and Christ. But look that, by going into the idol's temple, you defile not the temple of God; for light hath no fellowship with darkness: but look, what the Lord hath commanded, that do. For if not going to church were without persecution, they would not learn you that lesson. But all thing that is sweet to the flesh, is allowed of the fleshly. The Lord shall reward every man according to his works, and he that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity, and he that by the fleshly man is led in the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption. The Lord Jesus give you his Holy Spirit. Amen.

Seek peace and ensue it. Fear God, love God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Your friend, and all men's, in Christ Jesus,

R. Smith.

Scribbled, in haste, from Newgate, the 12th of May.

### To his Wife.

The God and Father eternal, which brought again from death our Lord Jesus Christ, keep thee, dear wife, now and for ever with thy parents and all thy friends. Amen.

I praise God for his mercy, I am in the same state that you left me in, rather better than worse, looking daily for the living GOD, before whom I hunger full sore to appear, and receive the glory, of which I trust thou art willing to be a partaker: I give GOD most hearty thanks therefore, desiring thee, of all loves, to stand fast in that faith which thou hast received. And let no man

take away the seed that Almighty God hath sown in thee, but lay hands of everlasting life, which shall ever abide, when both the earth and all earthly friends shall perish; desiring them also to receive thankfully our trouble, which is momentary and light, and (as St. Paul saith) not worthy of the things which shall be shewed on us: that, we patiently carrying our cross, may attain to the place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, to the which I beseech God of his mercy bring us speedily. I have been much troubled about your deliverance, fearing much the persuasions of worldlings; and have found a friend which will (I trust) find a mean for you, if you be not already provided, desiring you in any case to abide such order, as that my friend shall appoint in God. And bear well in mind the words which I spake at our departing; that, as God hath chose us, and made us worthy to suffer with him, we may endeavour ourselves to follow uprightly in this our vocation; desiring you to present my hearty commendation to all our friends, and especially to your parents, keeping your matter close in any wise. Give most hearty thanks to my friend, which only for our cause is come to Windsor. Continue in prayer. Do well. Be faultless in all things. Beware of abominations. Keep you clean from sin. Pray for me, as I do for you. I have sent you a piece of gold for a token, and most entirely desire you to send me word if you lack anything. The Lord Jesus preserve you and yours. Amen.—From Newgate, the 15th of April.

If you will meet with me again,  
Forsake not Christ for any pain.

By your faithful husband,

Robert Smith.

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## LETTERS OF MASTER BARTELET GREEN,

A gentleman, and professor of the Law: who, for God's cause and the maintenance of his Holy Gospel, suffered martyrdom, the 13th of January, in the year of our Lord, 1556.

**To his dearly beloved in the Lord, Mistress Elizabeth C.**

Would God (if it were his pleasure), that with this letter I might send you my heart and mind, and whatsoever there is in me else that pertaineth unto God. So should I think it the best message and happiest letter that ever I could write. But though I obtain not my desire, yet shall I not cease with continual prayer

to labour for you ; desiring Almighty God to increase that which he hath long since begun in you, of sober life and earnest zeal towards his religion. In faith (as saith St. Paul), she that is a true widow and friendless, putteth her trust in God, continuing day and night in supplication and prayer : but she that liveth in pleasure is dead, even yet alive. And verily, a true widow is she that hath married Christ, forsaking the vanities of the world and lust of the flesh. For as the married woman careth how to love, please, and serve her husband ; so ought the widow to give all her heart and soul, thoughts and words, studies and labours, faithfully to love God, virtuously to bring up her children and household, and diligently to provide for the poor and oppressed. Therefore St. Paul first instructeth a widow how to behave herself: that is (to begin where Paul leaveth), not to live in pleasure ; then to watch unto prayer, as the only means to obtain all our desires, stedfastly laying up all our trust in God, as Solomon right well saith : first eschew evil, then do good. Of Anna the praise is written, that she never went out of the temple, but served God with fasting and prayer night and day : so well had she espoused Christ. Judith ware a smock of hair, continuing in fasting, and had good report of all men. The next care that belongeth unto a widow, is that she bring up her children and household godly, in the nurture and information of the Lord. Whereof St. Paul saith, If any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to rule their own house godly, and to recompense their elders.

1 Sam. 2. The incontineny and covetousness of Phineas and Hophni, not corrected by Eli their father, provoked God's vengeance upon him and all his kindred. The over tender love of Absalom expelled David from his kingdom. The unrebuked sins of Amnon encouraged Absalom to slay his brother. Most manifest examples against the parents, for the offences of their children.

1 Kings 1. Contrariwise, how greatly might Hannah rejoice over Samuel her son, whom she had brought up in the house of the Lord ! What thanks should Tobias' wife give for her son Tobit ! How happy was Solomon to be taught by the prophet Nathan ! But above all widows, thrice blessed was the happy mother of seven sons, that so had instructed them in the fear of God, that by no torments they would shrink from the love of his truth. Of the last part, St. Paul sheweth, that a widow should be chosen, if she have nourished her children, if she have been liberal to strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, and if she have ministered to them in adversity. Herein it is evident how earnestly St. Paul would have widows bent towards the poor, for that (as though they only had been therefore meet) he appointed only widows to minister unto the saints, and to gather for the poor. Which use also continued almost throughout the primitive church, that widows had the charge and gathering for poor men and strangers.

Of your neighbours, I need not to put you in remembrance seeing you daily feed them with good hospitality, by which means also many foreigners are of you relieved; but of the poor almshouses, and miserable prisoners here in London, many lacking their liberty without cause, some under the colour of religion, some only kept for fees, and some on private men's displeasure. Alas, that Christ so hungereth, and no man will feed him; is so sore oppressed with thirst, and no man will give him to drink; destitute of all lodging, and not relieved; naked, and not clothed; sick, and not visited; imprisoned, and not seen. In time past, men could bestow large sums of money on copes, vestments, and ornaments of the church. Why rather follow we not St. Ambrose's example, which sold the same to the relief of the poor—or Chrysostome's commandment, which willeth first to deck and garnish the living temple of God? But alas, such is the wickedness of these our last days, that nothing moveth us; neither the pure doctrine, the godliness of life, nor good examples of the ancient fathers. If in any thing they erred, if they have written any thing that serveth for sects and dissension, that will their charitable children embrace, publish, and maintain, with sword, fagot, and fire. But all in vain: they strive against the stream. For though in despite of the truth, by force of the oars of crafty persuasion, they may bring themselves into the haven of hell; yet can they not make all men believe, that the banks move while the ship saileth, nor ever shall be able to turn the direct course of the stream of God's truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you in all pure doctrine and upright living; and give you grace, virtuously to bring up your children and family, and carefully to provide for the poor and oppressed. Amen.—At Newgate, the 20th of January, 1556.

Your assured,

Bartelet Green.

To my very loving Friends and Masters, M. Goring,  
M. Farnham, M. Fletewode, M. Rosewel, M. Bell,  
M. Hussey, M. Calthorpe, M. Boyer,

And other my Masters of the Temple, Bartelet Green wisheth  
health of body and soul.

Very friends are they, which are knit together with the knot of charity. Charity doth not decay, but increase, in them that die faithfully. Whereof it followeth, that, though we be absent in body, yet are we present in spirit, coupled together with the unity of faith in the bond of peace, which is love. How is he worthy the name of a friend, that measureth his friendship with the

distance of place, or parting of persons? If thy friend be out of sight, is thy friendship ended? If he be gone into the country, wilt thou cease to love him? If he be passed the seas, wilt thou so forsake him? If he be carried into heaven, is charity hindered thereby? On the one side, we have the use<sup>1</sup> of the fathers from the primitive church, that gave thanks for their friends that died in the faith, to prove that charity died not with death. On the other side, saith Horace, *Cœlum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*. What speak I of Horace? Saith not St. Paul the same thing? For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his blood: yea, we are members one of another. Is the hand or arm, foot or leg, a member, when it is dissevered from the body? How can we be members, except we be joined together? What is this line that coupleth us, but love? When all things shall fail, love faileth never. Hope hath his end, when we get that we hoped for. Faith is finished in heaven. Love endureth for ever; love, I say, that proceedeth of charity. For carnal love (when that which he loved is lost) doth perish with the flesh. Neither was that ever but fleshly love, which by distance of place, or severing of bodies, is parted asunder. If love be the end, or sum of the law; if heaven and earth shall perish; if one jot of God's word shall not decay, why should we think that love lasteth not ever? I need not to write much to you, my friends, neither can I have leisure, now that the keepers are risen. But this I say; if we kept Christ's commandment, in loving each other as he loved us, then should our love be everlasting. This friendship Paul felt, when it moved him to say, that neither length nor breadth (meaning no distance of place), neither height nor depth, should sever him from the love of Christ. Weigh well this place, and mete it with Paul's measures: so shall you find, that, if our love be unfeigned, it can never be ended. Now may you say, Why writest thou this? Forsooth, to the end that, if our friendship be stable, you may accomplish this the last request of your friend, perform after my death the friendship we began in our life, that amity may increase, until God make it perfect at our next meeting together. Master Fletewode, I beseech you remember Wittrance and Cook, two singular men among the common prisoners. Master Farnham and M. Bell, with M. Hussey (as I hope), will dispatch Palmer and Richardson, with his companions. I pray you, M. Calthrop, think on John Grove, an honest poor man, Traiford and Rice Aprice his accomplices. My cousin Thomas Witton, a scrivener in Lombard Street, hath promised to further their delivery: at the least he can instruct you which way to work. I doubt not but that Master Boyer will labour for the goodwife Cooper (for she is worthy to be holpen), and Gerard the Frenchman.

There be also divers other well disposed men, whose deliver-



ance if ye will not labour for, yet I humbly beseech you to seek their relief as you shall see cause; namely of Henry Aprice, Lancelot Hobbs, Lothar, Homes, Carr, and Buckingham, a young man of goodly gifts in wit and learning, and (saving that he is somewhat wild,) likely to do well hereafter. There be also two women; N. Coningham, and Alice Alexander, that may prove honest. For these and all other poor prisoners here, I make this my humble suit and prayer to you all, my masters, and especial good friends, beseeching you of all bonds of amity, for the precious blood of Jesus Christ, in the bowels of mercy, to tender the causes<sup>1</sup> of miserable captives, help to clothe Christ, visit the afflicted, comfort the sorrowful, and relieve the needy. The very God of peace guide your hearts to have mercy on the poor, and live faithfully together. Amen. This present Monday, when I look to die, and live for ever.

Yours for ever,

Bartelet Green.

<sup>1</sup> pity the  
cases

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## LETTERS OF THAT FAITHFUL MAN OF GOD, JOHN CARELESS;

Who, by cruel imprisonment, and unmerciful dealing of the papists, died in the Marshalsea, and was buried in the fields on a dunghill, and therefore is not unworthy here to be placed amongst the Martyrs.

To my most Dear and faithful brethren in Newgate,

Condemned to die for the testimony of God's everlasting truth.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual joy, strength, and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his eternal mercy, be with you, my most dear and faithful loving brother Timms, and with all the rest of my dear hearts in the Lord, your faithful fellow soldiers, and most constant companions in bonds, yea, of men condemned most cruelly for the sincere testimony of God's everlasting truth; to the full finishing of that good work, which he hath so graciously begun in you all, that the same may be to his glory, the commodity<sup>2</sup> of his poor <sup>2</sup>benefit affected church, and to your everlasting comfort in him. Amen.

Ah, my most sweet and loving brethren, and dearest hearts in the Lord, what shall I say, or how shall I write unto you, in the least point or part to utter the great joy that my poor heart hath conceived in God, through that most godly example of your christian constancy, and sincere confession of Christ's verity? Truly my tongue cannot declare, nor my pen express, that abundance of spiritual mirth and gladness, that my mind and inward man hath felt, ever since I heard of your hearty boldness, and modest behaviour, before that bloody butcher in the time of all your crafty examinations; especially at your cruel condemnation in their cursed Consistory place. Blessed be God, the Father of all mercy, and praised be his name, for that he hath so graciously performed upon you, his dear darlings, his most sweet and comfortable promises: in not only giving you the continual aid, strength, and comfort of his holy and mighty Spirit, to the faithful confession of his Christ, for whose cause (O most happy men) ye are condemned to die; but also in giving you such a mouth and wisdom, as all your wicked enemies were not able to resist, but were fain to cry Peace, peace, and not suffer you to speak. As truly as God liveth, my dear brethren, this is not only unto you a most evident probation that God is on your side, and a sure certainty of your everlasting salvation in him; but also to your cruel adversaries (or rather God's cursed enemies) a plain demonstration of their just eternal woe and damnation, which they shall be full sure shortly to feel, when ye shall full sweetly possess the place of felicity and pleasure, prepared for you from the beginning.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, cease not so long as ye be in this life, to praise the Lord with a lusty courage, for that, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, he hath vouched you worthy of this great dignity; to suffer for his sake, not only the loss of goods, wife, and children, long imprisonment, cruel oppression &c., but also the very deprivation of this mortal life, with the dissolution of your bodies in the fire. The which is the greatest promotion that God can bring you or any other unto, in this vale of misery; yea, so great an honour, as the highest angel in heaven is not permitted to have: and yet hath the Lord (for his dear Son Christ's sake) reputed you worthy of the same, yea, and that before me and many other, which have both long looked and longed for the same.—Ah, my most dear brother Timms, whose time resteth altogether in the hands of thy Lord, in a full happy time camest thou into this troublesome world, but in a much more blessed hour shalt thou depart forth of the same; so that the sweet saying of Solomon, or rather of the Holy Ghost, shall be full well verified upon thee, yea, and all thy faithful fellows: Better the day of death (saith he), than the day of birth. This saying cannot be verified upon every man, but upon thee, my dear

brother, and such as thou art; whose death is most precious before God, and dear shall your blood be in his sight. Blessed be God for thee, my dear brother Timms, and blessed be God again that ever I knew thee, for in a most happy time I came first into thy company. Pray for me, dear brother, pray for me, that God will once vouch me worthy of that great dignity, whereunto he hath now brought you.—Ah, my loving brother Drake, whose soul draweth now nigh unto God, of whom you have received the same, full glad may you be that ever God gave you a life to leave for his sake. Full well will he restore it to you again, in a thousand fold more glorious wise. Praise God, good brother, as you have great cause, and pray for me, I beseech you, which am so much unworthy (so great are my sins) of that great dignity, whereunto the Lord hath called you and the rest of your godly brethren; whom I beseech you to comfort in the Lord, as you can full well: praised be God for his gifts, which you have heartily applied to the setting forth of his glory, and the commodity<sup>1</sup> of his poor afflicted church. Which thing shall surely <sup>1</sup> *benefit* redound to your everlasting joy and comfort, as you shall most effectually feel or ever<sup>2</sup> it be long, though the wicked of the <sup>2</sup> *before* world judge far otherwise.

Ah, mine own hearts, and most dearly beloved brethren, Cavel, Ambrose, and both the Spurges: blessed be the Lord on your behalf, and praised be his name, which hath given you such a glorious victory. Full valiant have you shewed yourselves in the Lord's fight, and full faithful in your painful service. Faint not, but go on forward as ye have most godly begun; for great shall your reward be at the end of this your travail. Ah, my good faithful brethren all, what shall I say, or what shall I write unto you, but even the same that good Elizabeth did say to her godly kinswoman Mary, the blessed Mother of Christ. Happy art thou <sup>Luke 1.</sup> (quoth that good woman) which hast believed; for all things which the Lord hath spoken to thee, shall be fulfilled. So I say to you, my dear hearts in the Lord; happy are ye all, yea, twice happy shall ye be for evermore, because ye have stedfastly believed the most sweet promises which God the Father hath made unto you with his own mouth, in that he hath promised you (which are the faithful seed of the believing Abraham), that ye shall be blessed ever world without end. The promises of God your sweet Father as ye do believe, so do ye bear record that God is true. The testimony whereof ye have full worthily borne to the world, and shortly will full surely seal the same with your blood; yea, even to morrow, I do understand. Oh, constant Christians! Oh, valiant soldiers of the high captain Jesus Christ, who for your sake hath conquered the devil, death, sin, and hell, and hath given you full victory over them for evermore! Oh, worthy witnesses and most glorious Martyrs, whose invincible faith hath overcome that

<sup>1 un-</sup>  
fading

proud, sturdy, bragging prince of the world, and all his wicked army, over whom ye shall shortly triumph for evermore! Ah, my sweet hearts, the everlasting treasures are full surely laid up for you in heaven. The immarcescible<sup>1</sup> and most glorious crown of victory is already made and prepared for you, to be shortly clapped upon all your happy heads. The holy angels of your heavenly Father are already appointed to conduct your sweet souls into Abraham's bosom. All the heavenly host rejoiceth already, for that they shall shortly receive you, with joy and felicity, into their blessed fellowship. Selah.

Psa. 129

Rejoice with double joy, and be glad, my dear brethren, for doubtless ye have more cause than can be expressed. But alas! I that for my sins am left behind, may lie and lament with the holy prophet, saying, Woe is me that the days of my joyful rest are prolonged. Ah cursed Satan, which hath caused me so sore to offend my most dear loving Father, whereby my exile and banishment is so much prolonged. Oh Christ my advocate, pacify thy Father's wrath which I have justly deserved, that he may take me home to him in his sweet mercy. Oh that I might now come home unto thee, with my blessed brethren. Well, thy will, O Lord, be effectuously fulfilled; for it is only good, and turneth all things to the best, for such as thou in thy mercy hast chosen.

Psa. 103.

And now farewell, my dear hearts, most happy in the Lord. I trust in my good God, yet shortly to see you in the celestial city, whereof undoubtedly the Lord hath already made you free citizens. Though ye be yet with us for a little time, your very home is in heaven, where your treasure doth remain with your sweet Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ; whose calling you have heard with the ears of your hearts, and therefore ye shall never come into judgment, but pass from death to life. Your sins shall never be remembered, be they never so many, so grievous, or so great; for your Saviour hath cast them all into the bottom of the sea: he hath removed them from you as far as the east is from the west, and his mercy hath much more prevailed over you, than is distance between heaven and earth: and he hath given you, for an everlasting possession of the same, all his holiness, righteousness, and justification, yea, and the Holy Ghost into your hearts, wherewith ye are surely sealed unto the day of redemption, to certify you of your eternal election, and that ye are his true adopted sons, whereby ye may boldly cry unto God, Abba, dear Father, for evermore: so that now no creature in heaven, earth, nor hell shall be able to accuse you before the throne of the heavenly King. Satan is now cast out from you; he himself is judged, and hath no part in you. He will once more bite you by the heel, and then he hath done; for at the time you shall squeeze his head through your own good Christ, and so have final

victory for ever more. In joyful triumph whereof, he shall sweetly ascend into the place of eternal rest, whither your eldest brother Christ is gone before you to take possession for you, and to prepare your place under the holy altar, with Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Rogers, Hooper, Saunders, Farrer, Taylor, Bradford, Philpot, with many other; who will be full glad of your coming, to see six more of their appointed number, that their blood may so much the sooner be revenged upon them that dwell on the earth.

Thus I make an end, committing you all to God's most merciful defence, whose quarrel ye have defended, whose cause ye have promoted, whose glory ye have set forth, and whose name ye have constantly confessed. Farewell for a while, my dear hearts in the Lord: I will make as much haste after you as I may. All our dear brethren salute you. They pray for you, and praise God for you, continually. Blessed be the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, saith the Holy Ghost, and their works follow them. Apoc. 14.

Your own John Careless, a most unprofitable servant of the Lord, yet, of his great mercy, prisoner for his sake, abiding his further good pleasure. Pray, pray, pray!

### To Master Green, Master Whittell,

And certain other prisoners in Newgate, condemned, and ready to be burnt, for the testimony of the Lord Jesus.

The everlasting peace in Jesus Christ, the continual comfort of his most pure and holy Spirit, be with you, my most dear and faithful brethren and sisters of Newgate, the Lord's appointed sheep unto the slaughter; to the good performance of the great and notable work of the Lord, which he hath so graciously begun in you all: that the same may redound to the setting forth of his glory, and to the commodity<sup>1</sup> of his church, and to your own everlasting comfort in him. So be it. 1 benefit

Ah, my dear hearts, and most faithful brethren and sisters in the Lord, what high lauds and praise, yea, what humble and continual thanks am I bound to give to God our Father for you and on your most happy behalf, who so mightily hath magnified himself in you thus far forth, in giving you his holy and mighty Spirit, to the constant confessing of Christ's verity, even to the cruel condemnation; and I doubt not but he will do the same to the death. Oh, happy and blessed are you that ever you were born, that the Lord will vouch you worthy of this great dignity, to die for his sake. Doubtless it is the greatest honour that God can give you in this life. Yea, if they be so blessed of God that lie in the Lord, as the Holy Ghost saith they be: how much Apoc. 14.

more blessed and happy than are you, that die not only in the Lord, but also for the Lord. Oh that it were the good will of God that the good hour were now come, that I might go with you. Ah that my sins made me not unworthy of such an excellent dignity.

Be thankful, dear hearts, be thankful and rejoice in the Lord : for mighty is his mercy towards you, and great is your reward in heaven ; the which you, like faithful persons, have plucked to you with a godly violence of an invincible faith. Oh worthy warriors of the most high Captain ; oh constant confessors of the everlasting verity : how glorious a crown of victory shall you shortly receive, which is prepared for all such as do continue to the end. Oh, you sweet saints of the Lord, how precious shall your death be in his sight. Oh how dear are your souls to your Redeemer, in whose hand they shall most joyfully rest, and the pains of death shall never touch you. Oh how blessed shall you be, when Christ shall appear, at the which time you shall receive your bodies again full of immortality. Oh how joyful shall you be, when Christ, according to his promise, shall acknowledge you before his Father and his holy angels, as you have most constantly confessed him to be your Lord and only Saviour before men.

Oh, blessed Green, thou meek and loving lamb of the Lord, how happy art thou to be appointed to die for his sake. A full dainty dish art thou for the Lord's own tooth. Fresh and green shalt thou be in the house of the Lord, and thy fruits shall never wither nor decay. Although thou go here forth sowing thy good fruits with tears, the time shall come that thou shall reap with joy and gladness the fruits of everlasting life, and that without ceasing. Be merry therefore and fear not, for it is thy Father's will to give thee a kingdom, whereunto he hath chosen thee before the foundations of the world were laid.

Luke 12.

Oh happy minister, thou man of God, how glad mayest thou be of God's gracious favour, which hath prevented thee in the day of thy trial. Oh happy Peter, whose part thou hast well played ; therefore thy reward and portion shall be like unto his. Now hast thou good experience of man's infirmity, but much more proof and taste, yea, sense and feeling, of God's abundant bottomless mercy. Although Satan desired to sift thee, yet Christ, thy good Captain, prayed that thy faith should not fail. God's strength is made perfect by thy weakness, and his grace is sufficient for thee his dear child. Thine example did so encourage and strengthen thy poor brethren, that God is every way glorified by thee, and shortly will he glorify thee with himself, with that glory which he hath prepared for thee, his elect darling, before the world was made. Therefore rejoice and be glad, for thou hast good occasion, in finding such favour in his sight.

Luke 22.

This is most true, (oh my other brethren, whom I do not know, neither have I heard much of you,) happy are you that ever you were born; and blessed be our God which hath given you such victory over the bloody beast. Shortly shall you be clothed in large white garments, and fine raynes<sup>1</sup> of righteousness, and so shall you follow the Lamb on Mount Zion, with new songs of mirth and melody, for your delivery forth of Satan's power and tyranny. God for evermore be blessed for you, and strengthen you to the end: as I doubt not but he will; for he never failed them that put their trust in him.

Apo. 19.

1 perhaps  
rayance,  
for array

Oh, my dear and faithful sister Joan Warner, what shall I say to thee? thy trial hath been great; thy victory in Christ hath been notable. Thou hast overcome many a sharp shower and storm. Shortly shalt thou arrive at the haven of quiet rest, and receive a reward due to a constant martyr. Thou shalt go home to thy heavenly Father, and possess for ever the inheritance which Christ hath purchased for thee; where thy earthly parents be, still looking for thee, which have triumphed over Antichrist most victoriously. Oh, blessed parents of happy children, which have shewed such an example, as the like hath been seldom seen. I salute thee, dear sister, of like constant mind; whose constant example is worthy of continual memory. Praised be God for you, my own sweet sisters, which hath made you to play such wise virgin's parts. He hath plentifully poured the oil of his Spirit into the lamps of your faith, so that the light thereof shall never be extinct. You shall enter with your bridegroom into everlasting joy, whereunto you were chosen in him from the beginning.

Mat. 25.

Oh, my dear brethren and sisters, you blessed saints of the Lord, how much and how deeply am I bound to praise God for you, both day and night. Pray, pray for me, my dear hearts; for the tender mercy of God, that I may be made worthy to follow your trace. Oh, that I had run the race of my life as far as you have done yours, and were as nigh my journey's end as you be unto yours. But alas, I lie like the lame man at the pool's side by Solomon's porch, and every man goeth into the place of health before me. But God will appoint me one, one day to put me in. I trust my lord of London's coalhouse is empty, and all his officers idle. Therefore they must shortly fetch more sheep to shambles; for he is the common slaughter slave of all England. But happy are you that are passed through the pikes, and delivered out of his hands, and from all the angels of the darkness of this world, which long tempted you in the wilderness of the same: but now shall the angels of God come and minister unto you; for they are your servants to hold you up in their hands, that you shall not hurt your foot; no, nor one hair of your head shall perish. They shall carry you up to heaven in a fiery chariot, though you leave your mantle behind you for a time, till

John 5.

Psa. 90.

2 King's 2

God restore the same to you again, in a more ample and glorious sort.

Thus in haste, as it doth appear, I am constrained to make an end, committing you all to God's most merciful defence—who ever have you in his blessed keeping; desiring you all to remember me in your godly and faithful prayers, as I will not forget you in mine, by God's grace. The blessing of God be with you all, my dear brethren and sisters. All our brethren and fellow prisoners here, have them<sup>1</sup> most heartily commended unto you, and pray for you without ceasing. God send us a merry meeting in his kingdom. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> them-  
selves

By your brother and unfeigned lover John Careless, prisoner, abiding his most merciful will and pleasure. Pray, pray, pray!

To my dear and faithful brother, W. Timms, prisoner in  
Newgate.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, with the continual joy, comfort, and strength of his sweet Spirit, be multiplied, and daily more and more increased in your good heart (my most faithful and dear brother Timms), to the full quieting of your conscience, and beating back of all the fiery darts of the Wicked; that you may shortly receive the glorious crown of victory, and, in the same, triumph over all your enemies for evermore. Amen.

I cannot express the exceeding great joy and consolation of my poor heart, considering the marvellous works of God most graciously wrought upon you; not only in proving you and trying your faith, by his great and huge crosses both inwardly and outwardly, but also in giving you so great consolation and constancy in the midst of the same. Faithful is God and true of his promises, who hath said that he will never suffer his chosen children to be tempted above their strength; but in the midst of their temptation will make an outscape for them, by such means as may make to his glory and their everlasting consolation. My dear heart, great cause have you to be of good comfort, for I see in you as lively a token of God's everlasting love and favour in Jesus Christ, as ever I perceived in any man. In respect whereof I do, even with my heart, love, honour and reverence you, beseeching God, for his glorious name's sake, in the bowels and blood of our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ, to finish his good work in you, as I doubt not but he will do, according to his unfallible promises; yea I am well assured thereof, forasmuch as you have so effectually received his Holy Spirit into your heart, as a pledge and sure seal of your eternal redemption, and a testimony of your adoption in Christ Jesus. For which cause Satan so sore envieth you, that he hath now bent all his fierce



ordnance against you; thinking thereby utterly to destroy the invincible fort of your faith, founded most firmly upon the unmoveable rock Christ, against the which the devil, sin, nor yet hell-gates shall never prevail. Selah.

Therefore, mine own bowels in the Lord, be not discomforted for this your conflict, which doubtless shall greatly increase your crown of glory, triumph, and victory; but take a good heart unto you, and buckle boldly with Satan, both in himself, and in his subtle members. It is the very divine ordinance of God, that all his regenerate children shall be tempted, proved, and tried: as we see by the example of our Saviour Christ, who, as soon as he was baptized, was straightway led of the Holy Ghost into the wilderness, there to be tempted of the devil. But there got he such a glorious victory of Satan, that he could never since finally prevail against any of his poor members, but in every assault that he maketh, either inwardly or outwardly, he getteth a foil and taketh shame; so that now he rageth with all the spite possible, especially because he knoweth his time is but short. St. James testifieth that he is but a very coward, that will soon James 4. fly, if he be faithfully resisted. And as for his tempting tools, the Lord hath made them manifest unto us, so that he cannot deceive us, though he assault us: for, as St. Paul saith, his very 2 Cor. 2. thoughts are not unknown to us, as it doth in you largely appear—praised be the Lord's name therefore.

