

that stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. Wherefore either let us fall upon it by our imbecility and weakness, by denying ourselves, and so be broken, or else he will break us for ever in his straight judgment. But it is better that we fall upon it, than that it fall upon us; upon this foundation Christ saith in the text, *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.* Now he whom the Father draweth not, shall surely perish; it is also concluded that he which cometh not to this Son, shall be damned for ever. He is the only Son given unto us, which may save us, without him there is no salvation; if he help not, our case is most miserable: Of him *Peter* also speaketh, to the same effect, in the *Acts* of the *Apottles*, chap. 4. 11. *This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.* Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Whither would our divines and schoolmen turn themselves here, which have taught us, that by many works we must attain unto righteousness? Here is that high master, *Aristotle*, confounded, who hath taught us, that reason endeavoureth to do the best things, and is always ready to the better; but this Christ doth here deny, for unless the Father possess and draw us, we shall perish for ever. Here all men must confess their imbecility and slowness to good things; if so be that any perswade himself that he is able to do any good thing by his own strength, truly he hath reprov'd Christ of falshood, and with great arrogancy, presumeth to come to heaven, altho' he is not drawn of the Father. Wherefore, where the word of God is in his course, and soundly preached, whatsoever things are high and great, it casteth them down, it maketh all mountains even with the vallies, and overthroweth all hills, as the Prophet *Isaiab* saith; that all hearts hearing the word may despair of themselves, otherwise they cannot come unto Christ. The works of God are such, that while they kill they make alive, while they condemn they save; as *Hannab*, the mother of *Samuel*, singeth of the Lord

Lord, 1 Sam. 2. 6. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.* Wherefore, if a man be thus stricken of God in his heart, that he acknowledgeth himself such a one as ought for his sins to be condemned, he surely is even that very man whom God by his word hath stricken, and by this stroke hath fastened upon him the bond of his divine grace, whereby he draweth him, that he may provide for his soul, and have care of him. He could first find with himself no help nor counsel, neither did he wish for any, but now he hath found the special consolation and promise of God, which is after this sort: *Every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened, Mat. 7. 8.* By such a promise man is more and more lifted up in mind, and conceiveth a greater trust and confidence in God; for as soon as he heareth that this is the work of God alone, he desireth of God, as at the hand of his merciful Father, that he will vouchsafe to draw him. If so be that he be drawn of God unto Christ, undoubtedly that also shall come unto him, whereof the Lord maketh mention here, namely, that he will raise him up at the last day; for he layeth hold on the word of God, and trusteth in God, whereby he hath a certain testimony, that he is he whom God hath drawn, as *John* saith in his first Epistle, chap. 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.* Hereupon it must needs follow, that he is taught of God, and in verity now knoweth God to be no other, but a helper, a comforter, and a Saviour. Hereby is it now manifest, that if we believe, God will be no other towards us but a Saviour, helper, and giver of all felicity, who requireth and asketh nothing of us, but will only give and offer unto us, as he himself saith unto *Israel*, Psal. 81. 10. *I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Who would not love such a God, which sheweth himself gentle and loving unto us, and offereth so readily his grace and goodness? They shall

shall not be able to escape the severe and eternal judgment of God, which do unadvisedly neglect so great grace, as the epistle to the *Hebrews* saith, If they that transgressed the law of *Moses*, escaped not unpunished, but died without mercy, how much more grievous shall God punish them, which count the blood of the testament as an unholy thing, and tread under foot the Son of God? O how diligent is *St. Paul* in all his epistles to teach how the knowledge of God may rightly be conceived? O how often doth he wish increase in the knowledge of God? as if he would say, If ye only knew and understood what God is, ye should then be safe: Then ye would love him, and do all things that are approved of him. Thus he saith, *Colos. 1. 9. We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: And Psal. 119. 34. David saith: Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.* And thus ye have out of the first sentence of this text, that the knowledge of God doth come from the father, It is needful, that he lay the first stone in our building, otherwise we shall labour in vain. But that is done thus, God sendeth unto us preachers whom he hath taught, and provideth that his will be preached unto us. First that all our life and condition, although it have a fair shew and be holy outwardly, is of no estimation before him, yea, is abhorred and loathed of him. And this is called the preaching of the law; afterward he maketh grace to be preached unto us, to wit, that he will not have us utterly condemned and cast off, but that he will receive us in his beloved Son, and not simply receive us, but also make us heirs in his kingdom, yea, and Lords over all things which are in heaven and earth. This now is called the preaching of grace or of
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the gospel ; and all this is of God, which raiseth up and sendeth forth preachers. This *St. Paul* signifieth, when he saith thus, *Rom. 10. 17. Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* This also the words of the Lord mean here in the gospel, when he saith, *It is written in the Prophets ; and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the father save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.* When as we hear the first preaching, that is the preaching of the law, how we are condemned with all our works, then man sigheth unto God, and knoweth not what to do, his conscience is evil and fearful, and except help should come in time, he should despair for ever. Wherefore the other preaching must not be long deferred, the gospel must be preached unto him, and the way unto Christ must be shewed, whom God hath given unto us a Mediator, that through him alone we may be saved, by meer grace and mercy, without all our own works and merits. Then the heart is made joyful, and hasteth unto such grace, as the thirsty heart runneth unto the water. *David* had a notable feeling hereof, when he said thus, *Psal. 42. 1. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.* When therefore a man cometh to Christ, through the gospel, then heareth he the voice of the Lord Christ, which strengtheneth the knowledge that God hath taught him, to wit, that God is nothing else but a Saviour abounding with grace, who will be favourable and merciful to all them, which call upon him in his Son. Therefore the Lord saith moreover, *John 6. 47, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* In these