You see, dear brother, that now to molest you and such as you are, that be even passing from this vale of misery, he hath but two ways, or two pieces of ordnance to shoot at you, with the which he cannot hurt you, because you have two bulwarks to defend you. The first of these terrible guns that Satan hath shot at you, is the very same that he continually shooteth at me, that is to say, fear and infidelity for the uglisomeness of death, and horror of my sins, which be so many, grievous, and great. But this pellet is easily put away, with the sure shield of faith in the most precious death and blood-shedding of our dear Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ, whom the Father hath given unto us wholly to be ours for evermore, and with him hath given us all things, as Paul saith; so that, though we be never so great sinners, yet Christ is made unto us holiness, righteousness, and justification. He hath clothed us with all his merits, mercies, and most sweet sufferings; and hath taken unto him all our misery, wretchedness, sin, and infirmity. So that, if any should now be condemned for the same, it must needs be Jesus Christ, which hath taken them upon him. But indeed he hath made satisfaction for them to the uttermost jot; so that for his sake they shall never be imputed to us, if they were a thousand times so many more as they be. This do you most effectuously feel and

know, dear brother, a great deal better than I can tell you; blessed be God therefore.

And now Satan, seeing that he cannot prevail with his boisterous battery against this bulwark of faith, which doth so quench all his fiery darts that they can do you no harm, but rather do you good service to cast you down under the mighty hand of God, that he may take you up by his only grace and power, and so you may render him all the glory by Jesus Christ (which thing the enemy cannot abide in no wise,)—therefore he shooteth off his other piece most pestilent, to provoke you to put some part of your trust and confidence in yourself, and in your own holiness and righteousness, that you might, that way, rob God of his glory, Christ of his honour and dignity of his death. But blessed be the Lord God, you have also a full strong bulwark to beat back this pestiferous pellet also, even the pure law of God: which proveth the best of us all damnable sinners in the sight of God, if he would enter into judgment with us according to the severity of the same; and that even our best works are polluted and defiled in such sort, as the prophet describeth them. With which manner of speaking our free-will pharisees are much offended; for it felleth all man's righteousness to the ground, (I had like to have said, to the bottom of hell,) and extolleth only the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is allowed before God, and is freely given to all those that firmly believe, as, blessed be God, you do.

Essay. 64.

Ah, my good brother Timms, Satan hath put his hand in a wrong box when he beginneth to tempt you, either to vain glory or mistrust; for you are an old beaten soldier, and have had good experience of these manner of temptations, both by yourself and others, who, you know well, were the beloved of God. Be of good cheer therefore, dear heart, be of good cheer, for now Satan hath wrought all his malice; he hath done all that he can, and hath shot off all his last pieces, wherewith he had thought to have done most mischief. But now he seeth he cannot prevail, (that strong tower of your faith being so invincible,) he will pluck up all his tents, and get him to some other place to practise the like assaults; and then will the angels of God come and minister unto you the most sweet and heavenly consolations of the Holy Ghost. To Him therefore who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that ever we can desire or think, I do most heartily commit you, with all the rest of your godly prison fellows: who comfort, strengthen, and defend you with his grace and mighty operation of his Holy Spirit, as he hath hitherto done, that you having a most glorious victory over the subtle serpent and all his wicked seed, may also receive the crown of glory and immortality, prepared for you before the foundations of the world were laid; and is so surely kept for you in the hands of him

whose promise is unfallible, that the devil, sin, death, or hell shall never be able to deprive you of the same. The blessing of God be with you, now and for evermore. Amen. Pray, pray, pray, for me.

Your own for ever,

John Careless.

**To my dearly beloved in the Lord, Mistress A. K.**

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the help, comfort, and assistance of his most pure and holy Spirit, be with you, my most dear sister, to the performance of that he hath so graciously begun in you; that it may be to his glory, the profit of his church, and your eternal comfort in him. Amen.

As I am right sorry at my poor heart, (O worshipful Matron) that any afflictions or passions<sup>1</sup> of heaviness should trouble your godly and loving heart, (unto the which I wish unfeignedly all godly joy and quietness,) even so am I glad and give God most hearty thanks, that he of his great goodness hath used me poor wretched miser by any means, to be an occasion of the increase of your godly mirth and gladness. But O my good and faithful sister, I see whereabouts you go. You play with me as a good loving mother doth with her unwilling child. When it doth anything at her desire, she praiseth it and maketh herself glad thereof, that it may take courage to do better, and be more willing against another time. Even so do you (right reverend Matron) make yourself glad of my simple doings, to comfort and encourage me to continue in that which is good, and to grow and go forward willingly in the same. God for Christ's sake give me his grace, that in all things I may satisfy your godly expectation, that I may do some honour to his heavenly doctrine.

And as you have greatly comforted me with your most godly and loving letter, even so I beseech you to assist me with your faithful and hearty prayer; as I doubt not but you do, for I feel the present help thereof—praised be God therefore. God make me thankful for you, my dear sister, and also mindful of my duty towards you, and all other the Lord's elect children. Ah, my dear and faithful heart in the Lord, how much and how deeply am I bound to praise God for you, and to give him thanks day and night on your good behalf. Oh, happy are you that ever you were born, that God will so mightily be magnified in you. Oh blessed woman, that so surely believest, and hast so plentifully tasted of God's Holy Spirit, that out of thy womb do flow the rivers of the water of life; to whom God hath made manifest the might of his marvellous mercy, and hath given consolation in

the same, so that you are able, of your own good experience, to comfort others in all their afflictions; which thing I can witness, (I praise God therefore,) in that I do deeply taste and feel of the same. God for Christ's sake recompence the same, and all other your good doings, seven fold into your bosom; as I doubt not but he will do, according to his promise. God make me such a one as you report me to be, that my fruits might take such effect as you speak of. But alas, I am a great, horrible, and most grievous sinner; therefore, I fear me, God be angry with me for presuming to take his word in my mouth. God hide my sins from the sight of the world, that I be not a slander to his truth. But it is you, (O dear daughter of Abraham,) which do so love and live the Gospel, that I and other are more confirmed in the truth thereof by your good example. God hath at this day, in his poor afflicted church, a sort<sup>1</sup> of worthy women, which do him and his; such service, as is acceptable in his sight. I speak of experience, (I praise God therefore,) and not to the end to flatter you or any other; the Lord is my witness.

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number*

God for my sins hath taken from me the company of godly learned men, to my great grief and heavy discomfort; but, of his great goodness and mercy, he doth supply my spiritual lack by the good ministry of godly and virtuous women. Of which faithful labourers in the gospel, whose names are written in the book of life, my dearly beloved sister, you are not the least. The Lord be thanked for you, and blessed be the time that ever I knew you: for your love and faithful amity is to me a sure sign and seal of God's love and mercy. Oh, dear Lord, what am I, upon whom thou shouldst vouchsafe to shew such great tokens of thine inestimable love and kindness? Oh, faithful Father, forgive me my great ingratitude and sins. Oh, let me be no longer negligent in doing my duty towards thy dear children, which thou hast linked in love with me, knitting our hearts together in a perfect bond of Christian charity, whereby all men may see that we are thy disciples. Oh, my good sister, I would you knew what joy and comfort I do feel in my good Christ, at this present hour. God make you partaker of the same; for this which I have, partly cometh by you, whom God hath used as his good instrument thereto.

And whereas you do most godly counsel me, with St. Peter, to cast all my care upon the Lord, and to be careless, not only in name but also in effect, specially in respect of him for whose sake I do suffer, and the sincere truth which I do profess; I thank you heartily for your most godly and comfortable exhortation: and I intend, by God's grace, to follow the same, as far forth as he shall assist me with his holy and mighty Spirit; without the which I can neither take things patiently, neither rejoice under the cross as I ought for to do. Oh what great cause have I to rejoice and be

*1 Pet. 5.*

glad, that God, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, will count me worthy to suffer for his sake, and to bear his sweet cross, wherewith he doth marvellously begin to fashion me into his own similitude and likeness, that in his glory I may be like him also. Oh how well may I be Careless, in deed as well as in name, seeing that I have cast my care upon the Lord himself, who, I am right well assured by faith, careth for me, and hath committed me to Christ's safe custody, which loveth me unto the end, and will not lose me, but will raise me unto life at the last day. The Lord is my light and my defence; of whom then should I be afraid? The Lord is the preserver of my life; what can man then do unto me? I am one of the Lord's elect; who shall lay ought then to my charge? The Lord himself doth justify me; who shall then condemn me? Since Christ is mine and I am his, what shall make me careful, or who shall separate me from his sweet love, which, as Solomon saith in his sweet songs, is mightier than the death? No, no; let the tyrants come when they will, I trust they shall find me ready and willing to go home to my heavenly Father, whither my good brethren be gone before me, with joy, triumph, and victory over the bloody beast and her Babylonical blood: blessed be God therefore.

Your sweet examples of Elias, Daniel, and the Israelites, do much confirm my faith in Christ, although I be far inferior to any of them. But, as you say full well, God himself is my Father, and doth love me, his prodigal son, with an everlasting love; sure I am therefore, he will not see me lack either for body or soul; for he feedeth the birds and brute beasts, yea, and men that be much worse than they, as you full well have said. And further, my dear heart, whereas you say that your heaviness and sorrow is, when you call to remembrance my cross, and double cross, &c.; ah, my good loving sister, let not my crosses make your good tender heart heavy, but rather be glad and rejoice with me, that God of his great mercy will repute me worthy to bear them for his sake. Sing psalms with me of praise and thanksgiving; for God hath made me able to bear them patiently, if they were a thousand times so many more as they be, as indeed my sins have justly deserved. Well is me that ever I was born, that he would vouch me worthy to suffer at all hands, or all sorts of men, for his sake; or rather, that it would please his goodness to choose me, poor caitiff, in whom himself would suffer; for the enemies do not punish me for my sins, as they might justly do, but they do persecute sweet Christ in me, whose truth I do profess.

And now, as concerning the most comfortable doctrine of our eternal election in him before the foundation of the world was laid, I do protest before God and man, that if every hair of my head were a man's life, I would willingly give them all in the defence thereof. Full little wotteth our free-will men what they do,

when they go about so rashly to condemn that doctrine. The Lord illuminate their minds with the light of his Holy Spirit, that they may once see the truth thereof, and leave their kicking against the prick. Indeed, dear friend, in the respect of them and the peril which they be in, you and I both have good cause to mourn, lament, and be sorry, and to pray for them day and night, that the Lord, if it be his will, would convert them. And whether their blindness be of simplicity, as I hope it is, or of wilful obstinacy, which thing is greatly to be feared, yet have I no cause to be angry with them, for it is their own harm: whereas mine should have been the like, if God had left me to myself, as he might most justly have done; and for that I am as I am, his name only have the praise, and for his sake I will always seek to do them good, as much as lieth in me. And whatsoever they have said, or shall say or do against me, I do and will as heartily forgive them all, as I would be forgiven of God my great sins and trespasses. For sure I am, that whatsoever he be, that hath any true taste or lively feeling of the great mercy, love, and kindness of God towards him in Christ, he cannot bear hate or displeasure against any thing but sin and Satan, the only author thereof. Therefore, in that they do talk so much of love, and let so little appear in their deeds, it doth evidently appear how little taste and lively feeling of the free mercy of God in Christ they have. A weak faith hath ever a cold charity annexed unto it, which is quenched with every unkind word.

Yours unfeignedly,

John Careless.

### To my dear Sister M. C.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his eternal mercies, be most effectuously wrought in your heart, my dear and faithful sister, to the full accomplishing of that good work which the Lord hath so graciously begun in you; that it may be to the setting forth of his glory, the comfort of his poor afflicted church, and to your own eternal consolation in him. Amen.

I thank God most heartily for you, my dear heart in the Lord, with all remembrance of you in my prayers, as of duty I am bound, not doubting but you do the same for me, to my great joy and comfort in the midst of my crosses; which daily do increase, yea, and that in such sort, that if the faithful God (by your hearty prayer and others', God's dear children,) did not put to his helping hand, I should surely sink down under them. Ah, good sister, beg hard of our dear Father for me, that he would shortly tread

Satan under my feet; and that I may play the man in the Lord's battle, as you bid me, and be joyful in my Christ, what pain or peril soever I suffer. And rejoice with me, good sister, in the Lord, and let us be merry in him; not only to cheer the good hearts of all our faithful friends, but also to anger the cankered heart of Satan, that crooked serpent, our ancient enemy. For I know that there is nothing that can grieve his malicious mind more, than the mirth, gladness, and hearty rejoicing of the children of God in their good Christ.

Ah, my faithful friend, if your good heart be heavy, who can make mine light? If you be sorry, who can make me glad? But if you be merry and rejoice in the Lord, there shall no trouble make me sad or sorrowful. Be of good cheer, therefore, my good sister, and comfort my sweet brother W. Oh that I might once hear that he and his bridegroom were in bed both together, and that he had taken a sweet sleep in his lover's arms, as John did upon his lap on the Maundy-night. Commend me unto him John 13. most heartily; and desire him, for the Lord's sake, to fulfil my joy and increase my crown. Bid him be mindful of me in his hearty prayers, as I neither will nor can forget him in mine. Full dear is he unto my soul; so are you, my good sister, the Lord he knoweth, even so are you; you have so surely knit me to you with that bond of unfeigned love, whereby you are linked to the children of God. Oh blessed bond of perfection and true badge of Christ's disciples! Oh true and unfeigned love, wrought by his Spirit in the hearts of all his elect! This is to us a true sign, and sure seal, that we are the very children of GOD. This love is that flower that never shall fade, but flourish daily more and more, and be made perfect in that place where faith and hope shall have 1 Cor. 13. no office, but possess for ever that which they have here long looked for with patience. My dear heart, be of good cheer; for though our bodies be here separated asunder for a little time, yet shall the Lord bring us together again, ere it be long, into a place of great joy, where we shall dwell for ever. Yea, God can and will, if he see it good for us, bring us together again in this life, that we may have a merry meeting, and further occasion to praise his holy Name. He can work wonders when himself listeth. Oh what it is to dwell under the defence of the most Highest, and to sit under the shadow of the Almighty? The buggish<sup>1</sup> bishops Psa. 91. cannot make such-a-one afraid; because they cannot take away 1 frightful, as bugbears one hair from our head until God give them leave, which I am sure he will not do, until such time as he shall see it most to his glory, and the profit of his saints; and when that time is once come, who will desire to tarry here any longer?

Thus, dear sister, I have scribbled a few lines to you in haste: I will not say that it shall be my last farewell, although it be very like in this life. Commend me to my good brethren Master Heath,

Robert Cole, John Lydley, &c. I would be glad to see them, and take my leave of them, if they may do it without danger, as I think they may: but, in no wise, let them not danger themselves for that matter; sure I am, we shall all have a most joyful meeting shortly. God strengthen you all in his truth, and make you instruments of his glory, to defend the gospel of his grace against all sorts of enemies thereof. Amongst whom, methinks I do foresee, dear sister, the great plague that these free-will men shall pour upon the poor afflicted church of God: for without all doubt the dragon will make the river of reproach, which you now sustain for the verity's sake, a great flood or ever it be long; but in the end they shall drink it up all themselves, as they now do that which they spewed forth against our blessed brethren, Bradford and Philpot. And yet the verity doth flourish and shall, spite of the pie;<sup>1</sup> which grieveth Satan at the heart, and therefore he bestirreth him like a wood lion, knowing that his time is short. The Lord deliver us from these poisoned tongues. Verily I cannot tell whether I may more lament my long tarrying amongst these Ishmaelites, so given to malice, or the leaving of you and other my dear lovers in the Lord amongst them. The Lord be merciful unto his elect, and shorten these sorrowful days for their sakes, as he hath said he will. Farewell, mine own dear heart, farewell in the Lord Jesus Christ; who pour his Holy Spirit plentifully upon you, that, by the mighty operation of the same, you may daily more and more effectuously feel the sure certainty of your eternal salvation in Jesus Christ; that you may ever be able to comfort other with the same comforts, wherewith you are comforted in him. To whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you, now and evermore. Amen. The blessing of God be with you all, now and ever. Amen.

Your own poor brother John Careless, prisoner of the Lord, abiding his good pleasure.

### To my good Sister, M. C.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comforts of his sweet Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful sister, to the full accomplishment of that good work which he hath most graciously begun in you; that the same may be effectual to the setting forth of his glory, and to your everlasting consolation in him. Amen.

My loving and faithful sister in the Lord, I thank you for all your loving-kindness shewed unto me; but specially for your godly remembrance of me in your fervent and faithful prayers, and for your most godly and comfortable letter, whereby you do not only much increase my joy and comfort, but also put me in remembrance of my duty towards you. Blessed be the Lord our God, which of his great mercy hath so beautified his church in these our days, that

Apoc. 12.

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black)  
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even unto many godly women he hath given most excellent gifts of knowledge and understanding of his truth; so that they are not only well able to inform their own consciences in all things necessary to salvation, but also most sweetly to comfort their sorrowful brethren and sisters, that sustain any trouble for the testimony of God's truth, yea and that which is more, even in the midst of their great conflicts of conscience. Of which most happy number of godly and virtuous women, my dear heart, you are one, and that of the chiefest; being plentifully endued with the gifts of God's most gracious Spirit, as it doth full well appear in your daily doings—God only have the praise therefore. Forasmuch then as God hath given you the gift to write, I shall most heartily desire you to let me hear from you sometimes, be it never so little; for truly I take great comfort and courage thereby, specially in my poor conscience, which is sore assaulted of subtle Satan, and in a manner oppressed of my sins. Pray, dear sister, that God may give me true, hearty, and earnest repentance, and increase my faith; for they are both the good gifts of God only, and far pass the reach of my power to take at my pleasure. Therefore, dear sister, if you will help me to beg the same of our dear loving Father, I am sure that he both can and will give them me in his good time. And as for the fear of death or terror of the fire, I most heartily thank my good God, I feel it not: only it is mine own sins and unthankfulness, which holdeth hard battle, and wagem strong war against me; which only goeth about to separate me from my good captain Christ, that I should not enjoy his glorious victory: but, God being on my side (as I am sure he is), that cannot continually prevail against me. Though God for a time permit Satan to take his pleasure on me, as he did upon Job, yet I doubt not but in the end all shall turn to my profit, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whose most merciful defence I commit you, dear sister, with all the rest of the Lord's elect. Farewell in Christ.

Yours unfeignedly,

John Careless.

Pray, pray, pray, pray!

### To my most dear and faithful brother in the Lord, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, with continual joy, comfort, and quietness of conscience, through the mighty operation of the Holy Ghost, be with you, my most dearly beloved brother V., to the increase of your crown and victory, now and ever. Amen.

I have been often-times earnestly minded to write unto you, my dear heart in the Lord, since I received your most godly

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and loving letter: but the likelihood and hope which I have often since conceived to see you, and talk with you mouth to mouth, hath caused me to forbear that love hath<sup>1</sup> so often provoked me unto. But since mine expectation is not yet certified, nor (as far as I can perceive) is like to be in this life, I can no longer forbear the scribbling of these few lines unto you. The which I desire you to take in good worth: for, as I have done the same altogether in haste, so is it the contents of an heart something troubled, and not altogether in so sweet a security as it hath been in times past, and I doubt not but it shall be so full well again.

2 suffer-  
ings

2 Cor. 4.

Ah, my dear brother, if I should not now and then drink with Christ of the bitter cup of inward afflictions, I should too much neglect my duty towards you, and other my dear hearts in the Lord, whom the mighty God hath made worthy to feel, with Christ, the fellowship of his passions.<sup>2</sup> But blessed be my God, and most dear loving Father, which, of his great mercy and infinite goodness in Christ, will vouch me worthy, with you and other of his dear darlings, to carry as well the inward cross, which is most grievous and heavy, as the outward cross, which is so light and easy. I know there is an exceeding weight of glory prepared for me, although Satan now, by God's permission, seeketh all means possible to persuade me to the contrary, by casting of his clouds and mists over me, that he might darken the love of my dear Lord and Christ, which died for me, yea, and that when I was his utter enemy, and by nature the very child of wrath and perdition: but I know that the love of my Christ, being so great, will burst out again most gloriously. O God, methinks even now I feel it begin to kindle in my breast marvellously. Pray for me, dear heart, pray for me, that my soul may sweetly turn to her old rest again: for verily Satan hath made a sore ruffling with her of late, that he might have bereft her of her virginity, with the fornication of mistrust and infidelity. But I see well, my God is faithful (as St. Paul saith), and will not suffer her to be tempted above the strength he will give her. Pray for me, dear heart, I say again; and praise GOD most heartily for his great mercy extended towards me, as by your letter I understand you do: I thank you most heartily therefore, and I promise you (by God's grace) I will never forget you, so long as the breath is in my body; neither can I though I would.

Cant. 2.

And now, mine own bowels in the Lord, I long much to hear of your state, which I trust be most happy and blessed. Gladly would I hear that the celestial bridegroom were at home with you; and that, in respect of his most blessed and cheerful presence, you had cast away all your mourning garments. Oh that I might once hear you heartily sing with the spouse this sweet verse: My delight is to sit under the shadow of my love, for his fruit is full sweet unto my throat: he bringeth me into his wine-cellar: his

banner spreadeth over me is love; his left hand lieth under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me, &c. Oh, my dear heart, I am now constrained to end for this time; but God will send me another, I doubt not, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you.

Yours unfeignedly,

John Careless.

### To my dear brother, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of his most pure and Holy Spirit, be with you, my most dear friend and faithful brother V., to the increase of your faith, and comfort of your sorrowful spirit, which is to the Father a sweet sacrifice through Christ; for whose sake he will never despise your humble and contrite heart, but doth favourably accept the same, and will in most ample wise perform the desire thereof, to his glory, and your eternal comfort in him.

In the midst of my manifold crosses and troubles, wherein I am constrained to flee unto God for refuge and succour by earnest and faithful prayer, I cannot forget you, my dear heart in the Lord; but, esteeming your state for mine own, I do pour forth my complaint for you, as I do for myself, and rather more, as I think present need doth require, desiring most heartily to hear of the good success of the same in you. The Lord God for his great mercy's sake accomplish my desire; as I doubt not but he will, when he seeth it good and most to his glory, and to your comfort and commodity.<sup>1</sup> Oh that I might once see you so merry in Christ as you have just cause to be, that you might say with David, Awake, my glory, awake, lute and harp, bring forth the psalter with the merry song, that I might sing a new song of praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord, for the light of his favourable countenance, his help and deliverance. Oh, that would refresh me as a most precious oil, and gladden my poor heart, which is assaulted with sorrow more ways than one. I doubt not but the same shall by your means receive much comfort, though for a time it doth mourn with you; that we may be made both glad together, yea and that with such gladness as shall continue for ever. But in the mean space, I say, most happy are you, that so heartily mourn the absence of the bridegroom. If you were not a wedding child, you could never do it. Only Christ's true disciples do mourn for his absence: therefore shall they doubtless rejoice at his presence, which will be so much more joyful, by how much the absence is more sorrowful. Therefore, my good brother, take a good heart unto you, and be of good cheer. Say, with the prophet David O, my soul, why art thou

<sup>1</sup> benefit

Psa. 57.

Psa. 45.

Matt. 9.

Psa. 42.

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so heavy, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Oh, put thy trust in God; for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his loving countenance, and because he is my God. Read Psalm the 42nd and 43rd for your comfort, and consider that the holy king and prophet, at the making and first saying of them, was even in the same case that you are now in: but he still comforted himself with the sweet promises of God. And so do you, my dear heart, for to you they do as well pertain as they did to him, and as surely shall they be performed upon you, as they were upon him; for he is one God and dear Father unto you both, and for his mercy, truth, and promise sake, he must needs make good unto you all that he hath said. If his love towards you stood in the respect of your own merit or worthiness, you might well mourn, lament, and complain; yea, you had good cause to doubt, fear, and mistrust. But seeing he loveth you only for and in Jesus Christ, who is your whole holiness, righteousness, and redemption, lay away all mourning, lamenting, and complaining: banish from you all fear, mistrust, and infidelity: and know that as long as Christ doth continue God's Son, so long must the love of the Father continue towards you immutable, and his good will unchangeable, and cannot be altered through any of your infirmities. For this is most true, that as long as the cause of any thing doth last, so long must the effect remain: but Christ is the whole cause why the Father loveth you, and he also continueth for ever: then must I needs conclude, that the love of the Father continueth towards you for ever, and (as the Psalmist most joyfully so often singeth,) his mercy endureth for ever and ever. This is most true, mine own dear heart; although the Lord for a time hide it from your senses, that you might be the more earnest in prayer to him for the feeling of it, and also the more thankful for it when he doth give the lively taste of it, as doubtless he will do or ever it be long: and then shall you be well able to comfort other in the same state that you are now in, with the same comfort wherewith you are, and further shall be, comforted of God.

Heb. 12.

Therefore lift up your hands that are now a little fallen down; and stretch forth the weak knees of your troubled mind, which now mourneth with a godly mourning, and therefore shall it be full well comforted with that sweet peace of GOD which passeth all understanding: and you are sure already to enjoy the blessing that Christ gave unto the godly mourners of Sion, upon the mount, at the first sermon that he made. Oh happy V., in whose mourning company I had rather be, than in the house of mirth and banquetting of such as see not what cause they have to mourn and be sorry. But yet, my good brother, use a measure in this your godly mourning, and make not your faithful friends too much sorry for you. Let the persuasions of such godly

Eccle. 7.

lovers as you do daily company withal, or rather the persuasions of the Holy Ghost by them, move you to some godly mirth and rejoicing. Consider that you are commanded of God by the mouth of St. Paul thereto: Rejoice in the Lord (saith he), and I say again, Rejoice. Mark how he doubleth the sentence, that we may perceive it is a most earnest and necessary thing he requireth. Obey the commandment of God in this behalf: wherein as you cannot but highly please him, so, I assure you, you shall very much rejoice my poor heart, and the hearts of other which pray for you with mourning tears; and make that cruel enemy Satan and all your adversaries sorry, which will rejoice and laugh to see you mourn. Oh, my good brother, let it manifestly appear that the Lord of his great mercy hath heard our faithful and hearty requests for you. Oh how would that rejoice me, in the midst of my troubles.

Therefore now to conclude, (because the darkness constraineth me to make an end for this time,) I say, my dear and faithful brother, V., in respect of the great cause you have of your own part through Christ, and for the glory and honour of Almighty GOD—the comfort, joy, and rejoicing of your dear brethren and sisters in Christ—also your own duty by the commandment of GOD—and, last of all, to vex, molest, and grieve Satan withal, rejoice in the Lord, and be most heartily glad in him, who is wholly yours, and you are his, and shall be evermore. Selah.

Farewell, mine own bowels in the Lord, and praise GOD with joyful lips and a merry heart, and pray for me his most unprofitable servant, which have more cause, concerning myself, to lament than any one man living: but my good bridegroom is present, and biddeth me cast away my mourning garments, and therefore I must needs be merry with him. Even so he biddeth you to be, by my mouth; for he is present with you, although for sorrow you cannot know him, as Magdalene could not in the garden, until he spake unto her. The Lord God speak the words of comfort in your heart; and open the eyes of your mind, that you may perfectly perceive and feel his blessed presence, and so rejoice in the same for evermore, Amen. Comfort your heart in Christ, and cast your care upon him, for he careth for you.

Your brother in the Lord, abiding his good pleasure,

John Careless.

Unto all the faithful flock of Jesus Christ,

Within the city of London, which fear God unfeignedly, and seek to serve him in such holiness and righteousness as is acceptable in his sight, John Careless wisheth the eternal peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comfort of his most holy Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his mercy, now and evermore. Amen.

When I had with myself well weighed and considered, right worshipful citizens, the great charge and burden that you have borne and been at, not only with me, which am most unworthy of your liberal benefits, but also with many other the poor afflicted people of God, ever since the time that tyranny last broke loose into this miserable land, &c. I was even ashamed, and in conscience confounded, to think of my great sloth and negligence, yea, ingratitude and unthankfulness towards you, in not sowing some of these spiritual gifts, which God hath given me, amongst you, of whom I have reaped so manifoldly your temporal benefits.

God, for his dear Son's sake, forgive me my great sin that in this point I have committed against both him and you, desiring you also to do the same; and I will promise you, by God's grace, if he spare my life, I will henceforth better perform my duty towards you; my poor prayer always supplying that, which otherwise I am not able to perform. And in testimony thereof, I have written unto you this simple admonition, the which I ween<sup>1</sup> will be my leave-taking of you and last farewell in this corruptible life, as by many likelihoods it doth appear: wherefore I beseech you all to accept it in good part, as a sign and token of some parcel of my good will towards you. But what shall I write unto you, or whereof shall I entreat,<sup>2</sup> that you already do not perfectly know? You have had the pure word of God plentifully preached amongst you; yea, and the same sealed (praised be God therefore) with good store of blood. You have also the blessed Bible, and all other good books of godly men's doings among you; so that I think you are ignorant of nothing that pertaineth to the life of a perfect Christian. Therefore I will not here take upon me to teach you any thing; since I know that the most part of you perceiveth of the mind of God, as much or more than I do. But I will now most humbly pray you, and heartily beseech you, and that by the mercifulness of God in Jesus Christ, and as we shall all assemble shortly before him, that you will in no wise do contrary to your knowledge; lest your own conscience become also a swift witness at the great day against you. I will not meddle with secret matters, but speak

<sup>1</sup> suppose

<sup>2</sup> dis-  
course

of those things which be too much apparent : and yet not of all, but namely of one ; the which, as it seemeth to be least regarded amongst you, so am I sure the same is yet most horrible and odious in the sight of God—that is to say, the being present with the Papists at any of their antichristian and idolatrous service; which is not only a wicked dissembling of your faith, and a very<sup>1</sup> outward denial of the gospel of God, but also a <sup>1 real</sup> manifest committing of idolatry with the wicked, and doth deeply deserve God's heavy wrath and displeasure—which is not far off, unless you heartily repent in time and turn to the Lord, coming clean away from the filthiness aforesaid, as he doth lovingly call you.