words

words the soul findeth a table daintily furnished, whereby it may slack all hunger; for it knoweth assuredly, that he that speaketh these words cannot lie. Wherefore if it commit it self confidently unto him and cleave to the word, it resteth upon him, and so departeth not from this goodly table. This is that supper, to the preparing whereof, the heavenly Father killed his oxen and fatlings, and hath bidden us all unto it. The living bread whereof the Lord here maketh mention, is Christ himself, whereby we are so fed; if we lay hold but of a morsel of this bread in our hearts, and keep it, we shall be satisfied for ever, neither can we ever be pluck'd from God. Moreover, such an eating is nothing else, but to believe in the Lord Christ, that he is made unto us of God as St. Paul saith, *1 Cor. i. wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.* Wherefore by and by after the text, when the Jews were at contention about his words, he saith, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* Manna, which the fathers did eat in the desert (as Christ here saith) could not save from death, but this bread maketh us immortal; if we believe in Christ, death shall not hurt us any thing at all, yea, there is no more death. This the Lord meaneth by these words in another place, where he saith to the Jews; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death,* John 8. 51. Where it is certain that he speaketh of the word of faith and of the gospel. But some men may say, that the holy die notwithstanding, for Abraham and the holy prophets are dead, as the Jews said unto him, I answer, The death of christians is only a sleep, as the scripture also commonly calleth it: For a christian tasteth and seeth no death, that is, he hath the feeling of no death. For this Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom he believeth, hath overcome death, that afterwards he should not feel or taste it, but death is unto him only a passage and gate to life, as Christ himself

witnesseth, *John 5. 24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* Wherefore the life of a christian is merry, and on every side replenished with joy, and the yoke of Christ easy and sweet. But that it seemeth heavy and grievous unto us, this is the cause, for that the father hath not yet drawn us; hereupon it cometh to pass, that we take no pleasure thereof, neither is the gospel comfortable unto us. If so be that we would lay up the words of Christ well in our heart, they would be unto us an exceeding comfort. And thus ye have heard how we must feed on this bread which came down from heaven, that is, on the Lord Christ, to wit, by faith, which we then do when we believe in him, that he is our Saviour. The whole chapter out of which this text is taken, commendeth unto us nothing else but spiritual meat. For when the multitude followed Christ, that they might again eat and drink, which the Lord himself signifieth, he taketh occasion of the corporal meat which they sought, and almost through the whole chapter speaketh of spiritual meat, as he said, *The words which I speak are spirit and life.* Whereby he would signify, that he therefore fed them, that they should believe in him; and as they did eat the bodily meat, so they ought also to feed of the spiritual. Here let us weigh and mark this, that the Lord doth so gently and graciously apply himself to us, and offer himself in such gentle words, that it ought worthily to move our hearts, to believe in him, to wit, that that bread was therefore given for us, inasmuch as it was behoveful, that he should taste death, and suffer hellish pains; Also should bear sins which he never had committed, as though he had committed them, and had been his own; and he did also the same willingly for our sakes, and took us as brethren and sisters. This if we believe, we do the will of the heavenly father, which is nothing else but to believe in his Son, and so be saved. As Christ himself saith a little before: *This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.* It now therefore appearcth,

careth, that he that hath faith doth the will of God, and eateth of this heavenly bread, as *St. Augustine* saith, What dost thou prepare thy mouth? believe, and thou hast eaten. Of this spiritual supper the whole new Testament speaketh, but especially in this place of *John*. The sacrament of Christ's body and blood is a certain testimony and pledge of this true supper, whereby we ought to strengthen our faith, and to be assured, that this body and this blood, whereof we feed in the sacrament, delivereth us from sin, death, Satan, and all evil. But how may a man perceive and know, that he also doth pertain to this heavenly bread, and is called to this spiritual supper? let him consider the case in his own heart, which if we find so affected, that he doth as it were feel the sweetness in the promise of God, and is undoubtedly persuaded, that he is of the company of them which pertain to this supper, he is assuredly such a one indeed. For as we believe, so cometh it unto us. Such a man hath also by and by a regard of his neighbour, and helpeth him as his brother, careth for him, giveth unto him, lendeth him, comforteth him, briefly doth no otherwise to him than he desireth to be done unto himself; and all this proceedeth from hence, for that the bountifulness and goodness of Christ hath replenished his heart with sweetness and love, that it is a pleasure and joy unto him to do good to his neighbour, yea, and he is grieved if there be none toward whom he may be serviceable. And beside all this, he is tractable and lowly towards all men, he doth not esteem the temporal pleasure and pride of life, he judgeth no man, he defameth no man, he interpreteth all things in the better part. When as he seeth that the matter goeth not well with his neighbour, as that he fainteth in faith, waxeth cold in love, and that his life is not on every side approvable, he prayeth for him, and is sore grieved if any commit any thing against God and his neighbour. In fine, the root and sap are found, for they are in a flourishing vine, to wit, Christ, and therefore such fruits come forth. But if any be void of faith, and not taught of God, such a one doth not feed on this heavenly bread,

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neither bringeth forth these fruits, for where a right faith is not, there such fruits are always wanting. And therefore *St. Peter* teacheth us to make our calling unto salvation, sure by good works: where he speaketh properly of the works of love, namely, that we do good to our neighbour, and be affected toward him, as toward our own flesh and blood. Thus much shall suffice concerning this text. Let us call to God for his grace.

S E R M O N XVIII.

Concerning good Works the Fruits of Faith.

Rom. 13. 11, to the 14. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, &c.

THE apostle in this text teacheth, not of faith, but of works the fruits of faith, shewing how the life of a christian ought to be ordered and framed according to the flesh outwardly among men. For how we must live in the spirit and before God, faith doth teach, whereof *St. Paul* a little before this place hath at large, and even apostolically treated. Yea, if we consider this text well, it doth not so much teach as provoke, exhort, move, and stir up them which are already taught, what they must do. For *St. Paul* divideth the office of preaching into two parts, into doctrine and exhortation, *Rom. 12.* Doctrine is, when one teacheth that which was not known before, whereby men are instructed and come to understanding. Exhortation is, when the preacher moveth and provoketh unto that which is already known, either is necessary to be done of him, who will christianly perform the duty of preaching. Wherefore *St. Paul* doth very earnestly apply himself to both, and that his exhortation may be more effectual, and may more acceptably enter into the minds of them whom he hath purposed to exhort, he useth certain elegant and figurative speeches, and doth with an adorned manner of speaking, allure their minds
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unto him. For the words, sleep, darknes, light, waking, armour, works, the day, the night, which he here useth, are all spoken figuratively, by which other things are signified, than their nature and propriety do bear : for he speaketh not of the natural night, day, darknes, armour, waking and sleep, &c. but he resembleth by these natural things a certain likeness to our mind, whereby he may more forceably provoke and bring us to those spiritual things ; as if he said, ye see how men to get the riches of the present time, which do soon perish, rise early, and laying aside the works of darknes, apply themselves to the works of the day, after the night is passed, and the day is come ; with how much greater diligence ought we, shaking off our sleep, to rise early, and casting away the works which we did while it was yet dark, to apply our selves now to those works which are agreeable to our light, forasmuch as the night is now passed, and the day of our salvation hath appeared ?

By sleep he signifieth evil works which are void of faith ; for sleep is a work properly meet for the night, and that he meaneth thus, he sufficiently declareth, when he by and by after addeth : *Let us cast away the works of darknes.* So on the contrary, to wake and to rise, signify good works which come of faith. For as sleep pertaineth properly to the night, so to rise is properly agreeable to the morning and day. Whereupon it is said, *1 Theff. 5. 4. But ye, brethren, are not in darknes, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day ; we are not of the night, nor of darknes. Therefore let us not sleep as do others ; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night ; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath ; but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.* It is sufficiently manifest, that the apostle doth not in
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these words, forbid us the sleep of nature, nevertheless he draweth a similitude from natural sleep and waking, to spiritual, that is, to a good and evil life; and to be brief, to rise out of sleep is here the very same thing that the apostle writeth, *Titus 2. 11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteousness, and godly in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* For that which he called in these words, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, he calleth in this text which we have in hand, to arise from sleep, and that which he termeth to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, that he calleth in our present text, to watch, and to put on the armour of light, and whereas he saith, the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared, that he calleth here the day and light, of which we will hereafter speak more at large. Now let us see what likeness there is between natural and spiritual sleep. He that sleepeth naturally, neither seeth nor feeleth any of those good things that are in the world, but lyeth among those things which are even next adjoyning unto him as it were dead, serving to no use, neither regarding any thing at all. For altho' he live in himself, yet is he as dead to all other. Again, instead of true things, he is in dreams wholly occupied with vain images and forms of things, which appear true, and is so foolish, that he embraceth those vain forms, and thinketh them to be true things; but when he waketh, those images do together vanish away, and the man beginneth to be occupied with true things. After the same manner almost it is, when one is as it were swallowed up of ungodliness, for he sleepeth and is like a dead man before God, neither seeth he, neither feeleth any of the good things, which are good things indeed, namely, those spiritual good things, which are promised, and offered him by the gospel, altho' they be just by him; for those things are seen and felt by faith alone, otherwise they are removed from all sight and feeling. Wherefore so long