Ah, my dear hearts, what shall I say to you, or how shall I temper my pen to persuade you? All the godly preachers, that in times past have taken pains amongst you, have fully agreed and wholly concluded, yea, and by the holy Scriptures plainly proved, that it is not lawful for any of you to be personally present with the Papists, at any part of their antichristian service. This have they truly taught you; this have they largely and learnedly written unto you; and this have they most godly confirmed with their blood before you. What would you have more? Yea, many a faithful heart hath followed them, and to their power done the like, and yet (alas) all will not now serve. How happeneth this, my dear friends of London, that neither the loving admonitions of all God's good prophets, nor the earnest warnings of his dear witnesses and worthy Martyrs, will take no place amongst you? Do you think that they have not told you the truth, but some dream or vain tale that shall not so come to pass? Do you think that they did but dally with you to delude you, and to make you afraid of a flea-biting or vain shadow, where no need of fear is? Certainly you shall find it otherwise shortly, if you so think; as you may see, if you will, by experience of that which is already come to pass, even as they did truly tell you in their preaching, or rather prophesy, for your forewarning. Be you sure the Lord is no less mighty to perform his word pronounced by these his forerunners before his latter coming, than he was true to pour forth his plagues upon the Jews, prophesied both by John Baptist and other his forerunners before his first coming. Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Rogers, Bradford, Saunders, with the rest of their blessed brethren that are fled or burned, are as well to be believed in this point, as Elias, Esay, Jeremy, or John Baptist, in those things that they warned the world of. It is all one word, which they all have preached; and in the power of one Spirit, that they have ministered. And as verily as they were the Lord's messengers to Israel for that age, so surely were these latter sort the Lord's ministers to warn England for this age, and, I fear, the last that shall ever be sent unto it. But I ask

again, how happeneth it, that you, pretending to be the flock of Christ, do not now hearken to the voice of your head Pastor Christ, pronounced by his servants, to obey and follow it? Verily I fear me, because you be but wild goats, and none of Christ's true elect sheep. For if you were Christ's sheep indeed, you would surely give more regard to the voice of your Shepherd, speaking in his godly preachers, and not presume to follow strangers (as I hear say you do), which entice you to lewdness and back-looking from the plough, on which you had once laid hand: but Christ biddeth you remember Lot's wife.

Luke. 17.

1 set I hear say that there is amongst you, now-a-days, a sort<sup>1</sup> of worldly-wise men (whose doings will prove foolishness before God one day without doubt,) which have so diligently sought the Scripture, that they have found out that which none of our good preachers ever could do, though their whole study was only therein day and night. And what is that? Forsooth, as some say, they have found there, that it is permitted lawful for Christian men that know the truth, to be present with the Papists at their antichristian and idolatrous service; and that they may cloke their knowledge and dissemble their faith, and seek what shifts they can, to save their life, lands, and goods, so that they do not utterly deny the truth in their hearts, or by express words, in the way of recanting. Ah, sirrah, have they so? Yea, sir, I warrant you they have not had the Bible in their houses all this while for nought. They have found one trick to serve their turn when the time of trial cometh, which all our foolish preachers could not perceive; for had they known that knack, they would not so headlong have run into the fire as they have done. But with your leave, I will awhile talk with these worldly-wise divines, which have found out this hid mystery, I might say, *of iniquity*, well enough. I pray you, my masters, Mass-mongrel gospellers, where do you find that any faithful Christian may dissemble the profession of his Master's religion, to frame and fashion himself like unto the wicked world, whereout the Lord hath chosen him to serve him in spirit and truth? You find it, be-like, in the bottom of your bags of gold and silver; for in God's bible book, I am sure, you find it not, but altogether the contrary. You hear there, how God doth bid you not to bear a strange yoke with the unbelievers, but to come out from amongst them and to separate yourselves from them: but many men's hearing will not serve them on that side. You hear there also, that God will spue out such lukewarm gentlemen, as be neither hot nor cold, forth of his mouth: but I ween<sup>2</sup> you do not believe it; well, I say no more, but mark the end of this gear.<sup>3</sup> I will not deny but that you may wring and wrest some places of the holy Scripture contrary to all the rest, to make them seem, among the simple or carnal, as though they served for your purpose: and even so

Apoc. 3  
2 suppose

3 thing



may the rankest heretic in the world do, to stablish his heresy withal. But surely in the end such rakers shall receive a heavy reward; which will be a great deal sooner than they ween,<sup>1</sup> *suppose* let them make as light of the matter in the mean space as they list.

Ah what a great grief is this, and how greatly to be lamented in these our woeful days, that so many (which bear the name of Christians, unto whom it hath pleased the Lord of his great goodness and infinite mercy to reveal the blessed knowledge of his holy and sincere word, and thereto hath opened the eyes of their minds, and illuminate their understanding, whereby they do perceive, as well what is pleasant and acceptable in his sight, as also what is abominable and detestable in the same,) do yet, that notwithstanding, not only leave the good which they ought with all their endeavour to have done, but also with a wicked boldness do commit that evil, which they ought in no wise to have done: that is, whereas they ought by all godly means to have encouraged their christian brethren and sisters to be strong in the Lord, and boldly to confess Christ, bearing his cross also with joy and patience, and to avoid all detestable idolatry, superstition, and wickedness, which is the right occupying of their talent, and the very end whereto God hath given them the same; do, contrariwise, as much as in them lieth, both by word and wicked example discourage their weak brethren and sisters from the bold confession of Christ's verity, that they should not with joy and patience bear Christ's sweet cross; and also do provoke, yea allure and draw them to all kind of idolatry, superstition, and wickedness, in being present with the Papists at their most horrible and blasphemous mass, and other antichristian service. Whereby it is now come to pass (alas therefore), that the old proverb that St. Peter speaketh of, is found too true; the dog is turned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; to the utter destruction of many a one, unless the Lord of his great mercy give them grace to repent and turn in time. <sup>2</sup> *Pet. 2.*

Oh world of wickedness, and case most lamentable, that ever any man, to whom the Lord hath given any of his good gifts, should now apply the same to the destruction of his christian brethren and sisters, for whom Christ shed his most precious blood! Alas, that ever there should be any such unthankfulness found amongst those that bear the name of gospellers! It had been much better for such, unless they in time repent, that they had never known the Gospel, than thus beastly to abuse their knowledge, not only to the terrible destruction of themselves, but also of many other simple souls, which would never have been present or partakers with the antichrists at their Babylonical superstition, had it not been for such tempting serpents, which

have subtilly deceived them under a pretence of knowledge. Oh miserable blind guides, and blind leaders of the blind; who can sufficiently lament your woeful state, into the which your worldly wisdom hath brought you? Hath God for your ingratitude so given you up to yourselves, that you can now find in your heart with your knowledge to go about to destroy that thing, which you ought chiefly to edify, I mean the church of Christ whereof you pretend to be members? and also to erect and edify the thing which (God he knoweth) you ought by all lawful means to pull down and destroy, I mean the synagogue of Satan or malignant church of antichrist? Full well am I assured (O you hollow hearted hypocrites), that the pestilent papists themselves, neither by fear nor flattery, could ever have been able to have brought so many simple souls, that had some zeal to God's word, to the presence of their devilish idolatry, if you and such like carnal gospellers had not holpen them; as well with your lying persuasions, as also with your devilish doings and most wicked examples. Therefore I must needs say, that you have shewed yourselves to be greater enemies to the church of Christ, and dearer friends to the church of antichrist, than the very papists themselves be. Verily you are far fitter instruments for the devil to use his deceit by, than the papists, be they never so rank: yea, to say the truth, you are a far sweeter bait to catch the simple souls that do not suspect you, than the finest papists upon the earth. For is not this a sweet kind of gospelling (trow you?) to the senses of the carnal man, to come and tell him that is something fearful and worldly-minded withal, that he may by the word of God lawfully go to church, and do all things outwardly as the papists do, only let his heart be towards God, and all shall be well enough; yea, and so he may live and be quiet, and save his lands and goods, and do much good another way many a day to come, when the Gospel shall come again, &c.; and (to make this bait yet something more sweeter and more subtiller to deceive) to garnish the same with divers sayings and examples of the Holy Scriptures, which at the first blush, before they be well weighed, seem to make something for your purpose: think you (I say) that is not a sweet sleight of the subtle Serpent, to deceive the simple souls of carnal and wavering-minded men withal? Yes, verily: for this is (as the prophet Ezekiel saith) a sewing of pillows under all arm-holes, and bolsters under the heads of young and old, to catch souls, and to lay the conscience asleep upon. But when the time shall come that God doth waken them, then will such sleepers say with the prophet, Woe be to them that so have done: woe be unto such ungodly gospellers, that give such counsel unto carnal men, making them by evil means to seek to save their lives, whereby they are like utterly to lose the same, both in body and soul, for ever. These be the enemies of the Cross, that St. Pau

Ezek. 13.

Phil. 3.

speaketh of, which with sweet preaching and flattering words deceive unstable souls. These do not choose rather to suffer Heb. 11. adversity with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a little season; esteeming the rebukes of Christ to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt—as good Moses did. But these godless hypocrites, with the Gergesites, set more by Matt. 8. their porkers than by the company of Christ; and therefore have they not only desired him, but also compelled him, to depart out of their coasts; and in his stead they have gently<sup>1</sup> received the 1 civilly devil, and antichrist his eldest son; yea, with all their force and might they have brought him in again, as a good swineherd, to keep their pigs of worldly pelf, &c. Could the wicked papists ever have wrought their cursed feats as they have now done for the advancing of their poultry,<sup>2</sup> and bringing the rest of their 2 trickery tyranny and cruel purpose to pass, had not these dissembling gossellers been so applicable to their minds at the first dash, and with their subtle persuasions bewitched the hearts of others to come to their wickedness? No, surely; they should sooner, for shame, despair, and distress of mind, have hanged themselves, as their predecessor Judas did: and therefore I dare accuse them all before God (except they repent), as accessories to the wilful murder of all the godly christian preachers that have of late been put to death within this realm, and also of the souls of such as perish for lack of true preaching.

Ah, now do I perceive that it was not for nought that the prophet so sore threateneth them with eternal damnation, when Essay 30. he crieth, Woe be unto those shrinking children, that seek succour under the shadow of wicked Pharaoh. Oh, woe is my heart for them, that ever they should so slide from the Lord their instructor, and cause other to do the same. Yea, the most merciful Lord himself doth in his word bewail them, and as it were mourn for them, saying, Alas for these disobedient shrinking children, that they will take counsel without me: alas, that they will take Essay 30. a secret advice, and not out of my Spirit, and therefore heap they sin upon sin, &c. Now tell me, O you vain and carnal gossellers, that be not only content to play the disobedient shrinking children yourselves, but also, as much as in you lieth, do allure all other to do the like, to the great dishonour of GOD and destruction of your brethren's souls: tell me, I say, where you have that counsel and wicked advice? Verily out of the spirit of error and lies: for out of the Lord's Spirit of truth you have it not, for the Spirit of God is always consonant and agreeable to his word. Yea, in his word he commandeth the true servants of God to set themselves at liberty, and not any longer to bear the strange yoke 2 Cor. 6. with the unbelievers. But you, contrariwise, counsel them to become again the bond-slaves of Satan and his son antichrist, serving their idolatry and superstition with their bodily presence.

You bid them bear still the strange yoke of men's traditions and devilish inventions; with the unbelievers; telling them, that there is honest fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, and good company between light and darkness, and friendly concord between Christ and Belial, and that the believer and the infidel may part stakes<sup>1</sup> well enough; that their body which is, or ought to be, the temple of the Holy Ghost, may agree with images well enough, which be forbidden by the word of God; yea, and teaching them to worship the greatest idol that ever was under heaven. And therefore, whereas the Lord by his holy prophet doth command his people to come out from amongst them, and to separate themselves from them, and to touch no unclean thing; you, like tempting serpents, do will them to thrust in themselves among the thickest of them, and to join themselves, (which ought to be the members of Christ's mystical body,) to the wicked members of Satan; and not only to touch unclean things, but also to behold, and outwardly worship them; yea, to receive into their bodies (which ought to be the temple of the living God,) that most filthy idol, the strange god Mauzim, the papists' god of defence; yea, and there to retain him, until the Jakes<sup>2</sup> receive him, which is a more meeter place for him than the sanctified body of a Christian. Alas, and weal away,<sup>3</sup> that ever any man that beareth the name of a Christian, yea of a gospeller and favourer of God's word, should become such a vile slave to Satan, and to do him such notable service in these perilous days; by the means whereof he hath prevailed more than he ever did in so short time, since the beginning of the world.

Oh, what devil hath bewitched you, you runagates from God, that you should now do him such diligent service, whom you have not only pretended to hate, but also promised at your baptism utterly to forsake? Yea, and that you should now become such pernicious enemies to Christ, whose word you have so long pretended to love, some of you nigh these 20 years? Have you clean forgotten what you professed and promised unto him at your baptism? Hath not the devil servants enough of the papists and infidels, to set a-work to suppress Christ's sincere religion, but he must send forth you to help him, which of all other ought to hinder his cruel enterprise? Where be your wits become (O you madmen), the which for a little muck of this mould, will lose the precious part of everlasting life? Well, if you will needs play the traitors against God, and dissembling devils, and run headlong into hell yourselves, yet I pray you take not such pains to draw others with you, which by their will would not come there. Go not about to persuade them, that evil is good, that darkness is light, and that sour is sweet, lest your woe and damnation be the greater. If he shall be sore punished that hideth his talent in the ground, and doth none other man

<sup>1</sup> *compounded with one another*

<sup>2</sup> *privy*

<sup>3</sup> *well-a-day*

good therewith, how much more shall he be punished that occupieth his talents to evil uses, and employeth the same to the destruction of his weak brethren, for whom Christ died? If it were better for one to have a mill-stone hanged about his neck, and to be cast into the midst of the sea, than to offend one of Christ's little ones, yea, though it were but by example; what then shall become of them that lead them forth of the way, to commit most strong and detestable idolatry? If evil may not be done although good should come thereof, then that evil may not be done whereof cometh nothing but innumerable evils both to body and soul; yea, so many as a great volume were not able to contain them, if they should be rightly described. I could make a great many of strong arguments forth of the Scriptures, to prove the doings of these dissemblers both with God and man to be devilish and detestable. But these be sufficient to warn such as have not their hearts hardened: but as for the rest, I will say with St. John, He that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and upon their own heads be the peril of their perishing.

And now again to you, my dear hearts, which by such have been deceived, or are by fear or fragility fallen: to you I speak, and of love I warn you, my dear and faithful friends of London, whom I love in the Lord, as I am no less bound; I would be full loth to be a witness against any of you all at the great day. I have found great kindness of you, (God recompence you,) and therefore duty doth bind me, and love doth compel me, to call and cry unto you to come away from that filthy whore of Babylon, and buy no more of her wicked wares. Meddle not with her merchandize at this market time of Easter: for verily her sin is already ascended up into heaven, and hath also procured God's plagues and vengeance shortly to be poured upon her; whereof you shall surely be partakers, if you do not in time repent your backsliding and shrinking from the Lord. Repent, I say, repent, for the tender mercy of God, and have compassion upon your own souls before it be too late. Truly, dear friends, it is now no time to flatter with you, neither can I laugh at your harm; which I see to be at hand, though it be hid from your eyes, as it was from the Hierosolymitans, when Christ wept full bitterly at their merry singing, &c. It is not the part of a true heart to laugh with his friend, when present peril is at hand; but rather to lament to see him so merry, when he hath more cause to mourn. In which respect, I am even constrained with weeping tears to call unto you, my dear friends of London in general, because I will name no person, that you may yet take heed, and know the time also of God's first visitation: for sure I am that his second is hard at hand. Do not you think to flee from his presence; for his heavy hand will find you out, though you should hide yourselves in the very bottom of hell, as the prophet David saith.

Psa. 139 2.

Think not then that these Romish rocks, wherein you daily creep, can cover you from his fearful face, when he shall begin to call you to account for the talent that he hath lent you. It is not that your feigned excuse of fear and fragility of the flesh, that shall excuse your folly and flying back from him. No, no; you will be even speechless at that day, when every body shall spy how you have defiled your marriage-garment with the superstitions of the whore of Babylon, and how you have with that great harlot committed fornication; in the body and spirit, against your dear husband Christ, which redeemed you neither with corruptible gold nor silver, but with his own most precious heart-blood, and cleansed you in the fountain of water through his word, that you might be unto himself a glorious spouse and congregation, without spot or wrinkle in his sight. Then will it appear, in the presence of angel, man, and devil, how like dogs you have turned to your vomit again, and as filthy swine soiled yourselves in the popish mire, pits, and dirt of the Romish dregs. Repent, therefore; I say again, repent in time, and take the earnest warning that GOD doth send you by me his poor messenger, willing you to turn unto him before it be too late.

But peradventure you will say, as the guests did that were first bidden to the feast, you cannot so easily forego your farms, your cattle, goods and lands, your wives and children, &c. Oh, my dear friends, for the Lord's sake, lay away these vain, yea, wicked excuses; for verily God will in no wise accept them. Consider, for Christ's sake, your duty towards God in these dangerous days, wherein the Lord is willing<sup>1</sup> to try the chaff from the good corn, and to purge his floor with his fan, that is, his cross; that he may bring the wheat into his barn, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. You are called unto a kingdom that must be won with suffering on every side; into the which you must also enter (as St. Paul saith,) through many tribulations, temptations, and afflictions, in the which you must travel as strangers and pilgrims in this wretched world, which is not our native country, nor the place where we must rest for ever. Oh then learn to leave all things willingly, that you do here possess; and lift up your minds always to the heavenly habitation, where you shall continually remain in joys unspeakable. Repose not your felicity in the pelf of this world, which shortly shall perish and come to nought: but set your hearts' joy upon the living God; who, in Christ and for his sake, hath given himself wholly to be your portion and inheritance for ever, and therefore of right ought you with gladness to give yourselves wholly unto him, both in body and soul. But that do you not, so long as you seek to serve two Masters; which yet you cannot do, as Christ affirmeth, though you cloke, colour, and counterfeit never so much. Do you think it but a small thing for the Lord God himself, even the mighty

Apoc. 17.

1 Peter 1.

Eph. 5.

1 intend-  
ing  
Matt. 3.

Aets 14.

Jehovah, to give himself wholly to be your own good God, and most dear loving father? Do you think it but a light matter, that he hath given for you, even to the death of the cross, his own only dear Son Jesus Christ, in whom was and is all his whole pleasure and delight, yea, and that when you were his very enemies—by the which gift he hath given you all things both in heaven and in earth? Do you esteem it but a trifle, that he hath given you the Holy Ghost, by whose power and mighty operation you are made the very sons of God, and co-heirs annexed with Christ of all your father's goods and possessions? But peradventure you will ask me, Who doth not seriously regard all these aforesaid most precious gifts? Verily I say that none of you all doth regard them, that do not wholly give over yourselves again to serve him; yea, and that in such holiness and righteousness, as is accepted before him. For if you did duly consider the depth of his abundant bottomless love and mercy in Jesus Christ, you would so love him again, that you would boldly burst out and say with St. Paul, Who is he, or what is it, that shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord? Rom. 8. Read the whole chapter, and the 11th and 12th to the Hebrews, for your comfort.

But I know that some of you will say, Doth none love God and serve him truly, but such as lie in prison or give their lives for his sake? then God help us, for very few shall be saved. Indeed, dear friends, even so our Saviour Christ doth say; Many are called but few are chosen: and strait is the gate that leadeth to life, and few find it. And in another place Christ calleth his true church a little flock. And as concerning the first part of your question, Christ doth also make you a plain and direct answer, saying, that whosoever will be his disciple, must needs take up his cross and follow him. And again, He that loveth father, mother, wife, or children, goods or lands, or yet his own life, more than me (saith he), is not worthy of me. And St. Paul affirmeth to you plainly, that all, without exception, that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. And in another place he saith, To you it is given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. Now tell me, I pray you, whether these texts of Scripture do not prove, that all such as will not gladly suffer with Christ, do neither love him, nor serve him, nor yet be any of his disciples? Say what you will, and think what you list, yet shall you find this full true; that all such as will not suffer with Christ here, shall not reign with him elsewhere, neither is it meet that they should.

But now methinketh I hear some of you say to me, Why, Sir, we do suffer with Christ as it becometh Christians, in helping you to bear the cross with our liberal relief. If we had loved our goods more than we do Christ, as you seem to lay to our charge,

then would we not have bestowed so much of them upon you and other, as we have done, yea, and endangered ourselves to bring it to you, &c. Indeed, dear friends, in this point I must needs confess that you have done your duty towards us: the Lord GOD grant you to do the rest belonging to him as well; for verily this is not all that GOD doth at this time require of you; as all those good men and women can tell, that have as largely sowed the fruits of faith amongst us, as any of you have done, and yet never came at any of antichrist's service. God will not be answered with a piece of your goods, since you have promised to forsake all for his love. You must not play the part that Ananias and Sapphira his wife did, for the Holy Ghost will not suffer himself to be dissembled withal: therefore be warned by that example. Also, God doth not think it sufficient that you do forsake all your goods and lands, but doth look that you should suffer in your own persons also for his sake, yea, the very loss of your lives if he so permit. And but reason; since Christ did not only give us the gifts of his grace, and all other good things that we do here possess, but also his very life, yea and that when we were his very enemies. He gave us that freely which was his own; and shall we think scorn to render unto him again that which is his, and but for a time lent us, especially seeing that we shall receive the same in a far more glorious wise? Leave it we shall shortly, will we, nill we, and God he knoweth in what horror, fear, or trembling. And were we not better then to wish the same taken from us by such means, as might not only make most to the setting forth of God's glory, and the commodity<sup>1</sup> of his church; but also to our own everlasting joy and comfort, being certified by the same, that we be the true servants or rather the chosen children of God, whose death is right dear and precious in his sight? Ah, why do we not, with the apostles, desire to be reputed worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, seeing the same is the greatest dignity and highest promotion that God can bring us unto in this life, yea, and an honour that the highest angel in heaven is not permitted to have? Oh, Lord, that the cross, which is now come amongst us for the trial of our faith, should seem a strange thing unto us that profess the name and Gospel of Christ! whereas in very deed we should be most familiarly acquainted therewith, as with our inseparable companion in this life. Look upon all the holy patriarchs and prophets before the coming of Christ: look upon all the apostles, Martyrs, virgins, and confessors since the coming of Christ, and tell me if any one of them all: did not continually carry the cross as long as they lived, and all (in a manner) in the end died for God's sake. Yea, most chiefly of all, look upon Jesus Christ himself, the very dear and only Son of God, and tell me if all his life and death was not full of most painful bitter crosses; and will you look to be his disciples, and yet think

Acts 5.

<sup>1</sup> benefit



scorn to bear your cross with him? Disdain you to drink of that same cup, that your Lord and Master hath done before you? Will you look to enter into the kingdom of God, otherwise than all other have done that are gone before you? I pray you shew me your privilege, and tell me where you have this prerogative above the rest of your brethren, yea, above the Son of God himself, concerning his humanity.

My dear friends and faithful lovers of London, be not deceived with self-love and your own fleshly imagination: for at one word this is true, even as God in heaven is most true; that if you do not forthwith, and even out of hand, fly from that filthy whore of Babylon, and all her abominable idolatry and superstition, you shall surely perish with her, in the plagues that God shall shortly pour upon her. And furthermore I say, that if you will not here willingly suffer with Christ for the testimony of his everlasting truth, you shall suffer with the world here for your own wickedness, and then shall you not reign with Christ in glory at his gracious coming: unto the which I hope now it be not very long. For this is the firm decree and purpose of the immutable God, revealed in his everlasting word; that all they which will live 2 Tim. 3. godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution, and that every one of his elected sons shall be scourged, proved, and tried, as gold in the furnace or fire. And these words of Christ shall continue Mark 8. for ever, and be most effectuously fulfilled, that whosoever shall be ashamed of him or of his word, amongst this sinful and adulterous generation, of him will the Son of man be ashamed, before his Father and his angels; and he that goeth about by such wicked means to save his life, shall surely lose it for evermore.

Therefore, dear hearts, look to yourselves in time, and consider your calling. Lay away all vain excuses: for verily they will not serve for your discharge, when he shall come, that will reward every man after the works of their bodies; but he will require of you, in this point, all that he hath commanded you, as he aforehand hath told you both plainly and often enough—God give you grace to take it as a warning. And if you feel yourselves too weak to confess God's truth before the tyrants, then, for your refuge, the Lord hath given you leave to fly from place to place, and that is the uttermost that he will permit you to do; which doing yet is a good confession of Christ and his verity before the wicked world. Oh that you would follow the good example of a great number of your godly neighbours, which are graciously escaped the snares of Satan, and are now where they serve the Lord with a safe conscience, and enjoy the right and free use of his word and sacraments; follow them, for the Lord's sake, and get you hastily out of Sodom, for surely the Lord is utterly minded to destroy it. Linger not as Lot did, if you love your own lives, lest you find not altogether so much mercy at the

Lord's hands as he did; for verily you have tempted him too far already, and have too much despised his long suffering, lenity, and gentleness, which ought to lead you to earnest and hearty repentance. He hath mercifully forborn you these two years past and more: if he find no fruit in you shortly, make reckoning to be pulled up by the roots, every mother's son of you; for the axe is already laid at the root of England, as it was by the Romans at the root of the Jews, when John Baptist began his preaching. I pray God that we feel not the sharp stroke of it as they did. Pray, pray, pray, and repent in time: convert to the Lord, that he may heal your backslidings before your wounds be incurable.

I could here say much more, but time will not suffer me. I trust this shall be sufficient to all such as have any spark of faith,  
<sup>1 resolved</sup> love, or true fear of God. As for the rest, they are at a point<sup>1</sup> with themselves: whatsoever any man either write or say, they will surely dissemble one way or other to save their pigs, yea though they do but put their names in the pope's books, Well, yet say not another day but that ye were warned; and though it were but by a poor simple man, yet it was by him that wisheth wealth to all your souls, and one that in this point hath told you the truth, and he trusteth shortly you shall see him seal the same with his blood, through the help of the good prayers of all you that truly repent, and mind unfeignedly to turn to the Lord in time. As for the rest, I will pray for them; but let them keep their own prayers to themselves in God's name, for I will be no partaker with them, since I know the same is turned unto sin. Thus, with most hearty thanks for all your benefits and manifold kindness shewed unto me and my poor brethren, beseeching God to recompence the same seven-fold into all your bosoms, as I doubt not but he will, according to his unfallible promises, I do heartily commit you all unto God's most merciful defence, who ever have you all in his blessed keeping. Amen. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

<sup>2 inter-  
eptor</sup> Your poor, daily, and most bounden Orator<sup>2</sup> John Careless, prisoner of the Lord in the King's Bench, at all times abiding God's most merciful will and pleasure. Pray for me, for God's sake; as I will never forget you, by God's grace.

### To his Wife.

As, by the great mercy of God, at the time of his good will and providence appointed, my dearly beloved wife, you and I were joined together in the holy and Christian state of godly matrimony, as well to our great joy and comfort in Christ, as also to the increase of his blessed church and faithful congregation, by

having lawful children by and in the same, with the which God of his mercy hath blessed us—praised be his name therefore; even so now, by his merciful will and divine ordinance, the time is come, (so far as I can perceive,) wherein he will, for his glory and our eternal comfort, dissolve the same, and separate us asunder again for a time. Wherefore I thought it good, yea, and my bounden duty, by this simple letter to provoke, stir, and admonish you, to behave yourself in all your doings, sayings, and thoughts, most thankfully unto our good God for the same. And therefore, my dear wife, as you have heartily rejoiced in the Lord, and oftentimes given God thanks for his goodness in bringing us together in his holy ordinance; even so now I desire you, when this time of our separation shall come, to rejoice with me in the Lord, and to give him most hearty thanks, that he hath (to his glory and our endless commodity,) separated us again for a little time, and hath mercifully taken me unto himself, forth of this miserable world, into his celestial kingdom: believing and hoping also assuredly, that God, of his goodness, for his Son Christ's sake, will shortly bring you and your dear children thither to me, that we may most joyfully together sing praises unto his glorious name for ever. And yet once again I desire you, for the love of God, and as ever you loved me, to rejoice with me, and to give GOD continual thanks for doing his most merciful will upon me.

I hear say that you do oftentimes use to repeat this godly saying, "The Lord's will be fulfilled." Doubtless it rejoiceth my poor heart to hear that report of you: and for the Lord's sake use that godly prayer continually, and teach your children and family to say the same day and night; and not only to say it with your tongues, but also with your heart and mind joyfully to submit your will to God's will in very deed; knowing and believing assuredly, that nothing shall come to you, or any of your's, otherwise than it shall be his almighty and fatherly good will and pleasure, and for your eternal comfort and commodity. Which thing to be most true and certain, Christ testifieth in his holy Gospel, saying, Are not two little sparrows sold for a farthing? Matt. 10. and yet not one of them shall perish without the will of your heavenly Father. And he concludeth, saying, Fear not ye therefore, for ye are better than many sparrows. As though he should have said, If God have such a respect and care for a poor sparrow, which is not worth one farthing, that it shall not be taken in the lime-twig, net, or pitfall, until it be his good will and pleasure; you may be well assured that not one of you (whom he so dearly loveth, that he hath given his only dear Son for you,) shall perish, or depart forth of this miserable life without his almighty good will and pleasure.

Therefore, dear wife, put your trust and confidence wholly and

only in him; and ever pray that his will be fulfilled and not yours, except it be agreeing to his will, the which I pray GOD it may ever be. Amen. And as for worldly things, take you no care; but be you well assured, the Lord, your dear God and father, will not see you nor yours lack, if you continue in his love and childly fear, and keep a clear conscience from all kind of idolatry, superstition, and wickedness, as my trust is that you will do, although it be with the loss and danger of this temporal life. And, good Margaret, fear not them that can but kill the body; (but yet can they not do that, until God give them leave;) but fear to displeas him that can kill both body and soul, and cast them into hell-fire. Let not the remembrance of your children keep you from God. The Lord himself will be a Father and a Mother, better than ever you or I could have been unto them. He himself will do all things necessary for them; yea, as much as rock the cradle, if need be. He hath given his holy angels charge over them, therefore commit them unto him. But if you may live with a clear conscience, (for else I would not have you to live,) and see the bringing up of your children yourself, look that you nurture them in the fear of God, and keep them far from idolatry, superstition, and all other kind of wickedness: and for God's sake help them to some learning, if it be possible, that they may increase in virtue and godly knowledge, which shall be a better dowry to marry them withal, than any worldly substance: and when they be come to age, provide them such husbands as fear God, and love his holy word. I charge you, take heed that you match them with no papists; and if you live, and marry again yourself, (which thing I would wish you to do if need require, or else not,) good wife, take heed how you bestow yourself, that you and my poor children be not compelled to wickedness. But if you shall be able well to live God's true widow, I would counsel you so to live still, for the more quietness of yourself and your poor children. Take heed, Margaret, and play the wise woman's part. You have warning by other, if you will take an example. And thus I commit you and my sweet children unto God's most merciful defence. The blessing of God be with you, and God send us a merry meeting together in heaven. Farewell in Christ; farewell, mine own dear hearts all. Pray, pray!

**To my Dear Sister, M. C.**

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of his most pure and holy Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful loving sister, and comfort your heart with the plenteous consolation in Christ; that with the abundance of the same you may (according to your old custom,) comfort me in

my sorrowful estate, that I may be occasioned thereby to praise the Lord, with and for you and other his dear children. Amen.

Albeit, my dear and faithful loving sister, that it were now my part and very duty to shew myself so comfortable and joyful in God, for the great triumph and glorious victory that he hath so graciously given unto his dear and faithful child, good Master Philpot, that you and all other, (whose sorrows I dare say are much increased,) might be solaced by the same; yet, alas, such is my loss and lack of him, that I cannot but so sore lament the same, that, I fear me, I shall not only discomfort you therewith, but also displease God, which for my sin hath taken him away. And though it had been both my honesty and duty, seeing myself to be in so much sorrow, to have kept the same to myself, and not to have increased yours therewith; yet could I no longer forbear, but to communicate some part thereof, to the end that you might communicate again to me either your joy or sorrow, whether soever you have most store of. If your joy in Christ have the victory, (as doubtless it ought to have in the respect of God's glory, which is so mightily set forth by his sweet saint,) then, I pray you, come to me as shortly as you can, and communicate some part thereof unto me, whose froward and stubborn heart cannot yet be content to prefer the good will and glory of God, before mine own will and commodity,<sup>1</sup> as I ought to do. <sup>1 profit</sup> But if sorrow in you have gotten the upper hand, (as in very deed it doth begin to do in me,) good sister, come and speak with me so soon as you can, that we may measure our mourning together, and, in comforting one another, may be both constrained to forget our sorrows, and praise God with him, who is now singing in solace with his sweet companions that so constantly went before him, looking and wishing for us two, I dare well say. God grant us grace to follow their faith and footsteps unto the end. Amen.

Ah, my dear heart, methinks I am like a vessel of wine, that after it hath been tumbled and tossed to and fro, if it should not have vent, would burst in pieces. Even so the taking away of this very<sup>2</sup> man of God (whose sweet comfort my poor soul doth <sup>2 true</sup> lack,) so tosseth and turmoileth my poor heavy heart, that except I should, as it were with a vent, express the same to God with weeping tears, and open the same to you with words and letters, I think verily it would burst in pieces: which thing were to me most happily welcome, so that God were pleased therewithal. Oh, if nature will so work in a wicked worldling, to make him heartily to lament the loss of his friend, by whose death he doth yet obtain divers commodities;<sup>3</sup> how can it be but the tender <sup>3 benefit</sup> hearts, that be mollified with the good Spirit of God, must needs bewail the taking away of those dear hearts, by whose death they

are deprived of so many heavenly benefits, which so far without comparison do pass all earthly treasures? Ah, dear heart, I never wist,<sup>1</sup> what the benefit of that worthy Bradford was, until now that I feel the want of his dear fellow Philpot, which full oft poured the precious water of life and comfort upon my poor afflicted soul. But now, alas, for my great ingratitude, negligence, and other my great sins, God hath taken them both from me: I shall no more hear them in this life (the more is my sorrow,) declare unto me the most comfortable message of God's great mercy towards me. Their worthy writings, alas, shall no more bring me the most joyful news and merry tidings of the Gospel, to tell me that all my horrible sins and offences are freely forgiven me. Oh my great loss, which maketh me much to lament, and so vexeth and tormenteth my mind, that I cannot well tell what I write! Oh true token of God's terrible wrath against me, in taking away such precious jewels of comfort from me! But just is the judgment of God against me for my sin,<sup>2</sup> which<sup>2</sup> have largely deserved to be deprived of their sweet and comfortable company, not only in this life, but also in the life to come. But yet I know the Lord will not so do; but of his great mercy he hath taken them at this time from me, that I might make the more haste, with hearty desire to be dissolved and to be with them. O gracious God, how much is thy mercy? How marvellous is thy loving power, and how great is thy goodness, and the abundance of thine exceeding kindness, which turnest all things to thy glory, and the commodity<sup>3</sup> of thy chosen children? Oh, make me so much to rejoice in the respect of thy glory, which thou so mightily hast magnified in thy sweet Martyrs, that the same may soon swallow up my deserved sorrows. Amen. Commend me to my good sister C.; and bring her with you, if you can. John was wont to comfort Mary: but now good sweet Mary's come, comfort John.

Written in haste, with plentiful tears, by your own in Christ,  
John Careless.

To my dear and faithful brother, Augustine Berneher.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the help, comfort, and assistance of his eternal Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful brother Augustine, and with all the rest of my good brethren and sisters of the houses of Baxterly, and Mancetter, (which mourneth for the misery of God's people,) to your everlasting consolation in him. Amen.

Right glad I am to hear, my dear and faithful brother Augustine, that God, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, hath yet so graciously delivered and preserved you out of your

enemies' hands : beseeching Almighty God also, from the bottom of my heart, to be your continual defence unto the end, as hitherto he hath most graciously been; that you may both live and die to God's glory, the commodity<sup>1</sup> of his church, and to the increase of your own everlasting joy and comfort in him. 1 profit

Know you, dear brother, that I have received your letter, for the which I heartily thank you. Indeed I think it very short, although it seemeth something sharply to rebuke me in the beginning, for the breach of my promise in not writing to you of this long time. Well, brother, I am content to bear it with patience, considering that you are troubled otherwise, (the Lord comfort you and all heavy hearts,) neither will I spend ink and paper for my purgation in this point. God he knoweth whether I be so mindless of my promise, as it appeareth in your sight I am. Your request I will truly perform, to the uttermost of my power, as gladly as any poor wretch shall do in the world, and I thank GOD I have done no less of long time. And as my poor prayer shall be a handmaid to wait upon you, which way soever you ride or go, so I beseech you that my simple counsel may take some place in you, in this time of your pilgrimage, which you pass in no small peril: GOD keep and preserve you for his name's sake. I do not disallow, but much praise and commend your hearty boldness, in putting yourself in press,<sup>2</sup> when any one of 2 read-  
ness God's people needeth your help in any point. But yet I would not have you thrust yourself in danger, when you can do them no good; or at leastwise, when they may well enough spare that good you would do them. For if you should then chance to be taken, you shall not only be no comfort unto them, but also a great discomfort, adding sorrow unto their sorrow. I do not persuade you to absent yourself from any place where your presence of necessity is required: for in all such places, I know, GOD will preserve you, as he hath hitherto wonderfully done—praised be his name therefore; or if it shall please him to permit you in any such place to be taken, I know he will most sweetly comfort your conscience with this consideration, that it is the very providence and appointment of GOD that you should there and then be taken up, for a witness of his truth unto the world. But I cannot allow you, nor be contented, that you should rashly or negligently thrust yourself into that place where your wicked enemies do continually haunt, yea, and lay wait for you, when no necessity of yourself nor of any other of God's people doth require your company. If they need any of your godly counsel, you may write unto them that thing that you think good; which, I dare say, will be sufficient unto them. For (continual thanks and praises be given unto the everlasting God,) there is none of those that be truly condemned for God's truth, that now be weaklings; for they have manfully passed through the pikes, and

they have boldly abidden the brunt of the battle, and therefore I reckon the worst is past with them already. So that now and then a godly letter from you to them shall do as much good as your company shall do, and perchance more too. For writing sticketh longer in the memory than words do: yea, though your letters were as short to them, as your last was to me—so that the same be something sweeter, and not all-thing so sharp.

This, dear brother, is the simple counsel which I would gladly have you observe: partly for that I heartily pray for your preservation, to the commodity of Christ's church; and partly for that I unfeignedly wish the peace, comfort, and tranquillity of your own conscience, which I know will be quickly ready to accuse you, if you do any thing wherein you have not the word of God for your warrant. For in a glass that is clear, a small mote will soon appear: even so the good conscience of God's chosen children, being more clear than chrystal, will quickly accuse them at the least fault they do commit; whereas the wicked worldlings have their conscience clogged and corrupted through the custom of sin, that they cannot once see nor perceive their own shameful deeds and wicked works, until GOD set the same before them for their utter destruction, and then despair they immediately. But seeing that God hath given you a clear conscience, and a pure, sharp, quick, and lively sight in your soul, I would wish you to beware that you do nothing unadvisedly, but upon a good ground. For an accusing conscience is a sore thing when death doth approach, and then Satan will not stick to tell you that you have too much tempted God, when peradventure you have done nothing so at all. For this cause (I say) partly, I have thought it good to admonish you, as I have done often, to be circumspect; according to the counsel of Christ, which biddeth you beware of men. Other things I have not for to write; for I know this bearer can certify you of all things at large, better than I can declare it by writing.

Matt. 10.

I beseech you, good Augustine, help me forwards with your hearty prayers; for I trust I have but a small time to tarry in this troublesome world. Doctor Story told our Marshal, that we should all be dispatched so soon as he came from Oxford, whither he and other bloody butchers be gone to make slaughter of Christ's sheep, that lie there appointed to be slain. God for Christ's sake put them and such like beside their cruel purpose, if it be his good will and pleasure. Amen, good Lord. I pray you do my most hearty commendations to my dear sister and faithful friend, good Mistress Mary Glover. I beseech GOD be her comfort, as I doubt not but he is. I am very glad to hear that she doth so joyfully and so patiently bear this great cross that God hath laid upon her. I pray God strengthen her, and all other his dear saints, unto the end, Amen. Commend me unto



my dear and faithful sister, Elizabeth B. I thank her most heartily for my napkin ; and so I do you, dear brother, for my shirt. Truly that day that we were appointed to come to our answer before the Commissioners, which had sent word the same morning that they would come to the King's Bench by eight of the clock, and the house and all things were trimmed and made ready for them, I got that shirt on my back and that napkin in my hand ; and methought that they did help to harness me and weapon me well, to go fight against that bloody beast of Babylon. And trust me truly, if they had come, I would have stricken three strokes the more for your two sakes, as well as God would have abled me to have set them on ; as, by God's grace, I will not fail to do at the next skirmish that I come to ; wherefore, I pray you, pray for me, that I may be strong and hardy to lay on good load. Oh that I might so strike him down, that he should never be able for to rise again ; but that stroke belongeth only unto the Lord to strike at his coming, the which I trust will be shortly. Oh hasten it, good Lord, and shorten these sorrowful and sinful days, for thy great mercies' sake. Farewell, my dear and faithful brother ; the Lord defend, keep, and preserve you from the power of your enemies, visible and invisible, and send us a most joyful and merry meeting here or elsewhere, as it shall please his goodness to appoint us. In the mean space I shall most earnestly desire you to pray for me, for I never had more need in my life ; and doubtless you shall never want my poor prayer, if it shall please God to accept the prayer of so sinful a wretch as I am. The Lord impute not my sins to me, for Jesus Christ's sake ; unto whose most merciful defence I do most heartily commit you. The blessing of God be with you, now and ever. Amen. I pray you, do my most hearty commendations unto Master John Glover. I do not forget him in my daily prayers, and I trust he doth remember me.

Your poor brother, always mindful of you in my prayers,

John Careless, prisoner,

abiding God's pleasure.

To my dear brother Harry Adlington, prisoner in the  
Lollards' Tower.

The everlasting peace of GOD in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, joy, and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his mercies, be most effectuously wrought in your heart, my dear and faithful loving brother Adlington, and in the hearts of all your other godly prison-fellows, to the full finishing of that good work, which the Lord hath most graciously begun in you ; that the same may be to the setting forth of his glory, the

<sup>1</sup> profit commodity<sup>1</sup> of his poor afflicted church, and to your own eternal joy and comfort in him. Amen.

My most dear and faithful loving brother in our Lord, I, with all the rest of my loving brethren here with me, do most humbly and heartily commend us unto you, with all faithful remembrance of you in our daily prayers; giving God earnest thanks on your most happy behalf, for that he hath given you such hearty boldness and Christian constancy, in the faithful confession of his everlasting verity. Blessed be God for thee, my dearly beloved brother, which hath vouched thee worthy of so great dignity, as to suffer for his sake and the setting forth of his glory. Oh, glad in heart mayest thou be, to whom it is given, not only to believe in thy Lord and Christ most lively, but also to suffer for his sake, as one of his seely<sup>2</sup> sheep appointed to the slaughter. Be of good comfort therefore, my good brother; for your calling unto the cross of Christ was after a marvellous sort. Surely, it was only the Lord's appointment: and therefore he will well perform his own work in and upon you, to the great magnifying of his glory, and comfort of your brethren; whose hearts are mightily refreshed, to hear how heartily you have behaved yourself hitherto. This present day I received a letter from you: at the reading whereof my brethren and I were not a little comforted, to see your conscience so quieted in Christ, and your continuance so stedfast in him; which things be the special gifts of GOD, not given unto every man, but to you his dear darling, elect, and chosen in Christ, and such as you be. And whereas you do require to know my simple mind concerning your answer unto Doctor Story and the Chancellor; truly I say, you did answer them very well: for there are but two Sacraments indeed; that is to say, the Sacrament of Baptism, and the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, as you have full well answered them. Praised be God for his good gifts, who chooseth the weak to confound the strong, and the foolish to confound the worldly-wise. If, when you come before them again, they do ask you what a Sacrament is, say you that a Sacrament, being ministered according to Christ's institution, is a visible sign of an invisible grace, and hath the promise of God's mercy annexed unto it, available to all such as do worthily receive it, and not unworthily worship it; as they would have us to do, contrary to God's commandment. And these properties, belonging to Christ's true Sacraments, cannot be applied unto any one of those five Sacraments, which they have invented of their own brain, since Antichrist began to reign, to blind the people withal.

I perceive, dear heart, that upon Friday they do intend to condemn you and to give you your judgment. Therefore I think they will have no great reasoning with you, but bid you answer them directly, either Yea or Nay, to all such things as

they have to charge you withal, which they have gathered of you since you came into their cruel hands. But if they will needs make many words with you, because you are but a simple man, and therefore perchance they will be the busier with you to trouble you with many questions, to cumber your knowledge, and then seem to triumph over you, and that truth that you do hold; if (I say) they do this, as perhaps for some evil purpose they will, then be you so plain and short as you can, saying roundly unto them these or such like words, as nigh as you can. "Be it known unto you, that I in all points do believe as it becometh a true Christian, and as I have been truly taught, in the days of that good king Edward, of such godly preachers and prophets sent of GOD, as have sealed their doctrine with their blood: from whom I will dissent in no point; for I am a poor man without learning, but am commanded of GOD to follow the counsel of his constant preachers, and so do I intend to do, God giving me grace and assistance thereto. As for you, I know you to be none of Christ's shepherds, but ravening wolves which come to kill and scatter the flock of Christ, as the Lord said you should; and doth will' us to beware of you and your poisoned doctrine, bidding us to judge you according to your fruits, whereby all men may see and know what you be, that will not be wilfully blind. But the good shepherds have given their lives for the defence of Christ's flock; and I am commanded to follow their faithful and godly example, and to confess with them one truth even to the fire, if GOD shall see it good; and this, as a true Christian, I have hitherto done, and henceforth by God's grace intend for to do. And if for the same, GOD shall suffer you to take away my life, as you have done theirs, I am contented therewith; his will be done, for that only is good." But of this be you sure: the Lord will shortly call you to account for all the innocent blood that is shed within this realm; which you have brought into a most woeful case, and made many a heavy heart in the same, and more I perceive you will make, so long as the Lord for our sins will suffer you to prosper, and until the time that your own iniquity be full ripe. But then, be you sure, the Lord will sit in judgment upon you, as well as you do now upon his saints, and will reward you according to your deserving; to whom with my whole heart I commit my cause, and he will make answer for me, when the full time of my refreshing cometh. In the mean space I will keep silence with this that I have said: trusting that I have sufficiently discharged my conscience in confessing my faith and religion to you, declaring of what church I am, even of the catholic church of Jesus Christ, which was well known to be here in England in our late good king's days, by two special tokens which cannot deceive me, nor suffer me to be deceived; that is to say, the pure preaching of his holy word,

and the due administration of the holy sacraments—which is not to be seen in your Romish church, and therefore it cannot be justly be called the church and spouse of Christ. I believe in the Holy Trinity, and all the other articles of the Christian faith contained in the three creeds, and finally, all the canonical Scripture to be true in every sentence. And I detest all sects, both of the Arians and Anabaptists, or any other that divide themselves from the true church of Christ, which is his mystical body, the ground and pillar of truth, and the very house of the living God. And if for these things you take away my life, and make yourselves guilty of my blood, you may : for I am in your hands, as the sheep brought to the shambles, abiding the grace of the butcher. And be you sure your judgment sleepeth not ; but

<sup>1</sup> *Thess. 5* when you cry Peace, peace, and all is safe, then shall your plagues begin like the sorrows of a woman travailing with child, according to Christ's infallible promise."

This kind of answer, my dear heart, it shall be best for you to make ; and, by God's grace, I do intend to take the same order myself in time to come, when the Lord shall vouch me worthy of that great dignity, whereunto he hath called you. And if they should laugh you to scorn, as I know they will, saying, Thou art a fool, and an unlearned ass-head, and art able to make answer to nothing, &c. ; care not you for it, but still commit your cause unto God, who will make answer for you : and tell them, that they have been answered again and again of divers godly and learned men ; " but ðll will not help, for you have one solution for all manner of questions, even a fair fire and faggots—this will be the end of your disputations. Therefore, I pray you, trouble me no more ; but do that which you are appointed, when God shall permit the time. I am no better than Christ, his apostles, and other of my good brethren that are gone before me." This kind of answer will cut their combs most, and edify the people that stand by, so that the

<sup>2</sup> *calmly* same be done coldly<sup>1</sup> with sobriety, meekness, and patience ; as I heard say our sweet brethren Thomas Harland and John Oswald did at Lewes in Sussex, to the great rejoicing of the children of God which were in those parties : and I hear say that they were dissolved from this earthly tabernacle at Lewes on Saturday last, and were condemned but the Wednesday before ; so that we may perceive the Papists have quick work in hand, that they make such haste to have us home to our heavenly Father. Therefore

<sup>2</sup> *Kings. 2* let us make ourselves ready to ride in the fiery chariot, leaving these sorry mantles and old cloaks behind us for a little time, which God shall restore unto us again in a more glorious wise. My good brother Harry, you shall understand the bragging John T. hath beguiled his keepers (who trusted him too well,) and is run away from them, and hath brought the poor men into great danger by the same ; the one of them is cast, by the Council's

commandment, into the gatehouse at Westminster, the other is fled forth of the country for fear. Thus you may see the fruits of our free-will men, that made so much boast of their own strength. But that house which is not builded surely upon the immoveable rock, will not long stand against the boisterous winds and storms that blow so strongly in these days of trouble. But, my dearly beloved brother, blessed be God for you and such as you be, which have played the parts of wise builders; you have digged down past the sand of your own natural strength, and beneath the earth of your own worldly wisdom, and are now come to the hard stone and immoveable rock, Christ, who is your only keeper: and upon him alone you have builded your faith most firmly, without doubting, mistrust, or wavering. Therefore neither the storms nor tempests, winds nor weathers, that Satan and all his wily workmen can bring against you, with the very gates of hell to help them, shall ever be able once to move your house, much less to overthrow it; for the Lord God himself (and no man) is the builder thereof, and hath promised to preserve the same for ever. Unto his most merciful defence, therefore, I do heartily commit you and all your good company; desiring him, for his sweet Son Jesus Christ's sake, to confirm and strengthen you all, that you may be constant unto the very end; that, after the final victory is once gotten, you may receive the immarcescible<sup>1</sup> crown of glory, of God's free gift through his great mercy, in Jesus Christ our alone Saviour. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, thanks, power, rule, and dominion, for ever and evermore. Amen. The blessing of God be with you all.

<sup>1</sup> unfading

John Careless.

**To my faithful and loving brother, William Aylesbury.**

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comforts of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his mercy, be with you, my dear and faithful loving brother W. Aylesbury, to the increase of his good gifts in you, and the full finishing of that which the Lord hath so graciously begun in you; that the same may be to the setting forth of his glory, the commodity<sup>2</sup> of his poor afflicted church, and to your own everlasting comfort in him. Amen.

<sup>2</sup> profit

Albeit, my dear heart in the Lord, that at this very present my sorry slow hand is something pestered with writing, to please my friends which daily call upon me for the performance of my promise and duty towards them, by the means whereof I cannot now write unto you in so ample a manner as I fain would; yet

lest, by my too long silence, my great ingratitude for your love and godly letters should too much appear, I have here in haste scribbled these few words unto you : desiring you to accept the same in good part, until the Lord shall send me a more convenient time to express my good will and bounden duty more largely unto you ; promising you, in the mean space, that my poor prayer shall supply that which wanteth otherwise—as I trust you do not forget me in yours, for verily I have great need of it. My dear brother, I thank you most heartily for your godly, loving, and most comfortable letters, in the which I do perceive the precious gifts of God wherewith you are plentifully endued : the Lord be praised for you, and from the bottom of my heart I do reverence his Spirit in you. Wherefore, my good brother, be not negligent in the talent that God hath delivered unto you ; but diligently apply the same, as I know well you do, that the Lord may receive his own with vantage, and you the reward of a faithful servant, at the time of his most joyful return. Truly I will not speak it to flatter you, neither would I provoke you to vain-glory ; but I will say, as I see just cause, that God hath abundantly blessed you with the sweet knowledge and pure understanding of his most holy word. Be always thankful unto God, I charge you, and humble and meek in your own sight ; that GOD only may have all the glory from the bottom of your heart. And look that you be very circumspect in all your life and conversation ; that the light of your good works may so shine before men, that they may be occasioned to glorify your heavenly Father on your behalf. Be diligent in your doings, and quick and trusty in all your Master's business which you go about ; that by all means you may do honour to the doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Remember, that Satan now will have greater spite at you than at many other, because you are such a mortal enemy to his kingdom on every side. Therefore, be you sure, he will now lie biting at your heel, to see if he can give you a fall any manner of way ; that he might make the truth of that godly doctrine, which you constantly confess, to be slandered by the means thereof. I know well that Satan's thoughts are not hid from you. I doubt not but you will be more circumspect than I can declare : notwithstanding, I thought it my bounden duty to warn you, as one whom I love as mine own soul, wishing you all the good I can possible. Commend me unto my dear friend John Manning, and thank him for his manifold kindness. I am much to blame for him ; but if the Lord do spare my life a little longer, I will write something to him for a remembrance when I am gone. Desire him to pray for me, as I do not forget him. I have sent you your writings with thanks. I pray you, write me a copy of that concerning the Trinity : for I like it marvellous well it is so brief and pithy ; I have no leisure to write it, yet would I

fain have it, as knoweth the Lord GOD, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you, with my good brother John Manning—that he, with his grace and Spirit, will guide you both, with all the rest of his dear children, unto the end. Amen. The blessing of God be with you, now and evermore. Amen.

Your own unfeignedly,

John Careless, Prisoner of the Lord.

Pray, pray, pray.

### To my most faithful and Dear Brother, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of his most pure and Holy Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful brother V.; and in all things make you joyful, through the lively feeling of his fatherly mercy and godly providence for you: that you, having daily more and more the sure sense of the same, may be able of your own good experience perfectly to comfort me and all other with the same comfort which you have, and further shall receive, of God—who b'less and keep you, now and ever, Amen.

I cannot express, my dear heart in the Lord, how my joys do increase, to see how God of his great mercy doth daily add unto his true church and poor afflicted congregation, such as he in Christ hath elected to salvation, before the foundation of the world was laid: of which most happy number, preserved only by his free mercy and grace, the Lord (no doubt) hath chosen and doth reckon you for one, and hath registered your name in his book of life, where it shall remain for ever; and that so sure, that neither Satan, death, sin, nor hell shall never be able to blot or scrape out the same—though, for the further proof and trial of your faith, God many times suffereth the same to appear to your senses far contrary. Rejoice therefore, and with gladness give God most humble praise and hearty thanks, that ever you lived to see this day, in the which he hath surely sealed you with his holy and mighty Spirit unto the day of your final redemption, and most happy deliverance from all corruption. God make the same certain unto you, by the true testimony of the Holy Ghost in your heart; whose witness unto your spirit that you are the adopted son of God, is more sure and certain, than all the outward oracles in the world. And as this most true and heavenly doctrine doth bring all mirth, joy, peace, and quietness unto a Christian conscience, so doth it set Satan in a most sore rage and malice against the same: for that ancient enemy of ours cannot abide that we should altogether hang and depend upon God our most dear Father with full trust and confidence. He would not have us thoroughly persuaded of his great love and kindness towards

us ; yea, of his most Fatherly care and providence for us his dear children. For the enemy knoweth that whosoever hath faithfully conceived this true opinion of God, shall by the same be allured yea, forced and constrained, to set all his love and heart's delight upon the Lord again, and, in respect of the same only, be willing to serve him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of his life, yea, of love and childly fear seek to please him, be loth to offend him, and ready with good will to suffer all things for his sake : which be the points and properties belonging to the Lord's elect.

Therefore, above all things, Satan seeketh to darken and make dim this doctrine of our salvation, yea, clean to quench it out if he could, and to bring us from this persuasion of God's Spirit unto distrust and infidelity, which is the very root and fountain  
 1 whence wherehence<sup>1</sup> all other wickedness doth spring : for whatsoever is not done of this faith and godly persuasion, is sin in the sight of God, how glorious soever it doth appear in the sight of men. Let us therefore, above all things, pray for the increase of faith ; by the light whereof we do perfectly see in our Christ, God to be presently ours, with all that ever he is or can be, and shall be for evermore. Let us hold this fast, as the sure sheet-anchor of our soul : and though Satan stir up never so many storms and tempests of trouble and persecution, and never so many foul and foggy mists of darkness and heresies, yet shall our ship sail in  
 2 helms- safety ; for God himself is our lodesman,<sup>2</sup> and his holy and man mightly Spirit is the master-mariner, and both can and will guide and conduct us into the haven of health, and port of everlasting safeguard. And therefore let us say, with David, that though the waves and raging surges of the seas be marvellous, yet the Lord is more mighty and marvellous, and can still them with a word.

Alas, I am here constrained to make an end in the midst of my letter ; and truly I have been fain (by occasion which hath come) to lay aside this letter six or seven times since I began. Therefore take it in good worth as it is, and another time I trust to finish the same to your comfort, and to the accomplishing of my duty towards you, to whom I do owe myself and all that I can do : as knoweth God, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you, my dear brother V., and all the rest of his dear darlings, whom I love as my own soul, and thank God for your love to me. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

Yours unfeignedly, John Careless, Prisoner of the Lord, at all times abiding his most merciful will and pleasure. Pray for me for God's sake ; as I will never forget you.