as by reason of the sleep of his unbelief, he can have neither any regard or sense of true good things, which are very near him through the gospel, he busieth himself with the false good things of this world, as riches, promotions, and pleasures, which being compared unto eternal life, unto heavenly joy, and that perfect salvation which cometh to the godly, are altogether as dreams, and as those vain visions, compared to natural things, whereof they are only representations; but when a man awaketh, and hath received faith, all regard and desire of those false good things of this present life vanisheth away, and he acknowledgeth that they are nothing else but meer vanity and falshood, even as those visions do fade away quite as soon as a man awaketh out of a natural sleep. Hereof the 76th *Psalms* speaketh, *They have slept their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands,* and *Psalms* 73. *As a dream when one awaketh; so O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.* And *Isaiab* 29. *It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite; so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.* See how contemptuously and disdainfully the prophet speaketh of the chief power, riches, pleasures, and promotions of the world, and liketh them to dreams and most vain visions, wherewith, they which are asleep are deluded. What other durst say, that the good things, riches and power of these kings, princes, and rich men are nothing else but dreams, when as for them, men mingle earth with heaven, fire with water, raging without measure and end in the world? but the cause hereof is, for that they yet sleep, therefore they do yet see nothing hereof, as they want faith, so also are they destitute of the light, *For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.* What mean these words? Did we believe before, and do we not believe now? Here we must call to mind that which *Paul* writeth, *Rom.* 1. 2. that God promised the gospel by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his son *Jesus Christ our Lord*, that all should by him be saved, according

According to that which was said unto *Abraham*, Gen. 22. 18. *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* This blessing promised to *Abraham* in his seed, is nothing else but grace and salvation in Christ offered to the whole world by the gospel, which *Paul* so interpreteth, *Rom.* 4. and *Gal.* 3. For Christ is that seed of *Abraham*, that is, as he is man, his flesh and blood, by whom and in whom shall be blessed, as many as believe in him, and call upon him. This promise was afterward by the prophets continually more and more declared and preached, for they did all write of the coming of Christ, of the grace which he should bring, and of the gospel, which *Peter* also witnesseth, *Acts* 4. This promise of God all the faithful believed which died before Christ was born, who by this faith were saved, and obtained salvation in Christ and through Christ. Hereunto *Paul* now had respect when he said, *Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*; for that which he saith is thus much in effect: We believed in time past, that the promise made unto *Abraham* should be fulfilled, now it is fulfilled, and those things that we believed should come to pass, are now present: Christ is come, the gospel is revealed and published, and the blessing which we looked for is spread over the world; all things which we tarried for and believed, being promised, are come. And hereby the Apostle signifieth the spiritual day, whereof he speaketh afterward, which is properly the beginning and manifestation of the gospel, whereof we will hereafter speak. Now by this, that those things which we believed should be fulfilled, are now fulfilled, our faith is not any whit made void or frustrate, but much more sound and perfect; for as they of the old time before Christ's incarnation believed the promise of God which should be fulfilled, so we believe that the same is fulfilled, and the faith is altogether the same in itself, but that our faith followed theirs, as the fulfilling followeth also the promise: for either faith trusteth in the seed of *Abraham*, that is, in Christ, theirs before his incarnation, ours after it. Wherefore he that should at this day believe with the *Jews* that Christ is to come, should make God a liar, as

though he had not yet fulfilled his promise, which he hath fulfilled, and being fulfilled would have it published and preached; so also should salvation be yet far from the believers, which we should look for being as yet to come, in the time that shall hereafter follow. Of this double faith *Paul* speaketh, *Rom. 1. 17.* *Therein* (that is, in the gospel) *is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.* What meaneth this, *from faith to faith*? Nothing else, but that altho' the faith of the Fathers and our faith is the same, whereby it is believed in Christ either to come, or which hath already appeared; yet the gospel doth lead from their faith to our's, so that it is now necessary not only to believe the promise that was to be fulfilled, but also that it is fulfilled, which it did not behove *Abraham* and the other fathers to believe, although they had the same Christ which we have; for there is one faith, one spirit, one Christ, one communion of all saints, this difference only there is between us, that they went before Christ, we follow him. We have therefore believed, and we do also believe, to wit, the fathers and we, with a like and common faith in the same Christ, although not after the same manner, as it is said. And as by reason of this communion of faith which we have alike in the same Christ, we say, *We have believed, or we did believe, when as not we, but the fathers have believed, or did believe; so they again did say, that they should hear, see, and believe in Christ, when as not they, but we do live in that time.* We read not in a few places of the scriptures, that they which were before the incarnation of Christ, took upon them the person of them which are after it, and they which are after it, of them which were before it, because of the communion of faith, and the same Christ, which they have in common, and so there is as it were one company of believers. Now whereas the Apostle saith, that salvation is now nearer unto us than when we believed, that is, when our fathers those antient believers did look for it to come, we must not understand it of the nearness of possession, as though we now had it nearer and more certainly than they, for the fathers had