To my most dear and faithful Brother, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual joy and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his mercy, be with you, my dear heart in the Lord, and faithful loving brother T. V., to the full accomplishing of that good work which he hath so graciously begun in you; that the same, by all means, may be to the setting forth of his glory, to the commodity<sup>1</sup> of his poor afflicted congregation, and to the sweet comfort and quietness of your conscience in him, now and evermore. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> profit

With such due honour, love, and reverence, as it becometh me to bear unto the sweet saints and dearly beloved children of God, I have me most heartily commended unto you, my dear brother V., with all earnest and faithful remembrance of you in my daily prayers, thanking God right heartily that you do likewise remember me in yours, assuring you that my poor heart doth daily feel great consolation thereby; GOD only have the praise for the same, and all other his benefits. Ah, my dear heart in the Lord, well is me that ever I was born, that God of his great mercy and infinite goodness hath used me (most miserable wretch) at any time, as his instrument to minister any thing unto you, either by word or writing, that might be an occasion of your joy and comfort in the Lord, and a provoking of you to praise and thanksgiving unto GOD for the same, as your most loving and godly letter seemeth to import. Oh happy am I, that the Lord hath appointed me unto so good a ground to sow his seed upon: but much more happy are you, whose heart the Lord hath prepared and made so meet to receive the same so effectuously; giving thereto the sweet showers and heavenly dews of his grace and Holy Spirit, that it may bring forth fruits in due season accordingly; the increase whereof we shall shortly reap together, with perfect joy and gladness, and that continually. Therefore (my dear brother) I say unto you, as good Elizabeth did to her dear cousin Mary, Happy are you, and happy shall you be for evermore, Luke 1. because you have believed the most sweet and faithful promises of your Redeemer Jesus Christ. You have surely laid up in the treasury of your heart his comfortable callings that you have faithfully heard: his loving admonitions you have humbly obeyed, and therefore you shall never come into judgment. Your sins shall never be remembered: for your Saviour hath cast them all into the bottom of the sea; he hath removed them from you as far as the east is from the west, and hath given you, for an everlasting possession, his justification and holiness: so that now no creature, neither in heaven nor in earth, shall be able to accuse

Micah 7.  
Psa. 103.

you before the throne of the heavenly King. Satan is now judged; he is now cast out from you; he hath no part in you; you are wholly given unto Christ, which will not lose you; your stedfast faith in him hath overcome that sturdy and bragging prince of the world; Christ hath given you the final victory over him and all his army, that they shall never hurt you. What would you have more? Oh, my dear heart, how great treasures are laid up in store for you, and how glorious a crown is already made and prepared for you.

And albeit the Holy Ghost doth bear witness of all these things in your heart, and maketh you more sure and certain thereof, than if you had all the outward oracles in the world; yet I, being certainly persuaded and fully assured, by the testimony of God's Spirit in my conscience, of your eternal and sure salvation in our sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, have thought it good, yea, and my bounden duty, not only at this time to write unto you, and to shew my joyful heart in that behalf, but also, by the word and commandment of Christ, to pronounce and affirm, in the name and word of the heavenly King Jehovah, and in the behalf of his sweet Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom all knees shall bow, whom all creatures shall worship; and also by the impulsion of the Holy Ghost, by whose power and strength all the faithful be regenerate; I do, I say, pronounce to thee, my dear brother T. V., that thou art already a citizen of heaven. The Lord thy God, in whom thou dost put all thy trust, for his dear Son's sake in whom thou dost also undoubtedly believe, hath freely forgiven thee all thy sins, clearly released all thine iniquities, and fully pardoned all thine offences, be they never so many, so grievous, or so great, and will never remember them any more to condemnation. As truly as he liveth, he will not have thee die the death, but hath utterly determined, purposed, and eternally decreed, that thou shalt live with him for ever. Thy sore shall be healed, and thy wounds bound up, even of himself, for his own name's sake. He doth not, nor will not, look upon thy sins in thee; but he respecteth and beholdeth thee in Christ, in whom thou art lively grafted by faith in his blood, and in whom thou art most assuredly elected and chosen to be a sweet vessel of his mercy and salvation, and wast thereto predestinate in him before the foundation of the world was laid. In testimony and earnest whereof, he hath given thee his good and holy Spirit, which worketh in thee faith, love, and unfeigned repentance, with other godly virtues, contrary to the corruption of thy nature. Also he hath commanded me this day (although a most unworthy wretch) to be a witness hereof by the ministry of his holy word, grounded upon the truth of his most faithful promises; the which thou believing, shalt live for ever. Believest thou this, my dear heart? I know well thou dost believe. The Lord increase thy faith, and

give thee a lively feeling of all his mercies, whereof thou art warranted and assured by the testimony of the Holy Ghost; who confirm in thy conscience (to the utter overthrowing of Satan and those his most hurtful dubitations, whereby he is accustomed to molest and vex the true children of God,) all that I have said: and by God's grace I will, as a witness thereof, confirm and seal the same with my blood, for a most certain truth. Wherefore, my good brother, praise the Lord with a joyful heart, and give him thanks for this his exceeding great mercy, casting away all dubitation and wavering, yea, all sorrow of heart and pensiveness of mind; for this the Lord your God and most dear and loving Father commandeth you to do by me, nay rather by his own mouth and word pronounced by me. But now, my dear brother, after that I have done my message, or rather the Lord's message indeed, I could find in my heart to write two or three sheets of paper, declaring the joy I bear in my heart for you, mine own bowels in the Lord. Yet, the time being so short (as you do well know), I am here constrained to make an end, desiring you to pardon my slackness, and to forgive my great negligence towards you; promising you still that, so long as my poor life doth last, my prayer shall supply that my pen doth want; as knoweth the Almighty God, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you and all other his dear children, as well as though I had rehearsed them by name, desiring them most heartily to remember me in their hearty and daily prayers, as I know right well they do; for I feel the daily comfort and commodity<sup>1</sup> thereof, benefit and therefore I neither will nor can forget them, nor you or any such like. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

Yours, for ever, unfeignedly,

John Careless,

Still careful for you, prisoner for the testimony of God's everlasting truth, abiding his most blessed will and pleasure.—Pray, pray, pray!

**To my dear friend and faithful Sister, Mistress Mary Glover.**

The same everlasting God, and most gracious good Lord, that blessed Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and comforted them in all their crosses, troubles, and manifold afflictions, yea, and preserved them and provided for them in all extreme peril, danger, and necessities; bless, comfort, preserve, and keep you, with all your sweet children and family (my dear friend and faithful sister in the Lord good Mistress Mary Glover), with and by the power of his holy and mighty Spirit, our eternal Comforter, now and for evermore. Amen.

Ah, my dear friend, what shall I say, or how shall I comfort.

you in this great cross that GOD hath laid upon you, in taking home to himself those his blessed saints, whom he for a time lent you? Verily I am afraid lest I shall renew your sorrows in speaking of them. But, my dear heart, let that be far from you; rather now with them rejoice in GOD for their great glory, triumph, and victory, ever submitting with all meekness your will unto his, which only is good, and worketh all things for your best; of which thing if you be fully and thoroughly persuaded, you can by no means lack spiritual joy and comfort. Whereof in few words I will something say, although I doubt not but you know it already, though perhaps now sorrow doth a little darken the same, as at times it hath done in many good men; but faith is of such force and power, if it be unfeigned, that it will, with Jonas, forth of the whale's belly, cry unto the Lord, and bring from him the comforts of his Spirit and promises: which chiefly do consist in that which is rehearsed in the first commandment. Hear, Israel (saith the Lord), I am thy Lord GOD, and thou shall love me, &c. Behold with a stedfast and lively faith, this sweet saying and commandment of God. He biddeth us hear, and give credence. To what, I pray you? Forsooth, that he of his goodness hath given himself wholly unto us, to be our own peculiar and proper possession for ever, as the prophet David doth pleasantly sing: The Lord himself (saith he) is my portion and inheritance; my lot is fallen unto me in a happy ground, &c. Oh gracious GOD, what a thing is this, that the great Lord Jehovah, that omnipotent GOD which made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, upon whose providence all things do depend, at whose only beck both angel and devil must be fain to obey: Oh Lord, I say, what a thing is this, that he will vouchsafe to give himself wholly to be ours, with all that ever he may be? Oh, what are we, most vile dung, earth, and ashes, yea, most wicked caitiffs and horrible sinners, that he would vouch us worthy of this great benefit, which cannot be expressed with the tongues of men or angels? This must we now needs think and believe of GOD, or else we do most wickedly transgress the great and first commandment. But do we obey, and believe that this is true? So shall we of force by the same be constrained to fulfil the second part, that is to say, love him with all our heart, &c. For who, seeing the goodness of GOD towards him in Jesus Christ (for whose sake only he hath given himself wholly to be ours, in most large and ample wise that may be), who, I say, seeing this; would not with all his heart, soul, and mind, love the Lord again, and of love, not only leave the doing of such things as might displease him, but also be ready and willing to do whatsoever is acceptable in his sight, yea, most gladly and joyfully suffer whatsoever he will appoint us to do for his sake, knowing assuredly, that nothing can come unto us (no not the diminishing

of one hair of our head) without his good will, pleasure, and merciful appointment; and that he, loving us so well that he would give his Son himself, the Holy Ghost, and finally all other things in Christ, to us, will not appoint anything unto us otherwise than shall be to the setting forth of his glory, and our everlasting commodity.<sup>1</sup> This great, abundant, bottomless love and mercy of <sup>1</sup> *profit* God did holy St. Paul deeply feel, when he made that bold proclamation in the latter end of the 8th chapter to the Romans, saying, Who is it, or what is it that shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Read the whole chapter oftentimes, I beseech you.

Thus, dear heart, you see the eternal love and fatherly care and providence of God towards you. In respect whereof, I trust you do not only cast all your care upon him, but also most lovingly obey him in all his holy ordinances, evermore meekly submitting your will unto his in all and every thing; knowing that the same will make all things turn to your best, and that, without his pleasure, a poor sparrow shall not perish in the fowler's net—much less you, or your dear husband, your good uncle Master Latimer, or any of yours. Let this faith and godly persuasion evermore be firm in your heart, without doubting or wavering: forsooth, all that ever you go about is in vain; yea, without this faith in God, you cannot please him; you cannot commit and betake yourself wholly unto him; you cannot truly fear him; you cannot love him in deed; you cannot call upon him or heartily pray unto him, neither yet praise him aright. Therefore let this be your alone and continual endeavour, to be confirmed more and more of this, that GOD is your own most dear loving Father through Christ; that he hath a most tender care over you, and for you, as always he hath had and ever will have, both in soul and body, for this life and for eternal life, howsoever things have or shall happen to appear unto you. According to this your faith, and as you believe, so shall it be unto you; and as you think God to be unto you, so shall you feel him. Think therefore sweetly of the Lord and of his goodness, and thank him most heartily that ever he would vouch you worthy to sustain the loss of your chiefest treasures in earth for his sake, and that he would ever give you anything to bestow<sup>2</sup> for his love. And as you praise the <sup>2</sup> *dispose* Lord for his great mercies and manifold benefits, so largely given <sup>of</sup> unto you before many other, so do you faithfully pray unto him, that he will continue his loving kindness towards you, and keep you blameless through love in Christ, unto the end; yea, and make you worthy, strong, and able, to suffer the loss of your own life for the testimony of his truth; which (as your good uncle said to me once, and your dear husband full often,) is the greatest promotion and dignity that God can bring us unto in this life, yea, it is an honour which the highest angels in heaven

be not permitted to have. And in this your hearty and faithful prayer, I do most humbly require you to remember me; a most miserable wretch, I fear me, not counted worthy to become one of his constant witnesses unto the world, in such sort as I would fain be; pray for me, my dear heart, pray for me, as I will never forget you nor your blessed children, so long as I am in this prison of the body. Commend me unto Hugh Glover, Marmaduke, and to their younger brother and sister. The Lord God comfort and bless them, and pour his good Spirit upon them, wherewith their good father was plentifully endowed. I pray you, do my hearty commendations unto my good brother Augustine and his wife, and I heartily thank you for your goodness towards them. Desire them also to pray for me, for now the needful time doth approach. I praise God, I am more hearty than ever I was, and so I beseech him to make you all to be.—I have many things to say more, but I am here constrained to make an end. All my doings come to an end with extremity. God grant that I may enter into his glory through the strait gate, though I struggle and strive, thrusting among the press with great violence. I beseech you yet once again, and all my dear friends in God, to aid and strengthen me with your prayers, as I will never forget any of you, so long as this wasting life of mine doth last; as knoweth God, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you and all yours. The sweet blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

Your daily and most bounden orator,<sup>1</sup> John Careless,  
Prisoner of the Lord.—Pray, pray for me in faith.

<sup>1</sup> inter-  
cessor

### To my good brother, Master John Bradford.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comfort of his sweet Spirit, which hath surely sealed you unto eternal salvation, be with you and strengthen you in your joyful journey towards the celestial Jerusalem, (my dear friend and most faithful brother Master Bradford,) to the setting forth of God's glory, and to your eternal joy in Christ. Amen.

Ever since that good Master Philpot shewed me your last letter my dear heart in the Lord, I have continued in great heaviness and perplexity; not for any hurt or discommodity<sup>2</sup> that I can perceive coming towards you, unto whom doubtless death is made life and great felicity, but for the great loss that God's church here in England shall sustain by the taking away of so godly worthy, and necessary an instrument, as the Lord hath made you to be. Oh that my life, and a thousand such wretched lives more might go for yours. Oh, why doth God suffer me and such other caterpillars to live, that can do nothing but consume the alms c

<sup>2</sup> disad-  
vantage

the church ; and take away you, so worthy a workman and labourer in the Lord's vineyard? But woe be to our sins and great unthankfulness, which is the greatest cause of the taking away of such worthy instruments of God, as should set forth his glory and instruct his people. If we had been thankful unto God for the good ministers of his word, we had not been so soon deprived both of it and them. The Lord forgive our great ingratitude and sins, and give us true repentance and faith, and hold his hand of mercy over us, for his dear Son Christ's sake. Take not away all thy true preachers forth of this realm, O Lord ; but leave us a seed, lest England be made like unto Sodom and Gomorrah, when thy true Lots be gone. But what go I about to mingle your mirth with my mourning, and your just joy with my deserved sorrow? If I loved you indeed, as I have pretended, I should surely rejoice with you most heartily, and praise God on your behalf from the very bottom of my heart. I should praise God day and night, for your excellent election in and through his great mercy, and should give him most humble thanks for your vocation by his Gospel, and your true knowledge in the same. I should earnestly praise him for your sweet justification, whereof you are most certain by God's grace and Spirit, and should instantly<sup>1</sup> pray unto him for your glorification, which shall shortly ensue. I should rejoice and be glad to see you so dignified by the crown of martyrdom, and to be appointed to that honour to testify his truth, and to seal it with your blood. I should highly extol the Lord, who hath given you a glorious victory over all your enemies, visible and invisible, and hath given you grace and strength to finish the tower that you have begun to build. Finally, if I loved you, I should most heartily rejoice and be glad, to see you delivered from this body of sin and vile prison of the flesh ; and brought into that heavenly tabernacle, where you shall be safely kept, and never offend him more. This and much more should I do, if I had a good heart towards God, or you his dear child. But alas, I am an hypocrite, and do seek nothing but mine own commodity.<sup>2</sup> I would have God's everlasting providence give place to my peevish will and purpose, although it were to the hinderance of his glory and your sweet commodity.<sup>2</sup> God forgive me my horrible ingratitude, sins, and offences against him : and, good brother, do you forgive me my great negligence and unthankfulness towards you ; and henceforth, I promise you, I will put my will to God's will, and pray that the same may be fulfilled in you, so long as you be on this earth ; and when you are taken hence, I will most heartily praise the Lord for you, so long as I have my being in this world. Ah, my dear heart, now I must take my leave of you, and, as I think, my *ultimum Vale*<sup>3</sup> in this life ; but in the life to come I am right well assured we shall merrily meet together, and that shortly I trust. And in taking

<sup>1</sup> ear-  
nestly

<sup>2</sup> profit

<sup>3</sup> last  
farewell

of my leave of you, my dear heart in the Lord, I shall desire you faithfully to remember all the sweet messages that the Lord our good God and most dear loving Father hath sent you, by me his most unworthy servant; which as they are most true, so shall they be most truly accomplished upon you eternally. And for the more assurance and certificate thereof to your godly conscience, he hath commanded me to repeat the same unto you again, in his own name and word. Therefore now give ear and faithful credence. Hearken, O ye heavens, and thou earth give ear, and bear me witness at the great day, that I do here, faithfully and truly, the Lord's message unto his dear servant, his singularly beloved and elect child John Bradford. John Bradford, thou man so specially beloved of God, I pronounce and testify unto thee, in the word and name of the Lord Jehovah, that all thy sins whatsoever they be, be they never so many, so grievous, or so great, be fully and freely pardoned, released, and forgiven thee, by the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, thine only Lord and sweet Saviour, in whom thou dost undoubtedly believe. Christ hath cleansed thee with his blood, and clothed thee with his righteousness, and hath made thee in the sight of God his Father without spot or wrinkle. So that when the fire doth his appointed office, thou shalt be received as a sweet burnt sacrifice into heaven, where thou shalt joyfully remain in God's presence for ever, as the true inheritor of his everlasting kingdom; unto the which thou wast undoubtedly predestinate and ordained by the Lord's unfallible purpose and decree, before the foundation of the world was laid. And that this is most true that I have said, I call the whole Trinity, the Almighty and eternal majesty of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to my record at this present; whom I humbly beseech to confirm and stablish in thee the true and lively feeling of the same. Amen. Selah. Now with a merry heart and a joyful spirit, something mixed with lawful tears, I take my farewell of you, mine own dear brother in the Lord; who send us shortly a merry meeting in his kingdom, that we may both sing praises together unto him, with his holy angels and blessed spirits, for ever and ever. Farewell, thou blessed of the Lord, farewell in Christ; depart unto thy rest in the Lord, and pray for me, for God's sake.

As I had made an end of this simple letter, I heard some comfort both of good Master Philpot's servant and yours; but alas, I do scarcely believe them. Well, I will hope in God, and pray all night that God will send me some comfort to-morrow; and if the Lord give you sparing to-morrow, let me hear four words of comfort from you, for God's sake. The blessing of God be with you, now and for ever. Amen.

Yours for ever in the Lord Jesus,

John Careless,  
Living in hope against hope.



To a faithful Friend of his,

By whom he had received much comfort in his trouble and affliction.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, with the eternal comfort of his sweet Spirit, be with you, my dear brother, now and ever. Amen.

Ah, my dear and faithful brother, what humble praise and hearty thanks am I bound continually to render unto God for you, in that he hath made you so worthy and comfortable an instrument unto me, his most unworthy servant, in this time of my great conflict, not only against flesh and blood, but also against the spiritual power of darkness. In which wrestling though I be very weak, yet have I (I thank God most heartily therefore) received such strength and comfort by your faithful prayers and most godly and comfortable letters, that I am put in great hope, yea, in full assurance of a glorious victory. Blessed be the time that ever I knew you: for God (I perceive) hath made you an instrument in the stead of good Master Bradford, to supple my soul with the oil of his mercy, by pouring into the same his most gracious promises; God for Christ's sake mollify my hard heart, and give me grace to believe them. Oh, Lord, increase my faith. I believe, Lord: oh help my unbelief, that I may taste and feel the certainty of my salvation, and be thoroughly persuaded and assured, that thy grace, good Lord, is sufficient for me. Oh pray, pray, dear heart, pray for me; and as you can, comfort me with more such sweet letters, that I may sometimes feel a flash of God's favourable countenance in my face, as doubtless I did at the reading of your last most comfortable letter. God verify your saying, or rather his saying by you, upon me for ever; and the same Lord will I continually beseech, to make you always plentifully to feel the fruition of his most gracious favour, that you may always plentifully pour forth upon me, and all others that have need, the consolations of Jesus Christ. Oh that the time were now come, that I might put off this frail tabernacle of the flesh, in this heavenly security and quietness of conscience in Jesus Christ. God make you, dear brother, and all other his dear servants, to feel the like in your most need. Truly, dear heart, I have seven most godly and comfortable letters of that blessed of the Lord, good Master Bradford, which he wrote only for my comfort, when I signified my woeful state unto him. And though he have therein plentifully published the promises of God's mercy unto me, and sealed the same with his blood, yet had Satan blinded mine eyes, and put the same forth of my weak and frail memory, until your most happy letter came, yea, in a

This is the conflicts whereby Satan hath always sought to molest and vex the true children of God, and to pluck them from the hope of their salvation in Christ, read Psa. 77, 98, 99, 31, 33, 69; and concerning this matter, read before page 116, 148, 221, 249, and the whole letters following.

This state, to the worldly, and such as have not tasted of God's sweet cross, seemeth foolishness, but it is not strange to God's children.

most happy hour may I say. But of this enough until another time.—I am here constrained to break off from this thing, which I have scribbled in haste, as this bearer can testify. Farewell in Christ, farewell, I say, mine own dear heart in the Lord. The Lord our God bless you, and increase his good gifts in you, to the setting forth of his glory, and to your continual comfort in him. Amen.

*Inter-  
cessor*

Your daily orator,<sup>1</sup> and poor brother,

John Careless.  
Pray, pray!

### Another Letter written to the same person.

Blessed be God, the Father of all mercy, for the great comfort and christian consolation which he had so mercifully ministered unto my poor afflicted heart by your means, my most dear and faithful brother. Truly, methinketh, your words, or rather God's words by you uttered, have a wonderful power and efficacy working in my heart at the hearing or reading of them. Rejoice therefore, my dear brother, and be thankful unto God; for verily he both is and will be mightily magnified in you, and that divers and many ways; both to the strengthening of them that stand in his truth, and also to the raising up of such as are fallen from the same. God make me thankful for you and on your behalf: for verily great is the goodness of God towards me, in giving me acquaintance in faithful love and amity with you; God's name for ever be praised therefore, and he perform all his merciful promises upon you, as I doubt not but he will, for his sake in whom you trust.

*2 hinder*

I thank my God most heartily, and also you, my good brother, for that you are so careful for me in your faithful prayers; remembering my just deserved sorrows, as though they were your own, and labouring so much to solace the same. Ah, my gracious good God, what am I, for whom thou and thy dear children should be so careful? Oh, sweet Lord, forgive me my great ingratitude and sin, and grant that I never abuse thy great benefits. Oh let the love of thine elect, which love me for thy sake, be a sure sign and token, yea, a most firm testimony and a seal to my sinful conscience, of thine everlasting love and mercy towards me in Christ: as verily it would and ought to be, if mine infidelity did not let<sup>2</sup> it. Oh, circumcise therefore the foreskin of my heart, that I may with lively faith behold thy great love towards me in all thine elect; that I may always be thankful for the same, and love thee and them again most heartily and unfeignedly.

Ah, my dear heart, how sweetly and how truly, yea how godl

and how comfortably have you rehearsed the sweet saying of Solomon, concerning prosperity with true and godly friends. I will join with it the sentence which goeth a little before, for doubtless it may be well verified on you. A sure friend (saith the Wise man) will be unto thee even as thine own soul, and deal faithfully with thy household folk. If thou suffer trouble and adversity, he is with thee, and hideth not his face from thee. A faithful friend is a strong defence; whoso findeth such a one findeth a treasure. A faithful friend hath no peer;<sup>1</sup> the weight of gold is not to be compared to the goodness of his faith. A faithful friend is a medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him, &c. Lo, my dear heart in the Lord, here is a lively image or description of you; for verily such a one have I always found you unto me, not only sorrowing for my great sorrow, but also oftentimes making me merry and joyful, with such joys as the world cannot feel. Now let the world brag of his feigned friendship; but I will boast of this true friendship in God, and esteem it a more treasure than all transitory things. And as for my mourning, dear brother, God hath made you to turn it unto mirth; for God hath put you in the stead of them to be my comfort, whom he hath in his great mercy taken away. I trust henceforth to leave the mourning for my great loss, and to praise God for gaining unto himself so great glory by his chosen children. God make me a true mourner of Sion, both for mine own sin and wickedness, and also to see his honour defaced; that I may be made meet and apt to hear the joyful and comfortable message, that your beautiful feet shall bring me. God bless thee, my dear heart and faithful loving brother, and increase his good gifts of grace in thee, as he hath most happily begun; that you may daily more effectually feel and lively perceive the certainty of God's grace wherein you stand, and firmly to testify the same, to the conversion or confounding of all gainsayers, and to the comfort and confirmation of all God's dear children. Amen. Farewell, mine own sweet brother, farewell as mine own heart.

Such mourners should we be continually with this and other God's dear children; and blessed be they that so mourn. Matt. 4.

Your own in Christ,

John Careless.

Because he maketh mention in the former Letter,

And other heretofore, of the most godly and Christian conflicts which he had sustained, we thought good to adjoin hereto this sweet and heavenly exercise following; whereby it may appear what fruit these conflicts wrought in his most godly and Christian conscience.

Some men for sudden joy do weep;  
And some in sorrow sing,  
When that they lie in danger deep,  
To put away mourning.

Between them both will I begin,  
Being in joy and pain,  
In sighing to lament my sin,  
But yet rejoice again.

My sinful life doth still increase,  
My sorrow is the more:  
From wickedness I cannot cease,  
Woe is my heart therefore.

Sometimes when I think to do well,  
And serve God night and day,  
My wicked nature doth rebel,  
And leadeth me astray,

As bound and captive unto sin,  
Which grieveth me full sore;  
This misery do I live in,  
Woe is my heart therefore.

Indeed sometime I do repent,  
And pardon do obtain:  
But yet (alas) incontinent  
I fall to sin again.

My corrupt nature is so ill,  
Offending more and more,  
That I displease my Lord God still,  
Woe is my heart therefore.

Woe is my heart, woe is my mind,  
Woe is my soul and sprite,  
That to my God I am unkind,  
In whom I should delight.

His love always I should regard,  
Which toward me was so pure;  
But I with sin do him reward,  
Oh most unkind creature!

The beast, the bird, the fish, the fowl,  
 Their Maker do obey :  
 But I, that am a living soul,  
 Am far much worse than they.

For they, according to their kind,  
 To serve him do not cease :  
 But I, with sinful heart and mind,  
 Do daily him displease.

Thus do I sore complain of sin,  
 And with king David weep ;  
 For I do feel, my heart within,  
 The wrath of God full deep.

To heaven mine eyes I dare not lift,  
 Against it I have trespassed :  
 And in the earth I find no shift,  
 Nor succour that can last.

What shall I do ? shall I despair ?  
 And from my Saviour slide ?  
 Nay, God forbid, there is no fear,  
 Since Christ for me hath died.

God became man, and for us men  
 He died and rose again :  
 His mercy great, we may see then,  
 For ever doth remain.

Therefore my sin I will confess  
 To God, and mourning make ;  
 Who will forgive the same doubtless,  
 For his Son Christes'<sup>1</sup> sake.

<sup>1</sup> Christ  
his

If sin in me God should respect,  
 Then do I know full well,  
 His justice would me soon reject  
 To the deep pit of hell.

His glorious eyes cannot abide  
 The foul and filthy smoke,  
 Wherewith I am, on every side,  
 Covered as with a cloak.

But he in Christ doth me behold,  
 In whom he doth delight ;  
 And mine offences manifold  
 Through him releaseth quite,

## LETTERS OF

Reputing me amongst the just,  
 Forgiving all my sin :  
 Therefore my faith, my hope, my trust  
 Shall ever be in him.

O Lord, increase true faith in me ;  
 Thy good Spirit to me give :  
 That I may grow in love toward thee,  
 And ever seek to live

In true obedience of thy will,  
 And thankfulness of heart ;  
 And with thy grace so guide me still,  
 That I never depart

From thy true word and testament,  
 All the days of my life,  
 Nor from thy church most innocent,  
 Thine own true spouse and wife.

But from that filthy whore of Rome  
 Lord keep me evermore ;  
 As graciously thou hast yet done—  
 Thanks be to thee therefore.

And since thou hast, of thy goodness,  
 Forgiven me all my sin,  
 Strengthen me thy truth for to confess,  
 And boldly die therein :

That, as I have confessed thee,  
 Before the wicked sort,  
 Thou mayest in thy good time know me,  
 To my joy and comfort.

My soul, return unto thy rest,  
 Thou art well satisfied :  
 The Lord hath granted thy request,  
 And nothing thee denied.

Praise be to God, the Father of might :  
 Praise be to thee, O Christ :  
 Praise be to thee, O Holy Sprite—  
 Three in one God most highest.

Continue constant in Christ, and—Careless.\*

\* A play upon his name.

## A brief Admonition written to Mrs. Jane Glascock,

In a book of hers, when she came to the prison to visit him.