had altogether the same faith, as it is said, and the same Christ, wherefore salvation was as near unto them as unto us; *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, Heb. 13. 8.* Christ continueth the same from the beginning of the world even unto the end, by whom all are saved alike. But *Paul* speaketh of the nearness of revealing, that whatsoever things were said before concerning Christ, they were now fulfilled; death being overcome, the Lord did sit at the right hand of the Father, the gospel was preached abroad in the world, by which Christ did come unto all in the whole world; for this cause *Paul* saith, that our salvation is nearer than when it was hidden, and known unto few men, because that Christ being not yet glorified, it was not meet that the preaching of salvation should be made publick or common. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith, *Our salvation* is now nearer us, he saith the same thing in the Epistle to *Titus*, chap. 2. 11. in other words: *The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared*, that is, hath sprung forth, and is every where commonly preached; although it was not hid before in any of the saints, notwithstanding it was not yet commonly known unto the world. After the same sort the scripture speaketh in many places, when it sometimes saith that Christ is to come, sometimes that he is come, although he always hath been, and is in all the elect; howbeit because he had not before his resurrection come to all by publick preaching, the scripture speaketh diversly of his coming; for because of this publick preaching he came in the flesh, being made man, for his incarnation had not been profitable to any, if the gospel had not thereupon been preached, by which he came into the whole world, and whereby it is commonly known why he was made man, whereby that blessing promised to *Abraham* is now published, and made common to all which by the gospel believe in Christ. Hereupon *Paul* saith very well, *Rom. 1. 2.* that the gospel was promised of God, &c. as though he would say, although God hath promised every where in the writings of the prophets his son in the flesh, yet forasmuch as all that should be done, that the gospel might be preached abroad in the world, whereby

whereby he cometh spiritually to the minds of the believers, (which coming only bringeth salvation, and is far to be preferred before that coming in the flesh, inasmuch as it was done because of this) I say rather that God promised by the prophets in scripture the gospel concerning his son ; for God considered the gospel and our faith in all these things, for which he would also have him to be made man, that the gospel might be preached of him, that being made man, he hath saved us by his death, and that the salvation which he hath wrought, might go into the whole world, and be made near unto all. Some have taught four comings of Christ, according to the four *Sundays* in *Advent*, as they call it, but this coming of Christ by the gospel, which is most necessary of all, and of which all do depend, of which *Paul* here speaketh ; this coming I say they could not see, inasmuch as they are ignorant both what the gospel is, and to what end it was given. They babble many things of the coming of Christ, and nevertheless they drive him further from themselves, than heaven is distant from the earth ; for what can Christ profit any man which doth not possess him by faith ? Or how can any man possess him by faith, where the gospel is not preached ?

The night is far spent, the day is at hand : His meaning in effect is, that salvation is at hand ; for by the day *Paul* understandeth the gospel, namely, that it is that day whereby our hearts and minds are enlightened ; therefore such a day being sprung, our salvation is certainly at hand, that is, Christ and his grace promised in time past to *Abraham*, hath shined forth by preaching in the whole world, giveth light unto all men, raiseth all out of sleep, sheweth true and eternal good things, wherein we may be hereafter occupied, and may walk honestly in this day. On the contrary, by the night all doctrine is to be understood, which is not the gospel, beside which none can bring salvation ; but if thou do a little more exactly weigh the words, thou shalt see that *Paul* describeth that part of the day which is most delectable of all, and most full of all pleasantness,
namely,

namely, the joyful and amiable morning, and the rising of the sun ; for it is the morning when the night is gone and ended, and the day is now come, whereupon all things are marvellously cheered and recreated, the birds sing, other living creatures do stir up with alacrity and joyfulness ; men being as it were made alive again, do go forth to their labours ; all things, the day springing, and the morning shining, are so affected, as though the world were renewed, and all things restored to life again. Wherefore in many places of the scripture, the joyful, prosperous, and quickning preaching of the gospel, is likened to the morning, and to the rising of the sun, as it is here by *Paul*, who calleth the gospel day springing or arising. Also *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning : thou hast the dew of thy youth.* Here also the gospel is plainly called the womb of the morning, and the day of the power of Christ, wherein we are conceived and born the children of God, as dew, to wit. without the labour of men, by the only grace of the Holy Ghost from heaven ; the most pleasant comfortable sun Jesus Christ maketh this day, whom the scripture hereupon calleth the sun of righteousness. God saith, *Mal.* 4. 2. *Unto you that fear my Name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings ; for as many as believe in Christ, do receive of him the beams of his grace and righteousness, and do obtain salvation under his wings.* Whereupon it is said, *Psal.* 118. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it ;* as though he had said, this corporal sun maketh the corporal day, but God himself maketh this day, even he is that sun, from whence those beams and that day come, wherewith the whole world is enlightened. Finally, hereupon he calleth himself *the light of the world*, *John* 9. 5. And *Psal.* 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God,* that is, even as these bodily heavens do bring the sun and the day, and the sun is carried in them, so the apostles have in themselves, and bring by preaching, the true sun, which is Christ. &c. Whereupon it followeth : *In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming*
out

out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it : and there is nothing hid from the heat hereof. All this is said of the exceeding pleasant beginning or rising of this day, that is, of the gospel, which the scripture every where marvellously setteth forth ; for it is a word which quickneth, maketh glad, willing, cheerful, and ready to do good works, and finally it bringeth with it all good things. Wherefore it is called the gospel or glad tidings, for that it is a pleasant and prosperous message of the grace of God, and of all good things ; but who is able to rehearse all those things, which this day revealeth and maketh manifest unto us ? For it teacheth all things, what God is, what we are, whatsoever is past, and to come, of heaven, hell, the earth, angels and devils ; by this lamp is shewed unto us, how we ought to behave ourselves in all these things, and toward all, from whence we are, and whither we go. Yet nevertheless Satan hath deceived us miserable creatures, that neglecting such a day, whereby all things might be clear and manifest unto us, we seek the truth of philosophers and heathen men, who have not so much as by a dream known any whit of these things, and so we have suffered ourselves to be blinded with men's traditions, and to be thrust back again into the night ; for it is not light, whatsoever is not this day, otherwise *Paul* and the whole scripture should in vain extol this day alone, and call all other beside it the night. Surely the burden of God's displeasure must needs be most grievous, for that, contrary to so plain and manifest places of scripture, we have sought another light, although the Lord himself calleth himself the light and sun of the world ; and if other proofs were wanting, this one is sufficient, that universities do so impudently both set up and glory of *Aristotle* as a light unto them, in whom they exercise themselves much more than in Christ, yea, nothing in Christ, but altogether in *Aristotle*.

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. As Christ is the sun,
and

and the gospel the day, so faith is the light whereby to see and watch in this day ; for it would not profit, altho' the sun did shine and make the day, if the eyes did not perceive the light. Wherefore although the gospel be begun and preached in the whole world, yet none are lightened, but they that receive it, and by faith being made capable of the light, do arise out of sleep ; but to them as yet sleep this sun and day bring no profit, of which they receive no light, no more than if no sun or day had shined. And this is that season and hour, whereof he speaketh : *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, &c.* It is a spiritual time and season, although begun in this outward time, as it doth daily also come, wherein we ought to arise out of sleep, and lay aside the works of darknes ; whereby *Paul* sheweth that he doth not speak to them which are yet void of faith, for, as it is said, he teacheth not faith here, but the works and fruits of faith, when he saith, We know that the time is come, and that *the night* being passed, *the day is at hand* ; they which believe not, cannot know these things. Now if thou object and say, what reason or cause is there that he should write these things to the faithful, inasmuch as they know that it is time ? &c. Thou must call to mind that in the beginning of the exposition of this text of the Apostle, we have said that the office of preaching is of two sorts, one of teaching, another of exhorting and moving ; now a man cannot attain unto that knowledge, that it should not be needful that he be always moved, and kept in a continual and fresh meditation of those things which he hath learned, least the devil, the world, and the flesh [which are enemies that never grant truce, neither slack their assault] which do make him weary and slothful, that he may at the last sleep, and become altogether negligent in good things ; for the devil, saith *Peter*, is such an enemy, as goeth about continually like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour : Wherefore he saith, *1 Pet. 4. 7. Be ye therefore sober, and watch.* *Paul* also will have us do the same thing here ; for seeing that the devil, the flesh, and the world keep no mean, nor make no end of fighting
against

against me. Far be that from me, for I do not contend to be wiser than they; but this without controversy is thus, that whatsoever is wise, great, liberal, mighty and strong before the world, doth seldom or never agree with the word of God; for so it falleth out, that they that are such do for the most part persecute the gospel, and if they were not so great, the gospel should not so greatly shine forth and triumph. The *Roman* Emperors *Hadrian, Trajan, Dioclesian*, were the most wise *Cæsars* of all, whose government was so liked of, that it was praised of the whole world, yet they persecuted the gospel, and could not abide the truth; the same we find written of the kings of the *Jews*, as of *Abaz* and others, which governed their kingdom very well, yet despised the word of God, and disobeyed his commandments. We in our time had never such emperors or princes, as are comparable to them; but it ought to be verified in these, that God would by foolish preaching confound the wisdom of this world, as *Paul* saith, *1 Cor. 1.* All these things are shewed unto us in this text, which we have in hand, which hath a simple and slender shew and appearance of itself, but it containeth many things in it most worthy the noting. Now how the Lord concludeth with the *Pharisees*, when they had shewed him the tribute-money, and had answered that it was *Cæsar's* image and superscription, the Evangelist declareth, saying, *Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's: and unto God, the things that are God's.* Although they had deserved no such thing of the Lord, nevertheless he teacheth them the right way; and in these words he confirmeth the sword and office of the magistrate: They hoped that he would condemn and resist him, but he doth nothing less, for he commendeth and praiseth him, commanding that they give unto him those things that are his. Whereby he plainly will have, that there be magistrates, princes and rulers, under whose government we must live; neither must we care whether they use and exercise their rule and authority well or ill, we must have regard only to their power and office, for their power and authority is good, inasmuch