There is nothing that the Holy Scripture throughout doth so much commend unto us, as a true faith and stedfast trust in the promises of God's eternal mercies towards us in Jesus Christ. For from the same, as forth of the chief fountain and well-spring of life, do flow all kinds of virtues and godly fruits: especially true love towards God, in the which we ought purely to serve him all the days of our life, and also Christian charity towards our neighbours, as well to help them at all needs, as also not to hurt them by any means. Therefore pray earnestly for the increase of faith and lively feeling of God's mercy: for all things are possible unto him that can undoubtedly believe. Faith is the thing which assureth us of God's mercy, and whereby we vanquish all the fiery darts of the devil; our victory that overcometh the world; the knife that killeth and mortifieth the flesh; and finally, that which setteth us at peace with God, and quieteth our consciences always before him, and maketh us merry and joyful under the cross, with many more things than I can now express. Pray therefore for faith, in faith. And, for the Lord's sake, beware of popery and popish idolatry, the idol of the wicked mass, and other idolatrous service. Make not your body, which is a member of Christ, a member of Antichrist. Remember, we shall receive of God according to that we do in the body, be it good or evil. Therefore glorify God in your body, which is dearly bought. Betray not the truth, lest the Lord deny you. If God be God, follow him. You cannot serve two masters. I write not this as doubting you, but by the way of admonition. God keep you from all evil.

My sister dear, God give you grace,  
 With stedfast faith in Christs' name,  
 His Gospel still for to embrace,  
 And live according to the same.  
 To die, therefore, think it no shame,  
 But hope in God with faithful trust;  
 And he will give you praise with fame,  
 When you shall rise out of the dust.  
 For which most sweet and joyful day  
 To God with faith your prayer make;  
 And think on me, I do you pray,  
 The which did write this for your sake.  
 And thus to God I you betake,  
 Who is your castle and strong rock:  
 He keep you, whether you sleep or wake.  
 Farewell, dear mistress Jane Glascock.

*I Christ  
 his*

If God be with us, who can be against us.

Though worldly waves do rage apace,  
 And wicked winds blow out of frame ;  
 Though mountains move forth of their place,  
 Through the great tempests of the same :  
 Yet shall the Lord still you defend  
 Under the shadow of His wings ;  
 He loveth you unto the end,  
 And for your wealth doth work all things.  
 Therefore in him put all your trust :  
 Fear not these boisterous winds that blow ;  
 The Lord can lay them when he lust,  
 And bring the raging waves full low.  
 But your safeguard shall still remain,  
 In a strong castle of defence.  
 God grant us well to meet again  
 With mirth and joy in his presence.

John Careless.

To the afflicted Christian.

Fear not for death, pass not<sup>1</sup> for bands :  
 Only in God put thy whole trust :  
 For God will require thy blood at their hands ;  
 And this thou dost know, that once die thou must.  
 Only for Christ thy life if thou give,  
 Death is no death, but a mean for to live.



A Letter of Doctor Taylor of Hadley,

Written to his wife; which we have here placed as it came to our hands, with certain other letters following.

Dear wife, I pray God be ever with us, through Christ our only Mediator. Amen.

I thank you for my cap; I am something proud of it, for it is one step from the clergy in these days. I thank God, my heart is clean divided from their proceedings. For I know that no man can serve two masters, especially if they agree no better than Christ and Antichrist do. I am glad that Hadley can skill of such packing ware, as was brought thither the first day of May last past. Christ's sheep can discern Christ's voice from the voice of strangers, thieves, or hirelings. The pack-bringer was sorry that he came too late to the funeral market of his faithful friend. But here I will leave them both to God's judgment, and something touch the matter whereof the packer made mention on his opening day. At the first he called the Scripture (as I hear) full of dark sentences; but indeed it is called of St. David, a candle to our feet, and a light to our paths. Our Saviour Christ calleth his word the light, which evil doers do fly from and hate, lest their deeds should be reprov'd thereby. St. Paul would have us to walk as children of light, and in any wise not to continue in ignorance or darkness. But all we in the world pertain to two princes, either to the Father of light and truth, or else to the prince of darkness and lies. In these days, preachers declare evidently of whom they are sent, and in what spirit they speak, and to what prince they belong. For they cry out against God's lights, Sun, moon, stars, torches, lamps, lanterns, cressets, and candles, in God's book the Bible, provided of God's great goodness and mercy, to avoid all foul darkness, clouds, and mists, or dangerous doubtful ways in this our journey to our heavenly Father's long home, mansion houses, and dearly purchased heritage. Esay, God's faithful messenger, saith, Woe be unto them which call sweet sour, good evil, and light darkness. Therefore cometh my people into captivity, because they have no understanding. Our Saviour Christ pronounceth errors and heresies to remain among the people, so long as ignorance of the Scriptures remaineth. And hereby it appeareth to all good consciences, what they mean, which defame or accuse God's blessed word, (being full of light,) as though it were full of darkness. These owls would have all day-lights scraped out of books, hearts, and churches. O Lord, turn their hearts and tongues: bow them from the way of darkness, lest they go to the prince of darkness,

This packer is called Sir Robert Bracher, a false protestant, in king Edward's days, and afterward a deadly enemy to that religion which he had professed, and now is become a protestant again; and serveth at St. Dennis in London, in Fenchurch street, and calleth himself Harry Bradshawe.

This pedlar coming to the burial of his friend, and God's great enemy, Walter Clarke, of Hadley, albeit he came somewhat too late to the market, as he said, yet being desirous to utter his ware, opened there his pack full of most pestilent and poisoned doctrine. This was one of them that so unmercifully thrust Dr. Taylor's wife and children out of the doors, as she herself can testify.

and be cast in to the paradise of utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now touching the packs of wool, and packs of cloth, I fear they were, as all other their wares be, transubstantiate into flocks; even his very finest packing-stuff against only faith justifying, and for the corporal presence of Christ's body in the sacrament, for praying for souls departed, and for auricular confession. Abraham's justification by faith, by grace, by promise, and not by works, is plainly set forth, both in the epistle to the Romans chap. 4., and to the Galatians chap. 3. And Abraham's works of obedience in offering up his son, so long after his justification, must needs be taken as a fruit of a good tree justifying before men, and not of justification before God: for then had man to glory in: then did Christ die in vain. And whereas the 6 chap. of St. John was alleged, to prove that Christ did give his body corporally in his supper, even as he had promised in the said 6th chapter it is most untrue. For he only gave his body sacramentally, spiritually, and effectually, in his supper to the faithful Apostles; and corporally he gave it in a bloody sacrifice for the life of the world upon the cross, once for all. There in his own person, in his own natural body, he bare all our sins: by whose stripes we were healed, as St. Peter proveth, 1 Pet. 2.—Esay. chap. 53.—Indeed, receiving Christ's sacrament accordingly as it was instituted, we receive Christ's body and Christ's blood, even as I said before the apostles did. But the Popish mass is another matter. The mass, as it is now, is but one of Antichrist's youngest daughters, in the which the devil is rather present and received, than our Saviour, the second person in Trinity, God and man. O Lord God, heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, we beseech thee to turn again England to the right way it was in, in king Edward's time, from this Babylonical, stewish, spiritual whoredom, conspiracy, tyranny, detestable enormities, false doctrine, heresy, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word and commandments; from this evident and open idolatry, sacrilege, simony, blasphemy, superstition, hypocrisy, transubstantiate angel of light and day-devil, kingdom of lies, foul vain schisms, sects, seduction, apostacy, gay sweet poison, honied and sugared viperous venom, wily wolfishness, satanical subtilty, and abomination in the sight of God, and of all such as put on the true spectacles of holy Scripture. I am the more plain now in this matter, because I fear greatly, that many will be too much ready to go from Christ to Antichrist; from the Bible, true God's service and religion, to let in lying legends, portasses,<sup>1</sup> massbooks, and superstition. They say their church cannot err in any point; wher indeed they be not of God's church, and therefore they can do nothing but err, even as they do almost in all cases of true faith.

But, to come again to the packer, rather than preacher, he

<sup>1</sup> *brevia-  
ries*

bringeth St. Chrysostom's sentence, writing *Ad populum Antiochenum*; where he, making a comparison between Christ's flesh and Elias' cloke cast down to Eliseus, when Elias was taken up in the fiery chariot: at length he saith, that Christ, ascending up to heaven, took his flesh with him, and also left his flesh behind him in earth. The meaning of it is, he did ascend with his flesh, and left a memorial-cloke of the same body and flesh, which he calleth his flesh; as he, in the sacramental phrase, calleth bread his body, because it representeth his body; and as in the like manner of sacramental speech, a lamb was called the passover, the circumcision, God's covenant. He took up his flesh corporally, and left his flesh in mystery and sacrament, spiritually. Or it may be said that he left his flesh upon earth; that is, his mystical body, his faithful people, whom St. Paul calleth the members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones. Eph. 5. In the 49th chap. of Genesis, there is no word of Christ's sacrament, but there is a prophecy of Christ's passion, wherein his soul was bound, that is, his body. And where he speaketh there of grapes and wine, it is as that is spoken of Christ in another place, where he saith: *Ego solus torcular calcavi*, I alone did tread the wine press; meaning thereby, that Christ alone suffered painful passion for the remission of sins, and for the consolation of all his faithful soldiers.

It is not true, as the packer saith, that Christ's infinite power may make his body to be in a thousand places at once, as a loaf to be in a thousand bellies: for then might Christ divide the parts of his body, as a loaf is divided and so consumed; and then might Scripture be false, appointing Christ's body to be but in one place. Acts 3. Phil. 3. Heb. 1. The articles of our faith tell us sufficiently, where Christ's body is. It was never in two places at once, neither ever shall be, neither ever can be corporally and naturally; neither ever was, is, can, or shall be eaten so with any corporal mouths, as the Capernaïtes and papists most erroneously and heretically do judge. If our Saviour Jesus Christ hath no other body natural than is made of the substance of bread, and is in a thousand places at once, as I have often said in Hadley, we are not yet redeemed; neither shall our bodies rise again, and be made like unto his glorious body. We are sure, that our Saviour Christ's body is made of none other substance, than of his mother the blessed Virgin Mary's substance. We are sure, that he taketh not the nature of angels, much less of bread. Only he taketh on him the seed of Abraham, Heb. 2., in all things like unto us, only sin except. And this is a comfortable doctrine to us Christians, believing stedfastly, as the true catholic faith is, that Christ hath but two natures, perfect God and perfect man. Upon this rock Christ's church is builded, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. Matt. 16.

I speak nothing now of auricular confession, and praying for souls departed, because I do not hear what authors the packer brought in for this purpose. Sure I am, that he can bring no authentical and canonical warrant for such his packware. He may say what he will of Hebricians and Grecians, and flesh under forms, and not above forms, or above the board. He may conjure and convey, pass and repass, even what he will, in such clouds and mists. He reproved the Scriptures as full of darkness, and yet is <sup>! wisely</sup> full of darkness himself. He did wittily<sup>1</sup> to bring proofs out of Jewry, Turkey, and other strange places, for his round white cake, for that such his pedlary pelf-pack is contrary to the plain simplicity of Christ's supper. He glanced at priests' marriages. He might against that have brought as ancient a Doctor, as any he alleged out of Hebrew for his Mass or wafer cake; that is, doctor Devil. 1 Tim. 4.

I marvel that he did not confute and confound St. Paul, for the sentences, written above the altar, of the which he made mention in the pulpit. For he and his fellows of Oxford be so profound, so excellent, so glorious and triumphant clerks, that they can easily prove a man an ass, and all writers in the Bible ignorant, simple, full of errors, full of heresies, and beggarly fools. Yet they will be called catholics, faithful true Christian people, defenders of the holy mother the church: but truly they take part with the prince of darkness, with antichrist, with Jezebel. Apoc. 2. They will not be called papists, pharisees, Jews, Turks, heretics, and so forth: but whatsoever they will be called, God's religion had never more evident adversaries, and that in all the chief points of it; no not then, when our Saviour Christ whipt such merchants out of the temple, calling them a company of thieves. Matt. 21. God give them grace to repent. God be thanked, that the nobility something of late hath spied and stopped their tyranny. Oh unhappy England! Oh more ungrate people, sooner bewitched, than the foolish Galatians! We have now none excuse. We have undoubtedly seen the true trace of the prophetic, apostolic, primitive catholic church. We are warned to beware, lest we be led out of that way, society, and rule of religion. Now we shall shew what countrymen we be; whether spiritual and heavenly, or carnal and worldly. We had as true knowledge as ever was in any country or in any time, since the beginning of the world: God be praised therefore. If Hadley, being so many years persuaded in such truth, will now willingly and wittingly forsake the same, and defile itself with the cake-god, idolatry, and other antichristianity thereunto belonging, let it surely look after many and wonderful plagues of God shortly. Though another have now the benefice yet, as God knoweth, I cannot but be careful for my dear Hadley. And therefore as I could not but speak, after the first abominable

Mass begun there, I being present, no more I cannot but write now being absent, hearing of the wicked profanation of my late pulpit, by such a wily wolf. God's love, mercy, goodness, and favour hath been unspeakable, in teaching us the right way of salvation and justification. Let us all have some zeal, some care, how to serve him according to his good will written. The God of love and peace be ever in Hadley, through Christ our only Advocate. Amen.

Rowland Taylor.

### A Letter of Master Philpot,

Written to certain of his faithful friends, as his last Farewell, a little before he suffered.

The knowledge of God, which hath enlightened you with true understanding of the Gospel of Christ, be remaining with you still to the end, and be augmented in your hearts and doings, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, to the glory of God and your eternal salvation. Amen.

A man that is passing into far countries, before his departing, committeth such goods as God hath endued him withal to his dearest friends, to the end that they might be the better by them, if he return not again. Even so, dearly beloved, and right worshipful, my good friends, I (having shortly to pass unto my heavenly inheritance which is hidden with Christ, and to our common country and eternal dwelling-place which we shall have with God, never to return before the latter day, in the which our souls shall come to judgment, and receive their bodies to be glorified, according to their doings,) have thought it my duty to communicate unto you something, (with whom I have found great humanity,) of the few heavenly treasures, with the which God among others hath endued me in Christ: whereby he hath made me his child, and assuredly the inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, with all those which unfeignedly love him, and constantly cleave to his holy Gospel; and that is, by the renovation of his image, whereunto man was first created like unto God, which is to be in the favour of God, to know God truly, to live justly, to delight fervently in the contemplation of God, to be continually happy, to be immortal, void of all corruption and sin: the which blessed image through sin is deformed in us, and in manner lost; saving that it hath pleased GOD of his mercy, who willet not the death of a sinner, to restore that image by grace, through knowledge and belief of the Gospel, which otherwise in our nature is clean suppressed and extinguished.

Therefore we, knowing the great and lamentable loss which we

do sustain in Adam, ought most earnestly to seek the recovery thereof, that we might eternally live like unto God in immortality and felicity: the which we shall never recover, unless we go about to mortify our outward man all the days of our life more and more, and be renewed in spirit according to the true knowledge of God; the which if we be, then may we be assured that we have found that joy, felicity, and eternal life, which Adam had in paradise, yea, and more than that ten thousand fold; for that it is such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, neither the heart can conceive, which Christ hath prepared for us. This image of God whosoever by faith doth find, he hath found the most precious treasure that any man can find; for he is even here a citizen of heaven, and in possession of eternal life. Therefore I commit unto you principally a daily care of the renovation of this image, as the chiefest jewel you can desire in this world. And hereof now I am the more moved to put you in remembrance, because I love you entirely in the Lord, and desire your fellowship, which the iniquity<sup>1</sup> of our time will not permit me to enjoy here. And forasmuch as we have a better life to come than this present is, an eternal society with Christ, which neither the malice of time, neither the distance of place, can dissolve or separate; I exhort you now, as one that hath obtained mercy of God in the reparation of his image in me, to embrace the care thereof, with earnest desire to attain the same; whereby we shall all have a perfect fruition of our love and friendship, which already we have here begun, and with God in heaven shall be (without all doubt) made joyfully perfect.

<sup>1</sup> *injus-  
tice*

Let this be a perpetual remembrance of your poor afflicted friend, which daily looketh through fire to enter into that eternal life; where he trusteth assuredly to enjoy your fellowship, if the image of God be renewed in you through the knowledge of Christ, which you have received and do know. Look whose image the coin beareth; his it is. Semblably,<sup>2</sup> if your conversation be after the Gospel, verily you are the elect of Christ; but if it be according to the world, his servants you are whom your life doth express. We have all in baptism put on Christ; whom if we endeavour to represent, we are indeed the sons of God and inheritors with Christ. One good rule St. Paul to the Rom. in the 12th chapter doth appoint, for the restoration of this our image of God. Fashion not yourselves (saith he) unto this world: but be ye changed in your shape, by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the will of God; which thing is good, acceptable and perfect. God grant that this rule may take place with you; and then doubtless our company shall be inseparable with all the saints of God in eternal bliss.

<sup>2</sup> *in all  
probabi-  
lity*

Be you not deceived by the vain possessions and uncertain pleasures of this world; which serve to none other purpose, than

to blind your eyes, that they might not behold the things which be glorious and permanent for ever. The things which we see, are mortal; but the things which we see not, but certainly hope for, be immortal. For all flesh, as the prophet Esay saith, is but grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field. Oh that you, which have the possessions of this world, would so account them, and not sell your eternal inheritance for a mess of pottage, as Esau did. God open your eyes, that you may see the glory of Christ in the mount, with Peter, John, and James. Then, I doubt not, you would say with Peter, Lord it is good for us to abide here; let us here make our dwelling-places. We have in this world no firm mansion, but we seek after that which is to come: the which if we seek now where it may be found, we shall surely find it. If we mortify the image of Adam, which through sin reigneth in our flesh, then shall the image of Christ revive in us to our eternal glory. We are all baptized to die with Christ, to the end we should walk in newness of life, as persons dead to the world, and living to God. And if we die with him, by crucifying our concupiscence and lusts, we shall eternally live. Infidelity is the cause of all our misery; which causeth us to fear man more than GOD, and to esteem the things present more than the things to come. God enlighten our eyes, that we may understand how precious an inheritance Christ hath prepared for such; as hunger and thirst thereafter. Then, I doubt not, we would say with St. Paul, I am surely persuaded, that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rule, neither power, neither things present, neither things to come, neither any other treasure, or creature, shall separate us from the love which is in Christ Jesus. The Lord increase our faith; and give us his Holy Spirit, to discern with ourselves how much we are grown in his image, and are like unto him; for, how much we are unlike to the world, so much more are we like unto God, and so much the more do we approach unto him. The Lord draw you by his Holy Spirit, and fashion you unto his likeness, that we may eternally live together. The means to come thereunto, is diligent exercise in God's word; continual and faithful prayer; a desire and love to God; the fear of God; the contempt of the world; and a constant faith in the knowledge of his word, joined with the works of righteousness.

This is the sum of all our Christian religion which we do profess: which if we follow, happy are we that ever we were born. But if we be negligent of this, it had been better for us never to have been born: for cursed are they that decline from the Lord and his holy commandments, and have their delights in the vanities of this world. Cease not to follow the image of God, and to express the same in yourselves to the glory of God; and then God will glorify you for his image sake, which he saith to

live in you. We are all weak in transforming the same in us at the beginning; for our flesh is clean contrary to it. But we must not give over, by lawfully striving, till we may say with St. Paul, Now live I; but not I, but Christ in me. The Lord grant that Christ, which by the gospel is planted in us, may be fashioned in our godly conversation, to the glory of God, and to the good example of our brethren; that our temporal life may be changed into eternal life, and our friendship in God eternally endure. Amen.

This last farewell I send unto you to be a token of my love, until we shall meet in the kingdom of Christ; there to rejoice perfectly of that godly fellowship, which here we have had on the earth. God hasten that meeting; and deliver you from the temptation which is now come upon the church of England, for the trial of such as be faithful in the Lord's testament, to the crown of their glory if they be found faithful to the end. Let us watch and pray one for another, that these evil days do not overwhelm us; in the which our adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The peace of GOD remain with you for ever.—Written in the King's bench by one of the poor captive sheep of Christ, appointed to the slaughter for the testimony of the truth, where he doth joy, and wisheth you to joy, praising God with him. Amen.

John Philpot.

### A Letter of Master Bradford,

To certain men which maintained the heresy of the Pelagians and Papists concerning man's freewill; which, upon occasions, were then prisoners with him in the Kings Bench.

The good Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of truth, and guide to God's children, be with us all, and lead us into all truth. Amen.

Hitherto I have oftentimes resorted unto you (my friends, as I thought), and by all means sought to do you good, even to mine own charges and hinderance. But now I see it happeneth otherwise; and therefore I am purposed, till I may know more than I do, to absent myself from you, but not my help; and by these letters to supply that, which by mouth patiently you cannot abide to hear. You report me to my face that I am a great slander to the church of God: which may be two ways understood; that is, by living and doctrine. But as for living, you yourselves (I thank God therefore) gave testimony with me. In doctrine, therefore, you mean it. Now, in that there be many parts of the doctrine of Christ, I trow you mean not generally, but particularly: for you in generality have divers times given



your commendation on my behalf, both to my face and behind my back; for the which I humbly praise my God, through Christ. In particularity therefore you mean that I am a slander; which (as far as I know) is only in this to youwards, that I believe and affirm the salvation of God's children to be so certain, that they shall assuredly enjoy the same. You say, it hangeth partly upon our perseverance to the end: and I say, it hangeth only and altogether upon God's grace in Christ, and not upon our perseverance in any point; for then were grace no grace. You will (and do) in words deny our perseverance to be any cause, but yet in deed you do otherwise. For if perseverance be not a cause, but only God's grace in Christ the whole and only cause of salvation; then the cause, that is to say grace remaining, the thing, that is to say salvation, cannot but remain also. Of which thing if with the Scriptures you would make perseverance an effect or fruit, then could you not be offended at the truth: but say as it saith, that the salvation of God's children is so certain, that they shall never finally perish, the Lord putting his hand under them, that, if they fall, yet shall not lie still. For whom he loveth he leaveth not, but loveth them unto the end: so that perseverance is proper to them, and doth discern them from hypocrites, and such as seem to other, and to themselves also sometimes, that they be God's children. Which if they once were indeed, then, as St. John saith, they should not sin the sin to death; neither should they go out of God's church, but, as St. Paul saith, should persevere to the end. Now to be God's child is no less in all points above the power of man, than to be man's child is above our own power: but so much it passeth our ability in all points to be God's child, by how much this dignity is greater. Again, once God's child indeed, and God's child for ever: that is, finally shall not he that is so perish eternally, if that God our Father be both of good will infinite, and also of power accordingly; and if the seed of God which remaineth in his children can keep them from sinning (I mean to death); for otherwise they sin, and therefore pray daily, Forgive us our debts &c. Moreover, God's children be under grace, and not under the law, and therefore sin shall not damn them. For where no law is, there is no transgression (transgression I say to final damnation); for the new covenant of God is, never to remember their sins, but to give them such hearts and minds, that as they naturally lust and labour to do that is evil, so their inward man renewed; striveth to the contrary, and at the length shall prevail because he is stronger that is in them, than he that is in the world. And St. Paul saith, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? in that God absolveth them for Christ's sake, of whom they are kept; so that it is not possible for them to perish, in respect of their Pastor, who is faithful over God's people.

Rom. 11.

John 13.

1 John 2.5.

1 John 2.

Heb. 4.

1 John. 3.

Matt. 6.

Rom. 6.

Rom. 4.

1 John. 3.

Rom. 8.

John 6.

Matt. 24.

Heb. 13.

Heb. 3.

This certainty and assurance whoso feeleth in himself by the testimony of God's Spirit, in deed and of truth, the same is happy for ever, and cannot but, as he hopeth he shall be like to Christ in his coming, so desire it, and purify himself in all purity (so far will he be from carnal liberty): and, as the elect of God, he will endue and apparel himself daily with the apparel of the elect, using prayer night and day; which is another property of God's children. To this certainty, all the creatures of God call us, concerning their creation and use. This assurance God's first commandment requireth under pain of damnation; the Gospel of God and all his promises; the sacraments; and the substance of them, which is Christ Jesus our Saviour, doth above all things require it of every one that is baptized and brought into God's church. Nothing else doth GOD so require of us, as thus to be persuaded of him; for out of it floweth all godliness to God and man. So that it cannot be but they take Satan's part, which go about to let or hinder this certainty in themselves and in others. The which thing in that you do indeed, howsoever you mean, I cannot but, as I have done often before, admonish you of it eftsoons,<sup>1</sup> that your bloods may be on your own heads, if you persevere in your obstinacy, and if you do it obstinately and not ignorantly. From the which I beseech Almighty God to deliver you. Amen. 1 January.

<sup>1</sup> again

John Bradford.

### A Letter of Master Thomas Whittell,

Written to a friend of his, declaring the shameful tyranny of bloody Bonner; who, like a right angel of Satan, to pervert his faith and drive him from God, buffeted him with his butcherly fists, and most cruelly beat him.

Upon Thursday, which was the 6th of January, the bishop of London sent for me out of the porter's lodge, where I had been all night lying upon the earth, upon a pallet; where I had as painful a night of sickness as ever I had, I praise God. And when I came before him, he talked with me many things of the sacrament, so grossly, as is not worthy to be rehearsed. And amongst other things, he asked me if I would have come to Mass that morning, if he had sent for me. Whereunto I answered, that I would have come to him at his commandment; but to your Mass (said I) I have small affection. At which answer he was displeased sore, and said I should be fed with bread and water. And as I followed him through the great hall, he turned back and beat me with his fist, first on the one cheek, and then on the other, as the sign of my beating did many days after

appear. And then he sent me into a litle salthouse, where I had no straw nor bed, but lay two nights on a table, and slept soundly, I thank God. Then upon the Friday next after, I was brought to my lord, who gave me many fair words, and said he would be good to me. And so he, going to Fulham, committed me to Dr. Harpsfield, that he and I in that afternoon should commune together; and drew out certain articles, whereunto if I would subscribe, I should be dismissed. But Dr. Harpsfield sent not for me till night, and then persuaded me very sore to forsake my opinions. I answered, I held nothing but the truth, and therefore I could not so lightly turn therefrom. So I thought I should at that time have had no more ado: but he had made a certain bill, which the Register pulled out of his bosom, and read it. The bill indeed was very easily made, and therefore more dangerous. For the effect thereof was, to detest all errors and heresies against the sacrament of the altar, and other sacraments, and to believe the faith of the catholic church, and live accordingly.

They that saw his face thus miserably arrayed, and much worse than he reporteth, can bear witness to the truth hereof.—St. Paul commandeth that a bishop should be no fighter or striker. Titus 1.

The children of God, when they see their imperfections, frailties, faults and offences, are many times brought to such heaviness, doubting and mistrust of God's mercy towards them, as though he had clean forsaken them; as you may read, Psal. 31, 22, 77. But then wax they most strong, and receive new comforts again in Christ; as here you may see in this man of God.

To this bill I did indeed set to my hand, being much desired and counselled so to do; and, the flesh being always desirous to have liberty, I considered not thoroughly the inconvenience that might come thereupon; and respite I desired to have had, but earnestly they required me to subscribe. Now when I had so done, I had little joy thereof. For by and by my mind and conscience told me by God's word, that I had done evil, by such a sleight, to shake off the sweet cross of Christ; and it was not my seeking, as God he knoweth, but altogether came of them. Oh, the crafty subtilty of Satan in his members! Let every man that God shall deliver into their hands, take good heed, and cleave fast to Christ; for they will leave no corner of his conscience unsought, but will attempt all guileful and subtile means to corrupt him, and make him to fall both from God and his truth. But yet let no man despair of God's help; for Peter did fall and rise again. And David saith, A righteous man though he fall, he shall not be cast away; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. For I for my part have felt my infirmities, and yet I have found God's present help and comfort in time of need; I most humbly thank him therefore. The night after I had subscribed, I was sore grieved, and for sorrow of conscience could not sleep. For in the deliverance of my body out of bonds, which I might have had, I could find no joy nor comfort; but still was in my conscience tormented more and more, being assured by God's Spirit and his word, that I through evil counsel and advisement had done amiss; and both with disquietness of mind, and with my other cruel handling, I was very sickly, lying upon the ground when the keeper came; whom I desired to pray Dr. Harpsfield to come to me—and so he did. And when he came,

and the Register with him, I told him that I was not well at ease : but especially I told him I was grieved very much in my conscience and mind, because I had subscribed ; and I said that my conscience had so accused me, through the just judgment of God and his word, that I had felt hell in my conscience, and Satan ready to devour me ; and therefore I pray you, Master Harpsfield, said I, let me have the bill again, for I will not stand to it. So he commanded it to be fetched, and gave it me, and suffered me to pull out my name ; whereof I was right glad when I had so done, although death should follow. And hereby I had experience of God's providence and mercy towards me, who trieth his people and suffereth them to fall, but not to be lost. For in the midst of this temptation and trouble, he gave me warning of my fall, and also delivered me ; his name be praised for evermore. Amen. Neither devil nor cruel tyranny can pluck any of Christ's sheep out of his hand. Of the which flock of Christ's sheep, I trust undoubtedly I am one, by means of his death and blood-shedding ; which shall at the last day stand at his right hand, and receive, with other, his blessed benediction. And now, being condemned to die, my conscience and mind, I praise God, is quiet in Christ ; and I by his grace am very well willing and content to give over this body to the death, for the testimony of his truth and pure religion, against antichrist and all his false religion and doctrine. They that report otherwise of me, speak not truly. And as for Fountain, I saw him not all this while.