as it is ordained and instituted of God ; neither is there any cause why thou shouldest find fault with power, if at any time thou be oppressed by princes and tyrants, for whereas they abuse the power given unto them of God, they shall surely be compelled to give an account thereof. The abuse of a thing doth not make that thing evil, which is in itself good ; a chain of gold is good, neither is it therefore made worse for that a harlot weareth it about her neck, or if one should put out mine eye with it, should I find fault in the chain therefore ? In like manner the power of the prince must be borne, for if he abuse his office, he is not to be counted of me as no prince, neither belongeth it to me to revenge or punish it in him, I must obey him for God's cause only, for he representeth the place of God. How grievous things soever magistrates shall exact, I must for God's sake bare them all, and obey them, so far as they be not contrary to God's commandments ; if they do justly or unjustly, it shall in due time appear. Wherefore if thy substance, life and body, and whatsoever thou hast should be taken from thee by the magistrates, thou mayest say thus, I willingly yield them unto you, and acknowledge you for rulers over me, I will obey you, but whether you use your power and authority well or ill, see you to that ; moreover, whereas Christ saith, *Render therefore unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's : and unto God, the things that are God's.* We must understand that unto God pertaineth honour, we must acknowledge him for the living, omnipotent and wise God, and ascribe unto him what good thing soever can be named ; and altho' we do not give him this honour, he notwithstanding easily keepeth it, for nothing is either added to, or taken from him by our honouring. Howbeit in us he is true, omnipotent and wise, when as we count him so, and believe that he is such a one, as he suffereth himself to be said to be. Now unto *Cæsar* and the magistrate fear, custom, tribute, obedience, &c. are due ; God requireth especially the heart, the magistrate the body and goods, over which he executeth his office in the place of God, which *St. Paul* doth most notably in plain and manifest words declare, *Rom. 13. 1. Let*

such a life shall nothing at all appear, where faith is not, but where a lively, a cheerful and a strong faith is, there such a life cannot be wanting, forasmuch as such a faith is not wearied with well doing, neither sleepeth; wherefore it is no less necessary, to preach to them that have received the doctrine of faith, whereby they may be provoked and stirred up to go on in the good life which they have embraced, and that they suffer not themselves to be overcome by the assaults of the raging flesh, the crafty world, and most subtile Satan. Then it is meet that the doctrine of faith be preached to them that be as yet ignorant of Christ.

Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. Here he rehearseth the works of darkness by name, one of which he named also before, to wit, sleep, according to that saying, *1 Thess. 5. 6. Let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober.* Not that he forbiddeth natural sleep, but spiritual, which is infidelity, whereof those works of the flesh proceed; howbeit, natural sleep also is a work of darkness, if it be used for pleasure, and through immoderate filling of the belly, so that it is a hindrance to the light, that is, faith, and to the armour thereof. Moreover, these six works of darkness which he here rehearseth, do comprehend all the rest; for, *Gal. 5.* and *Colos. 3.* he reckoneth up more of them, but we will divide those, which he here rehearseth into two sides, the right and the left. On the right side these four fight with the spirit, gluttony, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness; on the left side (forasmuch as the left side in the scripture signifieth adversity) those things which proceed from thence do fight, as are wrath, contention and such like; but the right side signifieth prosperity, and those things which ensue thereof, as delights, gluttony, drunkenness, and overmuch sleep, &c. Now it is sufficiently manifest, that *Paul* under two works of darkness here rehearsed, namely, *contention* and *envying*, doth comprehend the rest also of that sort, among which are *bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking,* *Ephes. 4. 31.* And those

those which he rehearseth in the epistle to the *Galatians*: *Hatred, debate, emulation, sedition, heresies, murders, &c.* In fine, hereunto pertaineth whatsoever come of evil anger, either in words or deeds, all which cannot be numbred. After the same sort under those four, gluttony, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, he comprehendeth the vices of lust, which are wont to be committed as well in words as works, which also no man is able to number. And so the present words of the apostle do shew, neither needeth it any further declaration, that by these six works all things are to be understood, whereby they that are void of faith, and are yet in darkness, do live unpurely as concerning themselves, and unjustly toward their neighbours, whose whole life is disordered and out of course both toward themselves and toward others; for there is no man that knoweth not what it is to be gluttonous and drunken, that is, either to eat or drink above a measure necessary for the body; it is as well known what it is to sleep in chambers, and to be wanton, that is, to follow the pleasure of the body, both with sleeping above measure, and with other lewd and unchaste gestures and works, which are wont to be committed in chambers of full fed, well tipleed, idle and slothful bellies, as well in the day, as in the night, as well when they are alone, as in the resort and company of others. All which things do require even natural darkness, and secret places, and are signified of *St. Paul*, by chambering and wantonness.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. In these words as it were in fine, he sheweth all the armour of light, when as he exhorteth us, to put on Christ. Now Christ is put on of us after two sorts; first when we are cloathed with his righteousness, which is done by faith, wherewith he that is endued, believeth that Christ for him died, and fulfilled all things. For not ours, but Christ's righteousness hath reconciled us to the Father and delivered us from sins; and so to put on Christ pertaineth to the doctrine of faith, which teacheth that Christ was given unto us, and is unto us instead of a pledge. Whereof *St. Paul* speaketh, *Gal. 3. 27.* *For as many of you as have been baptized into*
Z 2. *Christ,*