Thomas Whittell, Minister.

### Another Letter of Master Thomas Whittell,

Written to a certain godly woman.

Oh, my dear and loving sister in Christ, be not dismayed in this storm of persecution : for Paul calleth the Gospel, the word of the cross, because it is never truly taught, but the cross and cruel persecution immediately and necessarily doth follow the same ; and therefore it is a manifest token of God's truth, that hath been here, and is still abroad, and that is a cause of the rage and cruelty of Satan against Christ and his members, which must be corrected for their sins in this world ; their faith must be tried, that, after trial and patient suffering, the faithful may receive the crown of glory. Fear not therefore, my well-beloved ; but proceed in the knowledge and fear of GOD, and he will keep you from all evil. Call upon his holy Name, and he will strengthen you and assist you in all your ways ; and if it please him to lay his cross upon you, for his Gospel's sake, refuse it not,

neither shake it off by unlawful means, lest you should (as God forbid!) find a more grievous cross and torment of conscience, if you should dissemble and deny the known verity, than is any persecution or death of body. Oh how happy are they, that suffer persecution for righteousness sake! Their reward is great in heaven. The momentane<sup>1</sup> afflictions of this life are not worthy of the glory that shall be shewed upon us. Oh, remember the godly women of the Old Testament and New, which lived in God's service and fear, and therefore are now in bliss and commended for ever; as namely Judith, Esther, Abigail, the Mother of the seven sons, Mary, Elizabeth, Susanna, Lydia, and Phœbe—and others. Set their examples before your eyes, and fear nothing; for Satan is conquered by our Saviour Christ; sin is put to flight, and the gate of immortality and eternal life is set wide open. God grant we may enter therein, through the door, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thomas Whittell.

### Master Bartelet Green

To certain of his Friends, a little before his death.

Better is the day of death, saith Solomon, than the day of birth. Man that is born of woman liveth but a short time, and is replenished with many miseries; but happy are the dead that die in the Lord. Man of woman is born in travail, to live in misery; man through Christ doth die in joy, and live in felicity. He is born to die, and dieth to live. Straight as he cometh into the world, with cries he uttereth his miserable estate; straight as he departeth, with songs he praiseth God for ever. Scarce yet in his cradle, three deadly enemies assault him: after death, no adversary may annoy him. Whilst he is here, he displeaseth God; when he is dead, he fulfilleth his will. In this life here, he dieth through sin; in the life to come, he liveth in righteousness. Through many tribulations in earth is he still purged; with joy unspeakable in heaven is he made pure for ever. Here he dieth every hour; there he liveth continually. Here is sin; there is righteousness. Here is time; there is eternity. Here is hatred; there is love. Here is pain; there is pleasure. Here is misery; there is felicity. Here is corruption; there is immortality. Here we see vanity; there shall we behold the Majesty of God, with triumphant and unspeakable joy in glory everlasting. Seek therefore the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the

right hand of God the Father; unto whom, with the Sen and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Christe Deus, sine te spes est mihi nulla salutis;  
Te duce vera sequor, te duce falsa nego.

IN ENGLISH THUS:

O Christ my God, sure hope of health besides thee have I none;  
That truth I love and falsehood hate, thou art my guide alone.

Your's in Christ, Bartlet Green.

### A Letter of John Careless, to one Mistress Cotton.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comforts of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his sweet mercies, be with you, dear friend and faithful loving sister, good Mistress Cotton, to the full increase of your joy in Christ, now and evermore. Amen.

As, from the very bottom of my poor heart, I wish unto you health both of body and soul, my dear loving sister in the Lord, so will I never cease praying unto God for the same, according unto my most bounden duty. Howbeit of your body upon condition, but of your soul without any condition; being well assured that the Lord, for his dear Son's sake, will perfectly grant me the same, so far forth as shall be most for your profit. So that if the health of your body will stand with the wealth of your soul, I am sure I shall have my petition granted for the health of the same. But if the sickness of your body be for the health of your soul, as I am sure it is, then have I also my desire granted; because I ask the same no further than it may stand with the other. But for the everlasting health of your soul do I heartily pray without the addition of any condition; for it is the Lord's good will I should so do. Therefore I am sure my request is already granted therein; for his sake, who hath redeemed the same with his most precious blood, yea, in whom you were elected before the foundation of the world was laid. This is most true, and therefore let nothing persuade you to the contrary. Rest upon this rock, and be you sure the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. I know, dear heart, that you have done much good to the poor for Jesus Christ's sake: yet beware you do not put any trust or confidence in your good deeds, merits, or deservings; but only in Jesus Christ, which hath given you himself wholly to

be yours, with all his holiness, righteousness, justification, and redemption, and all that ever he may. On the other side, he hath taken upon himself all your sins, misery, and infirmity; and hath made a full satisfaction for them, with the sacrifice of his own body and blood offered once for all. This I know, my good sister, you do constantly confess and believe, as that godly fruit of your Christian faith doth daily testify. I trust to be a witness with you at the great day, that your faith is unfeigned and full of godly charity; the Lord increase the same.—I am constrained here to make an end full sore against my will. My poor prayers shall supply that which my pen doth lack. The blessing of God be with you, now and ever. Amen.

Your daily Orator,<sup>1</sup> John Careless.

*1 interces-  
sor*

### A Letter of Master John Rough,

Written a little before his death, to the Christian Congregation in London, whereof he was a minister and preacher.

The comfort of the Holy Ghost make you able to give consolation to others in these dangerous days, when Satan is let loose to the trial of the chosen, when it pleaseth our God to sift his wheat from the chaff. I have not leisure and time to write the great temptations I have been under. I speak to God's glory; my care was to have the senses of my soul open to perceive the voice of God, saying, Who that denieth me before men, them will I deny before my Father and his angels; and to save the life corporal, is to lose the life eternal; and he that will not suffer with Christ, shall not reign with him. Therefore, most tender ones, I have by God's Spirit given over the flesh, with the fight of my soul, and the spirit hath the victory. The flesh shall now, ere it be long, leave off to sin; the spirit shall reign eternally. I have chosen the death, to confirm the truth by me taught. What can I do more? Consider with yourselves, that I have done it for confirmation of God's truth. Pray that I may continue unto the end. The great part of the assault is past—I praise my GOD. I have, in all my assaults, felt his present aid; I give him most hearty thanks therefore. Look not back, nor be ye ashamed of Christ's Gospel, nor of the bonds I have suffered for the same; whereby ye may be assured it is the true word of God. The holy ones have been sealed with the same mark. It is no time, for the loss of one man in the battle, for the camp to turn back. Up with men's hearts; blow down the daubed walls of heresies. Let one take the banner, another the trumpet; I mean, not to make corporal resistance, but pray; and ye shall have Elias's defence, and Eliseus' company, to fight for you; for

the cause is the Lord's. Now, my brethren, I can write no more ; time will not suffer, and my heart with pangs of death is assaulted ; but I am at home with my God, yet alive. Pray for me, and salute one another with the holy kiss. The peace of God rest with you all. Amen. From Newgate prison, in haste ; the day of my condemnation.

John Rough.

**A Letter of Cuthbert Simson,**

A Deacon of the Christian Congregation in London, and burnt in Smithfield for the verity of Christ's Gospel ; written to his wife out of the coalhouse.

My dearly beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, I cannot write as I do wish unto you. I beseech you with my soul, submit yourself under the mighty hand of our God, trusting in his mercy ; and he will surely help us, as shall be most unto his glory and our everlasting comfort : being sure of this, that he will suffer nothing to come unto us, but that which shall be most profitable for us. For it is either a correction for our sins, or a trial of our faith, or to set forth his glory, or for all together, and therefore must needs be well done ; for there is nothing that cometh unto us by fortune or chance, but by our heavenly Father's providence ; and therefore pray unto our heavenly Father, that he will ever give us his grace so to consider it. Let us give him most hearty thanks for these his fatherly corrections ; for as many as he loveth, he correcteth. And I beseech you now, be of good cheer ; and count the cross of Christ greater riches, than all the vain pleasures of England. I do not doubt (I praise God for it) but that you have supped with Christ at his Maundy,<sup>1</sup> I mean, that you believe in him, for that is the effect ; and then must you drink of his cup, I mean, his cross, for that doth the cup signify unto us. Take the cup with a good stomach, in the name of God ; and then shall you be sure to have that good wine, Christ's blood to your poor thirsty soul. And when you have the wine, you must drink it out of this cup. Learn this when you come to the Lord's supper. Pray continually. In all things give thanks.

Cuthbert Simson.

Of the exceeding cruel and unmerciful rackings and other torments that this man of God most patiently suffered, read and see in the book of Martyrs. Fol. 165l.

1 the day before Good Friday



**A Letter of William Coker,**

Then prisoner in Canterbury, and afterward burnt, for the testimony of the truth ; written to a friend of his.

As your hearty friend in God, and, through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, as pertaining to the faith your brother, I send you greeting and most Christian salutations. For your kindness, in that you wrote so speedily to me again, I commend you, and thank God for it ; though of necessity (you say) you were partly moved so to do, by reason of my bonds in the Lord. I heartily joyed by occasion of your letter ; because I understood thereby the state of mine old friends and godly acquaintance, and how ye all continually labour, as we do, in the Gospel of Christ, which is the word of salvation to as many as believe. Wherein we have this confidence, through our faith in the blood of Christ, that, though Satan and his rabble of ministers do rage never so much with lying and deceiveable power, yea, though he should appear never so glorious and angel-like in the sight of the world, yet shall his fiery darts be quenched, and he never able to prevail against us. For the which testimony of conscience, I give thanks unto God from the bottom of my heart ; and pray always unto the Lord, that, as we have begun, even so we may go forwards unto the end, until the time that the darkness be clean put away, and the perfect light shine in our hearts, souls, and bodies, in the eternal kingdom with God ; where we shall be sure our enemies shall not prevail against us, but then most victoriously be overcome by that sweet Lamb, the Son of God. In the mean time, the Lord preserve and keep us from evil. The Lord make us stout in his cause, and give us grace to confess the truth before this whorish generation. The Lord grant we may work his heavenly will ; that, when the time shall come, he may receive us unto himself in the glory everlasting : to whom be praise and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

Your brother in bonds, for the Lord's cause,

William Coker.

**A Letter of Nicholas Shetterden,**

A faithful Martyr of Jesus Christ, written to his Mother a little before  
his death.

O my good Mother, whom I love with reverence in the Lord, according to my duty, I desire your favourable blessing, and forgiveness of all my misdeeds towards you.

O my dear Mother, in few words I wish you the same salvation, which I hope myself to feel, and partly taste of, before this come to you to read; and in the resurrection I verily believe to have it more perfectly in body and soul joined together for ever; and in that day GOD grant you to see my face with joy; but, dear Mother, then beware of that great idolatry and blasphemous Mass. Oh, let not that be your GOD, which mice and worms can devour; behold, I call heaven and earth to record, that it is no GOD, yea the fire that consumeth it, and the moistness that causeth it to mould. And I take Christ's Testament to witness, that it is none of his ordinances, but a mere invention of men, and a snare to catch innocent blood; and now that GOD hath shewed it unto you, be warned in time. Oh, give over old customs, and become new in the truth. What state soever your fathers be in, leave that to God, and let us follow the counsel of his word: dear Mother, embrace it with hearty affection; read it with obedience; let it be your pastime, and cast off all carnal affections, and love of worldly things: so shall we meet in joy at the last day, or else I bid you farewell for evermore. Oh, farewell, my friends and lovers all: God grant me to see your faces in joy. *AMEN.* From Westgate, the 11th of July, 1555.

Nicholas Shetterden, appointed to be slain, for Christ's cause, and the maintenance of his most sound and true religion.

**A Letter written by the Lady Jane Grey,**

To her Sister the Lady Catherine; immediately before she suffered.

I have here sent you, good sister Catherine, a book; which, although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than precious stones. It is the book, dear sister, of the law of the Lord; it is his Testament and last will, which he bequeathed unto us wretches; which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy; and if you with a good mind do read it, and with an earnest purpose follow it, it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life. It will teach you to live, and learn

This book was a New Testament in Greek, in the end whereof she had written this letter.

you to die. It shall win you more than you should have gained by the possession of your woeful father's lands. For as, if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his lands; so if you apply diligently this book, seeking to directy our life after it, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt. Desire with David, good sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God. Live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life. And trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life; for as soon, if God call, goeth the young as the old. And labour always to learn to die. Defy the world, deny the devil, and despise the flesh; and delight yourself only in the Lord. Be penitent for your sins, and yet despair not; be strong in faith, and yet presume not; and desire with St. Paul to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, with whom even in death there is life. Be like that good servant, and even at midnight be waking, lest, when death cometh and stealeth upon you like a thief in the night, you be with the evil servant found sleeping; and lest, for lack of oil, you be found like the five foolish women, and like him that had not on the wedding garment, and so be cast out from the marriage. Rejoice in Christ, as I praise God I do. Follow the steps of your master Christ, and take up your cross; lay your sins on his back, and always embrace him. And as touching my death, rejoice, as I do (good sister), that I shall be delivered from this corruption, and put on incorruption; for I am assured that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win an immortal life. The which I pray God grant you; send you of his grace to live in his fear, and to die in the true christian faith; from the which (in God's name) I exhort you that you never swerve, neither for hope of life, nor for fear of death. For if you will deny his truth to lengthen your life, God will deny you, and yet shorten your days. And if you will cleave unto him, he will prolong your days, to your comfort and his glory; to the which glory God bring me now, and you hereafter, when it pleaseth him to call you. Fare you well, good sister, and put your only trust in God, who only must help you.

## LETTERS OF MASTER GEORGE MARSH,

A godly, faithful, and learned pastor in Christ's church; put to death at Westchester, with most cruel kinds of torments (as you may see in the book of Martyrs, fol. 1122) for the constant and faithful confession of Christ's Gospel.

To the Professors of God's Word and true Religion,

In the Town of Langton.

Grace be with you, and peace be multiplied, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I thought it my duty to write unto you, my beloved in the Lord at Langton, to stir up your hearts, and to call to your remembrance the words which have been told you before, and to exhort you (as that good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, Barnabas, did the Antiochians), that with purpose of heart ye continually cleave unto the Lord: and that ye stand fast, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, whereof (God be thanked) ye have had plenteous preaching unto you by your late pastor Master Saunders, and other faithful ministers of Jesus Christ; which now, when persecution ariseth because of the word, do not fall away like shrinking children, and forsake the truth, being ashamed of the Gospel whereof they have been preachers, but are willing and ready for your sakes (which are Christ's mystical body) to forsake not only the chief and principal delights of this life, I mean, their native countries, friends, livings, &c.; but also to fulfil their ministry unto the uttermost, that is, to wit, with their painful imprisonments and blood-sheddings (if need shall require) to confirm and seal Christ's Gospel, whereof they have been ministers; and (as St. Paul saith) they are ready not only to be cast into prison, but also to be killed for the name of the Lord Jesus. Whether these, being that good salt of the earth, that is, true ministers of God's word, by whose doctrine, being received through faith, men are made savoury unto God, and which themselves lose not their saltness now when they be proved with the boisterous storms of adversity and persecution; or others, being that unsavoury salt which hath lost his saltness, that is, to wit, those ungodly ministers which do fall from the word of God unto the dreams and traditions of antichrist—whether of these (I say) be more to be credited and believed, let all men judge.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, receive the word of God with meekness, that is grafted in you, which is able to save your souls;

and see that ye be not forgetful hearers, deceiving yourselves with sophistry, but doers of the word; whom Christ doth liken Matt. 7. to a wise man which buildeth his house on a rock, that when the great rain descendeth, and the floods come and beat upon that house, it fall not, because it is grounded upon a rock; that is, to wit, that when Satan and all his legion of devils, with all their subtile suggestions, the world and all the mighty princes thereof, with their crafty counsels, do furiously rage against us, we faint Psa. 2. not, but abide constant in the truth, being grounded upon a most sure rock, which is Christ, and the doctrine of the Gospel, against which the gates of hell, that is, the power of Satan, cannot prevail. Matt. 16. And be ye followers of Christ and the Apostles, and receive the word in much affliction, as the godly Thessalonians did; for the true followers of Christ and the Apostles be they, which receive the word of God. They only receive the word of God, which both believe it, and also frame their lives after it, and be ready to suffer all manner of adversity for the name of the Lord, as Christ and all his Apostles did, and as all that will live godly in Christ 2 Tim. 3. Jesus must do; for there is none other way unto the kingdom of Acts 14. heaven, but through much tribulation. And if we suffer any- Matt. 5. thing for the kingdom of heaven and for righteousness sake, we Mark 3. have the prophets, Christ, the Apostles, and Martyrs for an ensample to comfort us; for they did all enter into the kingdom of heaven at the strait gate and narrow way that leadeth unto life, which few do find. And unless we will be content to deny our own selves, and take up the cross of Christ and follow him, we cannot be his disciples; for if we deny to suffer with Christ and 2 Tim. 2. his saints, it is an evident argument that we shall never reign with him. And again, if we can find in our hearts patiently to suffer persecutions and afflictions, it is a sure token of the righteous judgment of God, that we are counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which we also suffer. It is verily (saith the Apostle) 2 Thes. 1. a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribulation to them that trouble us, and rest to us that be troubled. For after this life, the godly, being delivered from their tribulations and pains, shall have a most quiet and joyful rest, whereas the wicked and ungodly contrariwise shall be tormented for evermore with intolerable and unspeakable pains; as Christ, by the parable of the Luke 16. rich glutton and wretched Lazarus, doth plainly declare and teach. These ought we to have before our eyes always; that, in time of adversity and persecution (whereof all that will be the children of Heb. 12. God shall be partakers, and wherewith it hath pleased God to put some of us in ure<sup>l</sup> already), we may stand stedfast in the Lord, and endure even unto the end, that we may be saved. For 1 780 or experience 2 Tim. 2. unless we, like good warriors of Jesus Christ, will endeavour ourselves to please him who hath chosen us to be his soldiers, and fight the good fight of faith even unto the end, we shall not

obtain that crown of righteousness, which the Lord, that is a righteous judge, shall give to all them that love his coming.

Let us, therefore, receive with meekness the word that is grafted in us, which is able to save our souls; and ground ourselves on the sure rock, Christ. For (as the Apostle saith) other foundation can no man lay, besides that which is laid already, which is Jesus Christ. If any man build on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, timber, hay, stubble, every man's work shall appear; for the day shall declare it, and it shall be shewed in the fire, and the fire shall try every man's work what it is. If any man's work, that he hath builded upon, abide, he shall receive a reward: if any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss, but he shall be safe himself; nevertheless, yet as it were through fire. By fire here doth the Apostle understand persecution and trouble. For they which do truly preach and profess the word of God (which is called the word of the cross), shall be railed upon, abhorred, hated, thrust out of company, persecuted, and tried in the furnace of adversity, as gold and silver are tried in the fire. By gold, silver, and precious stones, he understandeth them that in the midst of persecution abide stedfast in the word: by timber, hay, and stubble, are meant such as in time of persecution do fall away from the truth; and when Christ doth purge his floor with the wind of adversity, these scatter away from the face of the earth like light chaff, which shall be burned with unquenchable fire. If they then which do believe, do in time of persecution stand stedfastly in the truth, the builder (I mean the preacher of the word) shall receive a reward, and the work shall be preserved and saved: but if so be that they go back and swerve when persecution ariseth, the builder shall suffer loss, that is to say, shall lose his labour and cost; but yet he shall be saved, if he, being tried in the fire of persecution, do abide fast in the faith.

Wherefore, my beloved, give diligent heed, that ye as living stones be builded upon this sure rock, and be made a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, for to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ. For we are the true temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in us, if so be that we continue in the doctrine of the gospel. We are also an holy and royal priesthood, for to offer up spiritual sacrifices and oblations. For the sacrifices of the new Testament are spiritual, and of three manners: the first is the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which St. Paul doth call the fruits of those lips which confess the name of God; the second is mercy towards our neighbour, as the prophet Osee saith, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, (read the 25th chap. of Matthew); the third is when we make our body a quick sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God; that is, when we mortify and kill our fleshly concupiscences and carnal lusts, and so bring our flesh, through the help of the Spirit, under the obedience of God's holy law. This is a sacrifice to God most

Cor. 3.

1 Cor. 1.  
Matt. 5.  
Luke 6.  
Matt. 3.  
Psa. 1.

1 Peter 2.  
1 Cor. 3.

1 Pet. 2.

Heb. 13.

Osee 6.

Rom. 12.

acceptable, which the apostle calleth our reasonable serving of God. And let us be sure that, unless we do now at this present take better heed to ourselves, and use thankfully the grace of God offered to us by the gospel-preaching these years past, whereby we are induced and brought to the knowledge of the truth, unless (I say) we keep Christ and his holy word dwelling by faith in the house and temple of our hearts, the same thing that Christ threateneth unto the Jews shall happen unto us : that is, to wit, the unclean spirit of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and infidelity or unbelief, the mother and head of all vices (which by the grace of God was cast out of us), bringing with him seven other spirits worse than himself, shall, to our utter destruction, return again unto us; and so shall we be in a worse case than ever we were before. For if we, after we have escaped from the filthiness of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, be yet tangled therein again and overcome, then is the latter end worse than the beginning; and it had been better for us not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after we have known it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto us; for it happeneth then unto us according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to wallowing in the mire. And thus to continue and persevere in infidelity, and to kick against the manifest and known truth, and so to die without repentance, and with a despair of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, is to sin against the Holy Ghost; which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. For it is not possible (saith St. Paul), that they which were once lighted, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were become partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come, if they fall away, should be renewed again by repentance; forasmuch as they have (as concerning themselves) crucified the Son of God again, making a mocking of him. St. Paul's meaning in this place is, that they that believe truly and unfeignedly God's word, do continue and abide stedfast in the known truth. If any therefore fall away from Christ and his word, it is a plain token that they were but dissembling hypocrites, for all their fair faces outwardly, and never believed truly; as Judas, Simon Magus, Demas, Hymeneus, Philetus, and others were, which all fell away from that known verity, and made a mock at Christ; which St. Paul doth call here, to crucify Christ anew, because that they, turning to their old vomit again, did most blasphemously tread the benefits of Christ's death and passion under their feet. They that are such can in no wise be renewed by repentance: for their repentance is fleshly, as the repentance of Cain, Saul, and Judas was; which, being without godly comfort, breedeth desperation unto death. These are not of the number of the elect: and, as

Ephes. 3.

Matt. 12.

1 Pet. 2

Prov. 26.

Matt. 23.

Heb. 6.

Matt. 27.

1 John 2. St. John doth say, they went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us unto the end. Also the apostle saith in another place, If we sin willingly, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for judgment, and violent fire which shall devour the adversaries. They sin willingly, which of a set malice and purpose do withhold the truth in unrighteousness and lying, kicking against the manifest and open known truth; which, although they do perfectly know that in all the world there is none other sacrifice for sin, but only that omnisufficient sacrifice of Christ's death, yet notwithstanding, they will not commit themselves wholly unto it, but rather despise it, allowing other sacrifices for sin, invented by the imagination of man, as we see by daily experience: unto whom, if they abide still in their wickedness and sin, remaineth a most horrible and dreadful judgment. This is that sin unto death, for which St John would not that a man should pray.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved in Christ, let us (on whom the ends of the world are come) take diligent heed unto ourselves, that now in these last and perilous times, in the which the devil is come down, and hath great wrath, because he knoweth his time is but short, and whereof the prophets, Christ, and the apostles have so much spoken and given us so earnest forewarning, we withhold not the truth in unrighteousness; believing, doing, or speaking any thing against our knowledge and conscience, or without faith. For if we do so, for what cause so ever it be, it is a wilful and obstinate infidelity, and a sin unto death: as our Saviour Christ saith, If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins. For unless we hold fast the word of life, both believing it, and also bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, we shall, with the unprofitable fig-tree which did but cumber the ground, be cut down, and our talent taken from us, and given unto another that shall put it to a better use; and we, through our own unthankfulness put from the mercy of God, shall never be able to pay our debts, that is to say, we shall altogether be lost and undone. For the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them that dress it, receiveth blessing of God; but that ground that beareth thorns and briars is reprov'd, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. Nevertheless, dear friends, we trust to see better of you, and such things as accompany salvation; and that ye, being that ground watered with moistness of God's word plenteously preached among you, will with a good heart hear the word of God and keep it, bringing forth fruit with patience, and be none of those forgetful and hypocritical hearers, which, (although they hear the word, yet the devil cometh and catcheth away that which was sown in the



heart,) either having no root in themselves, endure but a season, and as soon as tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by they are offended, either<sup>1</sup> with the cares of this <sup>1 or</sup> world, and deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and so are unfruitful. Read the parable of the sower; and among other things note and mark, that the most part of the hearers of God's word are but hypocrites, and hear the word without any fruit or profit, yea, only to their greater condemnation; for only the fourth part of the seed doth bring forth fruit. Therefore let not us that be ministers, or professors and followers of God's word, be discouraged, though that very few do credit and follow the doctrine of the Gospel, and be saved.

Whosoever therefore hath ears to hear, let him hear: for <sup>Matt. 11.</sup> whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away that he hath. That is to say, they that have a desire of righteousness and of the truth, shall be more and more illuminated of God: on the contrary part, they that do not covet after righteousness and truth, are more hardened and blinded, though they seem unto themselves most wise. For God doth here follow an example of a loving father, which, when he seeth that fatherly love and correction doth not help towards his children, useth another way. He ceaseth to be beneficial unto them, and to minister unto them fatherly correction; he giveth them over unto themselves, suffering them to live as they lust themselves. But we trust to see <sup>Heb. 6.</sup> better of you, my dearly beloved; and that ye like Gadarenites, <sup>Matt. 8.</sup> for fear to lose your worldly substance or other delights of this life, will not banish away Christ and his Gospel from among you: <sup>Acts 14.</sup> but that ye with all diligence of mind will receive the word of God, taught you by such ministers, as now, when persecution ariseth because of the word, are not ashamed of the testimony of our <sup>2 Tim. 1.</sup> Lord Jesus, but are content to suffer adversity with the Gospel, <sup>2 Tim. 2.</sup> and therein to suffer trouble as evil doers, even unto bonds. And if ye refuse thus to do, your own blood will be upon your own <sup>Acts 18.</sup> heads. And as ye have had plenteous preaching of the Gospel, more than other have had; so shall ye be sure, if ye repent not, and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, to be sorer plagued and to receive greater vengeance at God's hand than others; and the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and be given to another nation, which will bring forth the fruits thereof.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved in Christ, take good heed to yourselves, and ponder well in your minds, how fearful and horrible a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. And see that ye receive not the word of God in vain; but continually labour in faith, and declare your faith by your good <sup>2 Cor. 6.</sup> works, which are infallible witnesses of the true justifying faith, <sup>James 2.</sup> which is never idle, but worketh by charity. Give yourselves, I <sup>Gal. 5.</sup>

Titus 2. say, continually to all manner of good works. Amongst the  
 Rom. 13. which the chiefest are, to be obedient to the magistrates, since  
 they are the ordinance of God, whether they be good or evil;  
 unless they command idolatry and ungodliness, that is to say,  
 things contrary unto true religion; for then ought we to say,  
 Acts 5. with Peter, We ought more to obey God than man. But in any  
 wise we must beware of tumult, insurrection, rebellion, or resist-  
 ance. The weapon of a christian man in this matter, ought to be  
 Eph. 6. the sword of the Spirit, which is God's word; and prayer, coupled  
 with humility and due submission, with readiness of heart rather  
 to die than to do any ungodliness. Christ also doth teach us  
 John 19. that all power is of God, yea, even the power of the wicked, which  
 Job 34. God causeth oftentimes to rage for our sins, and disobedience  
 Rom. 14. towards him and his word. Whosoever then doth resist any  
 power, doth resist the ordinance of God, and so purchase to  
 himself utter destruction and undoing. We must also by all  
 means be promoters of unity, peace, and concord. We must  
 1 Peter 2. honour and reverence princes and all that be authority, and pray  
 Eph. 6. for them, and be diligent to set forth their profit and commodity.  
 1 Tim. 5. Secondly, we must obey our parents, or them that be in their  
 rooms, and be careful for our households, that they be provided and  
 fed, not only with bodily food, but much rather with spiritual food,  
 which is the word of God. Thirdly, we must serve our neigh-  
 bours by all means we can, remembering well the saying of Christ,  
 Matt. 7. Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye likewise  
 unto them; for this is the law and the prophets. Fourthly, we  
 1 Tim. 2. must diligently exercise the necessary work of prayer for all  
 estates; knowing that God therefore hath so much commanded  
 it, and hath made so great promises unto it, and doth so well  
 accept it. After these works we must learn to know the cross,  
 Matt. 5. and what affection and mind we must bear towards our adver-  
 saries and enemies, whatsoever they be; to suffer all adversities  
 and evil patiently; to pray for them that hurt, persecute, and  
 trouble us. And by thus using ourselves, we shall obtain a  
 2 Peter 1. hope and certainty of our vocation, that we be the elect children  
 of God.

Acts 20. And thus I commend you, brethren, unto God, and to the word  
 of his grace, which is able to build further, and give you an in-  
 heritance among all them which are sanctified; beseeching you  
 to help Master Saunders and me your late pastors, and all them  
 that be in bonds for the Gospel's sake, with your prayers to God  
 Rom. 15. for us, that we may be delivered from all them that believe not,  
 and from unreasonable and froward men; and that this our im-  
 prisonment and affliction may be to the glory and profit of our  
 Col. 4. christian brethren in the world, and that Christ may be magnified  
 Phil. 1. in our bodies, whether it be by death or by life. Amen.—Salute  
 from me all the faithful brethren; and because I write not several

letters to them, let them either read or hear these my letters. The grace of our Lord be with you all. Amen.

The 28th of June, by the unprofitable servant of Jesus Christ, and now also his prisoner,

George Marsh.

Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Pray, pray, Acts 2 pray : never more need.

To certain of his dearly beloved Friends,

Dwelling at Manchester, in Lancashire.

Grace be with you and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

After salutations in Christ to you, with thanks for your friendly remembrances of me, desiring and wishing unto you, not only in my letters but also in my daily prayers, such consolation in spirit, and taste of heavenly treasures, that ye may thereby continually work in faith, labour in love, persevere in hope, and be patient in all your tribulations and persecutions, even unto the end and glorious coming of Christ; these shall be earnestly to exhort and beseech you in Christ, that, as ye have received the Lord Jesus, Col. 2. even so to walk, rooted in him : and not to be afraid of any terror Phil. 2. of your adversaries, be they never so many and mighty, and you 1 Peter 3. on the other side never so few and weak; for the battle is the Matt. 10. Lord's. And as, in times past, God was with Abraham, Moses, Luke 11. Isaac, David, the Maccabees, and other, and fought for them, and delivered all their enemies into their hands; even so hath he promised to be with us also unto the world's end, and so to Matt. 28. assist, strengthen, and help us, that no man shall be able to withstand us. For as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee Joshua 1. (saith God), and neither leave thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and bold, neither fear nor dread; for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. Now if God be on our side, Rom. 8. who can be against us? In this our spiritual warfare is no man overcome, unless he traitorously leave and forsake his Captain, either cowardly cast away his weapons, or willingly yield himself to his enemies, either fearfully turn his back and fly. 1 or

Be strong therefore in the Lord, dear brethren, and in the Eph. 6. power of his might; and put on all the armour of God, that ye may be able to stand stedfast against the crafty assaults of the devil. Now what weapons ye must fight withal, learn of St. 2 Cor. 11, Paul, a champion both much exercised, and also most valiant and 12. invincible. For we must think none other, but that the life of Acts 12. man is a perpetual warfare upon earth; as the examples of all godly men throughout all ages do declare. The valiant warrior

St. Paul, being delivered from the hands of the ungodly, and that so many times, and from so many extreme perils and dangers of death, as he himself doth witness, is fain to commit himself in the end to the rough waters of the sea, where he was in great peril and jeopardy of his own life. Yet was God always (to the great comfort of all that hear of it) most ready to comfort and succour him, and gloriously delivered him out of all his troubles; so that no man that did invade him could do him any harm, and in the end he was compelled to say, I have finished my course, the time of my departing is at hand, I long to be loosed and to be with Christ, which thing is best of all, most heartily desiring death. These things be written for our learning and comfort; and be to us a sure obligation,<sup>1</sup> that, if we submit ourselves to God and his holy word, no man shall be able to hurt us; and that he will deliver us from all troubles, yea, even from death also, until such time as we covet and desire to die.

Let us, therefore, run with patience unto the battle that is set before us, and look unto Jesus the captain and finisher of our faith, and after his example, for the reward's sake that is set out unto us, patiently bear the cross and despise the shame; for all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. Christ is no sooner baptized, and declared to the world to be the Son of God, but Satan is by and by ready to tempt him. Which thing we must look for also: yea, the more we shall increase in faith and virtuous living, the more strongly will Satan assault us; whom we must learn, after the example of Christ, to fight against and overcome with the holy and sacred Scriptures and word of God, which is our heavenly armour and sword of the Spirit. And let the fasting of Christ, while he was tempted in the wilderness, be unto us an example of sober living, not for the space of forty days (as the papists do fondly fancy of their own brains), but as long as we are in the wilderness of this wretched life, assaulted of Satan, who like a roaring lion walketh about, and ceaseth not seeking our utter destruction; neither can the servants of God at any time come and stand before God, that is, lead a godly life and walk innocently before God, but Satan cometh also among them; that is, he daily accuseth, findeth fault, vexeth, persecuteth, and troubleth the godly; for it is the nature and property of the devil always to do harm and to hurt, unless he be forbidden of God; for unless God do permit him, he can do nothing at all, no not so much as enter into a filthy hog; but we are more of price than many hogs before God, if we cleave unto his Son by faith. Let us, therefore, knowing Satan's deceits and rancour, walk the more warily; and take unto us the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able to quench and overcome all the fiery and deadly darts of the wicked. Let us take to us the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,

which is the word of God, and to learn to use the same according to the example of our grand captain Christ. Let us fast and pray continually; for this frantic kind of devils goeth not out otherwise, as Christ doth teach us, but by faithful prayers and fasting, which is true abstinence and soberness of living, if we use the same according to the doctrine of the Gospel and word of God. Fasting is acceptable to God, if it be done without hypocrisy; that is to say, if we use it to this intent, that thereby this mortal body and disobedient carcase may be tamed, and brought under the subjection of the Spirit; and again, if we fast to this intent, that we may spare wherewith to help and succour our poor needy brethren. This fast do the true christians use all the days of their life; although among the common sort of people remaineth yet still that superstitious kind of fasting, which God so earnestly reproveth by his prophet Esay. For as for true chastening of the body, and abstaining from vice, with shewing mercy towards our needy neighbours, we will neither understand nor hear of; but still think, with the Jews, that we do God a great pleasure when we fast, and that we then fast when we abstain from one thing, and fill our bellies with another. And verily in this point doth our superstition much exceed the superstition of the Jews; for we never read that they ever took it for a fast to abstain from flesh, and to eat either fish or white meat, as they call it.

Matt. 4.

Mat 17.

Esay 58.

To fasting and prayer must be joined alms, and mercy towards the poor and needy. And that our alms may be acceptable unto God, three things are chiefly required. First, that we give with a cheerful and joyful heart, for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver. Secondly, that we give liberally, putting aside all niggardship; knowing that he that soweth little shall reap little, and he that soweth plentifully shall reap plentifully. Let every man therefore do according as he is able. The poorest caitiff in the world may give as great and acceptable an alms in the sight of God, as the richest man in the world can do. The poor widow that did offer but two mites, which make a farthing, did highly please Christ, insomuch that he affirmed with an oath, that she of her penury had added more to the offerings of God, than all the rich men, which of their superfluity had cast in very much. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not. Thirdly, we must give without hypocrisy and ostentation, not seeking the praise of men, or our own glory or profit. And although the Scriptures in some places make mention of a reward to our alms and other good works, yet ought we not to think that we do merit or deserve any thing; but rather we ought to acknowledge, that God of his mere mercy rewardeth in us his own gifts. For what hath he that giveth alms, that he hath not received? He then

2 Cor. 9.

Mark 12.

that giveth unto a poor man any manner of thing, giveth not of his own, but of those goods which he hath received of God. **2 Cor. 4.** What hast thou, saith the Apostle, that thou hast not received? If thou hast received it, why rejoicest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?

This sentence ought to be had in remembrance of all men; for if we have nothing but that which we have received, what can we deserve? or what need we to dispute and reason of our own merits? It cometh of the free gift of God, that we live, that we love God, that we walk in his fear; where is our deserving then?

We must also in this our spiritual warfare arm ourselves with continual prayer, a very necessary, strong, and invincible weapon; and, after the example of Christ and all other godly men, cry heartily unto God in faith, in all our distresses and anguishes. **Matt. 26.** Let us go boldly to the seat of grace, where we shall be sure to receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. For now is pride and persecution increased; now is the time of destruction and wrathful displeasure. **Heb. 4.** **1 Macc. 4.**

Wherefore, my dear brethren, be ye fervent in the law of God; and jeopard ye your lives, if need shall so require, for the testament of the fathers; and so shall ye receive great honour, and an everlasting name. Remember Abraham; was not he found faithful in temptation, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness? **Gen. 22.** Joseph in time of his trouble kept the commandment, and was made a lord of Egypt. **Gen. 41.** Phineas was so fervent for the honour of God, that he obtained the covenant of an everlasting priesthood. **Num. 25.** Joshua, for fulfilling the word of God, was made the captain of Israel. **Joshua 1.** Caleb bare record before the congregation, and received an heritage. **Num. 14.** David also, in his merciful kindness, obtained the throne of an everlasting kingdom. **1 Sam. 24.** Elias, being zealous and fervent in the law, was taken up into heaven. **2 Kings 2.** Ananias, Azarias, and Misael remained stedfast in the faith, and were delivered out of the fire. **Daniel 3.** In like manner Daniel, being unguilty, was saved from the mouth of the lions. **Daniel 6.** And thus ye may consider throughout all ages since the world began, that whosoever put their trust in God were not overcome. Fear not ye then the words of ungodly men; for their glory is but dung and worms. **Psal. 38.** To-day are they set up, and to-morrow are they gone; for they are turned into earth, and their memorial cometh to nought. Wherefore let us take good hearts unto us, and quit ourselves like men in the law; for if we do the things that are commanded us in the law of the Lord our God, we shall obtain great honour therein.

Beloved in Christ, let us not faint because of affliction, where-with God trieth all them that are sealed unto life everlasting; for the only way into the kingdom of God, is through much tribulation. **Acts 14.** For the kingdom of heaven (as God teacheth us by his

prophet Esdras) is like a city builded and set upon a broad field, <sup>2 Esdr. 7.</sup> and full of all good things; but the entrance is narrow and sudden, full of sorrow and travail, perils, and labours, like as if there were a fire at the right hand, and a deep water at the left, and as it were one strait path between them both, so small that there could but one man go there. If this city now were given to an heir, and he never went through the perilous way, how would he receive his inheritance? Wherefore seeing we are in this narrow and strait way, which leadeth unto the most joyful and pleasant city of everlasting life, let us not stagger, either turn back, being afraid of the dangerous and perilous way, but follow our Captain Jesus Christ in the narrow and strait way, and be afraid of nothing, no not even of death itself; for it is he that must lead us to our journey's end, and open us the door unto everlasting life. Consider also the course of this world; how many there be which for their master's sake, or for a little promotion's sake, would adventure their lives in worldly affairs, as commonly in wars, and yet is their reward but light and transitory, and ours is unspeakable, great, and everlasting. They suffer pains to be made lords on the earth for a short season; how much more ought we to endure like pains (yea, peradventure, much less), to be made kings in heaven for evermore? Consider also the wicked of this world, which for a little pleasure's sake, or to be avenged on their enemies, will fight with sword and weapons, and put themselves in danger of imprisonment and hanging. So much as virtue is better than vice, and God mightier than the devil, so much ought we to excel them in this our spiritual battle. And seeing, brethren, it hath pleased God to set me, and that most worthy minister of Christ, John Bradford your countryman, in the forefront of this battle, where for the time is most danger; I beseech you all in the bowels of Christ, to help us, and all others our fellow-soldiers standing in like perilous place, with your prayers to God for us, that we may quit ourselves like men in the Lord, and give some example of boldness and constancy, mingled with patience in the fear of God; that ye and others our brethren, through our example, may be so encouraged and strengthened to follow us, that ye also may leave example to your weak brethren in the world to follow you. Amen.

Consider what I say: the Lord give us understanding in all <sup>2 Tim. 2.</sup> things. Brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that ye use this <sup>1 Cor. 7.</sup> world as though ye used it not: for the fashion of this world vanisheth away. See that ye love not the world, neither the <sup>1 John 2.</sup> things that are in the world; but set your affections on heavenly things, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Be meek and long-suffering; serve and edify one another, with the gift that God hath given you. Beware of strange doctrine; lay aside the old conversation of greedy lusts, and walk in a new life.

Beware of all uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking, false doctrine, and drunkenness; rejoice and be thankful towards God, and submit yourselves one to another. Cease from sin; spend no more time in vice; be sober, and apt to pray; be patient in trouble, love each other, and let the glory of God and profit of your neighbours be the only mark you shoot at in all your doings. Repent ye of the life that is past, and take better heed to your doings hereafter. And above all things cleave ye fast to him, who was delivered to death for our sins, and rose again for our justification. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and rule for evermore. Amen.

Salute from me in Christ all others which love us in the faith, and at your discretion make them partakers of these letters; and pray ye all for me, and other in bonds for the Gospel, that the same God, which by his grace hath called us from wicked papistry unto true Christianity, and now of love proveth our patience by persecution, will of his mercy and favour in the end gloriously deliver us, either by death or by life, to his glory. Amen.

At Lancaster, the 30th of August, 1554; by me, an unprofitable servant and prisoner of Christ,

George Marsh.

### A Copy of a Letter written by Stephen Cotton

To his brother John Cotton, declaring how he was beaten of Bonner.

Brother, in the name of the Lord Jesus, I commend me unto you; and I do heartily thank you for your godly exhortation and counsel, in your last letter declared to me. And albeit I do perceive by your letter you are informed, that, as we are divers persons in number, so are we of contrary sects, conditions, and opinions, contrary to that good opinion you had of us at your last being with us in Newgate; be you most assured, good brother in the Lord Jesus, that we are all of one mind, one faith, one assured hope in our Lord Jesus, whom I trust we all together with one spirit, one brotherly love, do daily call upon for mercy and forgiveness of our sins, with earnest repentance of our former lives; and by whose precious blood-shedding we trust to be saved only, and by no other means. Wherefore, good brother, in the name of the Lord, seeing these impudent people whose minds are altogether bent to wickedness, envy, uncharitableness, evil-speaking, do go about to slander us with untruth, believe them not, neither let their wicked sayings once enter into your mind. And I trust one day to see you again, although now I am in God's prison, which is a joyful school to them that love their Lord and God; and to me, being a simple scholar, most



joyful of all. Good brother, once again I do, in the name of our Lord Jesus, exhort you to pray for me, that I may fight strongly in the Lord's battle, to be a good soldier to my captain Jesus Christ our Lord; and desire my sister also to do the same; and do not ye mourn or lament for me, but be ye glad and joyful of this my trouble. For I trust to be loosed out of this dungeon shortly, and to go to everlasting joy, which never shall have end.

I heard how ye were with the commissioners for me, and how ye were suspected to be one of our company. I pray you, sue no more for me, good brother. But one thing I shall desire you—to be at my departing out of this life, that you may bear witness with me that I shall die (I trust in God) a true Christian, and, I hope, all my companions in the Lord our God; and therefore believe not these evil-disposed people, who are the authors of all untruth. I pray you provide for me a long shirt, against the day of our deliverance: for the shirt you gave me last, I have given it to one of my companions, who had more need than I; and as for the money and meat you sent us, the bishop's servants delivered none to us, neither he whom you had so great trust in. Brother, there is none of them to trust to; for qualis magister, talis servus.<sup>1</sup> I have been twice beaten, and threatened to be beaten again, by the bishop himself. I suppose we shall go into the country to Fulham, to the bishop's house, and there be arraigned. I would have you to hearken as much as you can; for when we shall go, it shall be suddenly done. Thus fare ye well. From the coalhouse, this present Friday.—Your brother,

<sup>1</sup> like  
master,  
like man

Stephen Cotton.

### A Letter of Richard Rothe,

Burnt at Islington, to certain condemned at Colchester, and ready to die for the Lord's cause; written with his own blood.

Oh, dear brethren and sisters, how much have you to rejoice in God, that he hath given you such faith to prevail against these blood-thirsty tyrannies thus far; and no doubt he that hath begun that good work in you, will fulfil it unto the end. Oh, dear hearts in Christ, what a crown of glory shall ye receive with Christ in the kingdom of God. Oh that it had been the good will of God, that I had been ready to have gone with you; for I lie in my lord's little-ease in the day, and in the night I lie in the coalhouse, from<sup>1</sup> Ralph Allerton, or any other. And we look every day when we shall be condemned: for he said that I should be burned within ten days before Easter; but I lie still at the pool's brink, and every man goeth in before me. But we abide patiently the Lord's leisure, with many bands, in fetters and stocks, by the which we have received great joy in God.

<sup>1</sup> apart  
from

And now fare you well, dear brethren and sisters, in this world ; but I trust to see you in the heaven, face to face. Oh, brother Munt, with your wife and my dear sister Rose, oh how blessed are you in the Lord, that God hath found you worthy to suffer for his sake—with all the rest of my dear brethren and sisters, known and unknown. Oh, be joyful, even unto death ; fear it not, saith Christ, for I have overcome death. Oh, dear hearts, seeing that Jesus Christ will be our help, tarry ye the Lord's leisure. Be strong, let your hearts be of good comfort, and wait you still for the Lord. He is at hand ; yea, the angel of the Lord pitcheth his tent round about them that fear him, and delivereth them which way he seeth best ; for our lives are in the Lord's hands, and they can do nothing unto us before God suffer them : therefore give all thanks to God. Oh, my dear hearts, now shall you be clothed with long white garments upon the Mount Sion, with the multitude of saints, and with Jesus Christ our Saviour, which will never forsake us. Oh, blessed virgins, ye have played the wise virgins' part, in that ye have taken oil in your lamps, that ye may enter with the bridegroom, when he cometh, into the everlasting joy. But as for the foolish, they shall be shut out, because they made not themselves ready to suffer with Christ, neither go about to take up his cross. Oh how precious shall your death be in the sight of the Lord ; for dear is the death of his saints. Farewell, mine own dear hearts, and pray. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen, amen. Pray, pray, pray.

By me, Richard Rothe,  
written with mine own blood.

### The Copy of a Letter,

Written and cast out of the Castle of Canterbury, by the prisoners there in bands for God's word ; declaring how the papists went about to famish them to death : of the which company, five were famished amongst them already.

Be it known unto all men that shall read or hear read these our letters, that we, the poor prisoners of the Castle of Canterbury for God's truth, are kept and lie in cold irons, and our keeper will not suffer any meat to be brought to us to comfort us. And if any man do bring anything, as bread, butter, cheese, or any other food, the said keeper will charge them that so bring us any thing, except money or raiment, to carry it with them again ; or else if he do receive any food of any for us, he keepeth it for himself, and he and his servants do spend it, so that we have nothing thereof. And thus the keeper withholdeth and keepeth away our victuals from us, insomuch that there are four of us,

There were five famished in that prison, whose names were these:  
John Clark,  
Dunston Chetten-den, W.  
Potkins, A.  
John Archer.

prisoners there for God's truth, famished already. And thus is it his mind to famish us all: and we think he is appointed of the bishops and priests, and also of the justices so to famish us; and not only us of the said Castle, but all other prisoners in other prisons for the like cause to be also famished. Notwithstanding, we write not these our letters to the intent we might not afford<sup>1</sup> to be famished for the Lord Jesus' sake: but for this cause and intent; that they, having no law so to famish us in prison, should not do it privily, but that the murderer's hearts should be openly known to all the world, that all men may know of what church they are, and who is their father.

Out of the Castle of Canterbury.

**A Letter of that true Pastor and worthy Martyr, Doctor Ridley;**

Wherein you may see the singular zeal he had to the glory of God, and the furtherance of his Gospel: written to Master Cheke, in King Edward's days, and here placed as it came to our hands.

Master Cheke, I wish you grace and peace. Sir, in God's cause, for God's sake, and in his name, I beseech you of your help and furtherance towards God's word. I did talk with you of late, what case I was in concerning my chaplains. I have gotten the good will and grant (to be with me,) of three preachers, men of good learning, and, as I am persuaded, of excellent virtue; which are able, both with life and learning, to set forth God's word in London, and in the whole diocese of the same, where is most need of all parts in England; for from thence goeth example, as you know, into all the rest of the King's Majesty's whole realm. The men's names be these. Master Grindall, whom you know to be a man of virtue and learning. Master Bradford, a man by whom (as I am assurdly informed) God hath and doth work wonders, in setting forth of his word. The third is a preacher, the which, for detecting and confuting of the Anabaptists and papists in Essex, both by his preaching and by his writing, is enforced now to bear Christ's cross. The two first be scholars in the University. The third is as poor as either of the other twain. Now there is fallen a prebend in Paul's called Cantrells, by the death of one Layton. This prebend is an honest man's living, of thirty four pounds and better in the king's books. I would with all my heart give it unto Master Grindall; and so I should have him continually with me, and in my diocese, to preach.

But alas, Sir, I am letted<sup>2</sup> by the means (I fear me) of such as do not fear God. One Master William Thomas, one of the clerks to the Council, hath in times past set the Council upon

<sup>1</sup> be content

<sup>2</sup> hindered

me, to have me to grant that Layton might have alienated the said prebend unto him and his heirs for ever. God was mine aid and defender, that I did not consent unto his ungodly enterprise. Yet I was so then handled before the Council, that I granted that whensoever it should fall, I should not give it, before I should make the king's Majesty privy unto it and of acknowledge,<sup>1</sup> before the collation of it. Now Layton is departed, and the prebend is fallen, and certain of the Council (no doubt, by this ungodly man's means,) have written unto me to stay the collation. And whereas he despaireth that ever I would assent that a preacher's living should be bestowed on him, he hath procured letters unto me, subscribed with certain of the Council's hands, that now the king's Majesty hath determined it unto the furniture<sup>1</sup> of his highness' stable. Alas, Sir, this is a heavy hearing. When papistry was taught, there was nothing too little for the teachers. When the bishop gave his benefices unto idiots, unlearned, ungodly, for kindred, for pleasure, for service, and other worldly respects, all was then well allowed. Now, where a poor living is to be given unto an excellent clerk, a man known and tried to have both discretion and also virtue, and such a one as, before God, I do not know a man yet unplaced and unprovided for more meet, to set forth God's word in all England; when a poor living (I say) which is founded for a preacher is to be given unto such a man, that then an ungodly person shall procure in this sort, letters to stop and let<sup>1</sup> the same, alas, Master Cheke, this seemeth unto me to be a right heavy hearing. Is this the fruit of the Gospel? Speak, Master Cheke, speak, for God's sake, in God's cause, unto whomsoever you think you may do any good withal. And if you will not speak, then I beseech you, let these my letters speak unto Master Gates, to Master Wroth, to Master Cecil, whom all I do take for men that do fear God.

It was said here constantly my Lord Chamberlain to have been departed. Sir, though the day be delayed, yet he hath no pardon of long life: and therefore I do beseech his good lordship, and so many as shall read these letters, if they fear God, to help that neither horse, neither yet dog, be suffered to devour the poor livings appointed and founded by godly ordinance to the ministers of God's word. The causes of conscience, which do move me to speak and write thus, are not only those which I declared once in the cause of this prebend before the king's Majesty's Council, which now I let pass: but also now the man Master Grindal, unto whom I would give this prebend, doth move me very much; for he is a man known to be both of virtue, honesty, discretion, wisdom, and learning. And besides all this, I have a better opinion of the king's Majesty's honourable Council, than (although some of them have subscribed, at this

<sup>1</sup> of cognizance, acquainted

<sup>1</sup> maintenance

<sup>1</sup> hinder

their clerk's crafty and ungodly suit, to such a letter) than, I say, they will let,<sup>1</sup> and not suffer, after request made unto them, the living appointed and founded for a preacher, to be bestowed upon so honest and well a learned man. 1 hinder

Wherefore for God's sake, I beseech you all, help that, with the favour of the Council, I may have knowledge of the king's Majesty's good pleasure, to give this preacher's living unto Master Grindal. Of late, there have been letters directed from the king's Majesty and his honourable Council unto all the bishops, whereby we be charged and commanded, both in our own persons, and also to cause our preachers and ministers, especially to cry out against the insatiable serpent of covetousness, whereby is said to be such a greediness amongst the people, that each one goeth about to devour other; and to threaten them with God's grievous plagues, both now presently thrown upon them, and that shall be likewise in the world to come. Sir, what preachers shall I get to open and set forth such matters, and so as the king's Majesty and the Council do command them to be set forth, if either ungodly men, or unreasonable beasts, be suffered to pull away and devour the good and godly learned preachers' livings? Thus I wish you, in God, ever well to face and to help Christ's cause, as you would have help of him at your most need. From Fulham this present, the 23rd of July, 1551.

Your's in Christ,

Nicholas London.

### A Letter of Cuthbert Simson to certain of his Friends,

Concerning his Racking and other cruel torments which he suffered in the Tower.

The 13th day of December, I was sent to the Tower; and on the Thursday after, I was called into the warehouse before the Constable of the Tower and the Recorder of London, Master Cholmeley. They commanded me to tell them, whom I did will to come to the English service. I answered, I would declare nothing. Then was I set in an engine of iron, for the space of three hours, as I judged. After that, they asked me if I would tell them. I answered as before. Then was I loosed, and carried to my lodging again. On the Sunday after, I was brought into the same place again before the lieutenant, being also constable, and the recorder of London, and they examined me. As before I had said, I answered. Then the lieutenant sware by God, I should tell. Then did they bind my two forefingers together, and put a small arrow betwixt them, and drew it through so fast that the blood followed, and the arrow brake. Then they racked me twice. After that was I carried to my lodging again; and ten

This Engine is called Skevingtons gyves wherein the body standeth double, the head being drawn towards the feet. The form and manner of these gyves, an I of his Racking, you may see in the book of Martyrs. Folio 1681.

days after, the lieutenant asked me if I would not confess that which before they had asked me. I said, I had said as much as I would. Then five weeks after, he sent me unto the high priest, where I was greatly assaulted; and at whose hand I received the pope's curse, for bearing witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And thus I commend you unto God, and to the word of his grace, with all them that unfeignedly call upon the name of Jesus; desiring GOD, of his endless mercy, through the merits of his dear Son Jesus Christ, to bring us all to his everlasting kingdom. Amen. I praise God for his great mercy shewed upon us. Sing Hosanna unto the Highest, with me Cuthbert Simson. God forgive me my sins. I ask all the world forgiveness, and I do forgive all the world; and thus I leave this world, in hope of a joyful resurrection.

Cuthbert Simson.

**Written by Master Bradford,**

In a New Testament of a friend of his.

<sup>1 Cor. 1.</sup> This book is called *Sermo Crucis*, the word of the cross, because the cross doth always accompany it: so that if you will be a student hereof, you must needs prepare yourself to the cross, which you began to learn before you learned your Alphabet; and Christ requireth it of every one that will be his disciple, therein not swerving from the common trade of callings or vocations; for no profession or kind of life wanteth his cross. So that they are far overseen, which think that the profession of the Gospel, which the devil most envieth, the world most hateth, and the flesh most repineth at, can be without a cross. Let us therefore pray, that God would enable us to take up our cross by denying ourselves. E carcere, 18 February, 1555.

John Bradford.

**A Letter of Master Thomas Leaber,**

Being then in exile for the testimony of God's Gospel, to Master Bradford, prisoner in the Tower of London.

The grace of God be unto you, with my hearty commendations.

I have seen the places, noted the doctrine and discipline, and talked with the learned men, of Argentine, Basil, Zurich, Berne, Lausanne, and Geneva; and I have had experience in all these places, of sincere doctrine, godly order, and great learning, and especially of such virtuous learning, diligence, and charity in Bullinger at Zurich, and in Calvin at Geneva, as doth much

advance God's glory, unto the edifying of Christ's church with the same religion for the which you be now in prison. And as I doubt not but you, in reading of their books, have found much godly and comfortable knowledge; so I am sure that they, in hearing of your constancy and patience, take occasion greatly to rejoice, with thanksgiving unto God, which doth testify his truth unto the world, not only by their writing, but also by your suffering. The Lord therefore, which useth this your suffering, joined with godly learning, to set forth his glory, not only unto the comfort of simple souls in England, but also unto the great rejoicing and encouraging of the most godly learned men in all countries, will (as I desire and trust) give you such comfort in conscience, as shall easily bear the pains of your imprisonment. If you desire to suffer or do that thing which might testify the truth, advance the glory, and edify the church of Christ, truly you have your desire; yea and, I ensure<sup>1</sup> you, very many godly <sup>1 assure</sup> men in divers places give daily thanks unto God in prayer for you.

You know your cause is good; your friends be in favour, and your adversaries in displeasure with the Almighty God, your heavenly Father; your suffering for the truth shall not be unrewarded; your hope in Christ shall never be confounded. For although your bodies be kept within prisons, yet your testimony unto the truth shineth far abroad in the world; and your faithful prayers, in charitable unity joined with many others, be continually presented afore the throne of God. God grant you grace to find and use comfortable meditation of his word, in diligent obedience unto his will. Christ be your keeper in comfort. Amen. From Zurich, the 25th of October, by yours faithfully in Christ,

Thomas Leaver.

Wisdom, chap. 3.

They are punished in few things, but in many things shall they be rewarded.

He trieth them as the gold in the furnace, and receiveth them as a burnt offering.

Gratia, sancte Pater, tua det, quo infirma ferendæ  
Hæc caro victrici nostra sit apta cruci.

Thy Holy Spirit and grace grant us, O Father dear,  
Whereby we may be strong thy cross alway to bear.





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