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Christ have put on Christ. The other manner of putting on Christ is, when we weigh and consider, that he is given unto us, also instead of an example, that we should shew our selves serviceable, toward our neighbours, being endued with the same vertues, with which we by faith acknowledge that he being adorned, did serve us, that so we may resemble him in all points; and of this manner of putting on Christ St. Paul speaketh here. The same also he willeth us to do, 1 Cor. 15. when he saith, *And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* And Ephes. 4. *That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness.* Now in Christ we see nothing but the armour of light, no gluttony, no drunkenness but fasting, temperance, keeping under the flesh by divers labours, travelling, preaching, praying, and doing well to all men, in him was no place for slothfulness or superfluous sleep, much less for wantonness, but a marvellous, chastity and purity; he accustomed himself to watch, to rise early, to lye on the ground in the field, having neither house, chamber, nor bed; in him was no wrath, contention, or brawling, but altogether goodness, sweetness, meekness, charity, mercy, patience, &c. Wherefore as St. Paul saith here briefly, *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,* it is as much as that we should set him before us as an example to follow. He teacheth the *Colossians* the same thing in somewhat more words, after this sort: Col. 3. 12. *Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body: and be ye thankful. And Philip after that he had exhorted them to love one another, and that every man should esteem other better*

better than himself, and seek to pleasure, and do for other, he also setteth Christ before them as an example who shewed himself to us our servant, and saith : *Phil. 2. 5. Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus : Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God : But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : And being found in fashion as a man.* The sum thereof is this : the armour, or weapons of light are good works, contrary to those works of darkness, gluttony, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, contention, and envying, such works are, to fast, to watch, to pray, to labour, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, heat, to be chaste, to use modesty, temperance, goodness, and that I do not thrust in too many of mine own words, let us hear *St. Paul* himself rehearsing them in order, *Gal. 5. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance :* But he rehearseth them far more at large, *2 Cor. 6. 1, 2,* saying, *We beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain ; for he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee : behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation ;* as if he said, Our salvation is now nearer unto us than when we believed, to wit, that it would come to pass, that these days of salvation, in which the gospel is preached abroad to the whole world, should appear. It is time therefore to arise out of sleep, *ver. 3, 4, &c.* *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed : But in all things approving our selves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report : as deceivers, and yet true ; As unknown, and yet well known ; as dying, and behold, we live, as chastened, and not killed ; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing*

possessing all things. See what a plentiful and very golden stream floweth out of the mouth of *St Paul*, Hereof I think we most plainly perceive, what is the armour of light, wherewith we must be fenced and fortified both on the right hand and on the left. Now this most fitly agreeth with the matter, whereas he setteth before us a most excellent and perfect example, namely, the Lord himself, saying, *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ* : for he is a fluggish beast, and not a man, who when he seeth his Lord fast, suffer hunger, labour, watch and to be weary, yet giveth himself to gluttony, sleep and pleasures. What Lord could take these things at his servants hand, nay, what servant durst presume to do these things ? So it cannot be, that a christian man should not be ashamed, when he beholdeth Christ, and seeth himself so unlike unto him, yea, occupied in quite contrary things. For whom the example of Christ himself doth not stir him up, exhort, and move, who can bring or stir up him unto goodness ? What would the leaves of words do with their small noise, if these thunderings of the example of Christ do not move ; and surely for this cause, *St. Paul* of purpose adjoyned this word *Lord*, saying, *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, as if he said, count it no great nor burthenfome thing, to stand and fight in this armour of light, ye that are servants, behold your Lord, who when he had no need, did notwithstanding, so well and valiantly use this armour, and fought in it for you. *And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* The apostle in these few words hath noted two cares of the flesh ; one is natural, whereby necessary food and apparel is provided for the body, that it may live, and be able to sustain his labour, least that it be by overmuch abstinence weakened, and made unprofitable to work ; the other care is joined with sin, when the body is provided for to fulfil the lusts thereof, and that it may be delighted ; this care the apostle here forbiddeth, for it ingendereth the works of darkness, so to pamper and make of the flesh, which is continually to be chastised, that it may be obedient to the spirit, and may not shake off the sinner, like unto an untamed house,

house,

horse, altho' that chastising is so to be tempered, that the body notwithstanding may do his duty, and bear the sinner. For as the *fodder, a wand, and burdens, are for the ass*; and *bread, correction, and work for a servant*, Ecclesiastic. 33. 24. He doth not say that thou shalt flea or slay the ass, neither that thou shalt kill the servant, or cast him into prison; so unto the body the chastising and labour thereof is due, and necessary food is not to be withheld from it, St. Paul himself saith, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*. He saith not, I cast it into sickness, or I kill it, but I subdue it to the spirit, that it may serve, and be obedient thereunto. Moreover these words, *to fulfil the lusts thereof*, St. Paul added because of two sorts of men, whereof the first under a pretence of natural necessity, do satisfy their pleasure, and cover that practice under this false pretence. We are so prone and ready unto this, that even many of the saints have very much complained of this evil, and because of it, have oftentimes above measure, afflicted their bodies; for the flesh is so crafty and marvellous subtle to prepare delights for it self, that no man can sufficiently take heed of it, yea, it is needful that a man here do never leave to care and fear. The other sort of men are those blind holy ones, which think that the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof consisteth in meats and drink, and in chosen apparel, and do besides their own works regard nothing; when they have so failed, that they have made their head diseased, and their stomach distempered, and do bring unto their body some great infirmity, or sickness, they then think that they have been marvelous holy, and have wrought incomparable good works. But St. Paul saith, *meat commendeth us not to God, for neither if we eat are we any better: neither if we eat not are we the worse*. And Colos. 2. he writeth thus much in effect: Beware of worshiping of angels, which hath a shew of wisdom, because of humbleness and superstition, whereby they spare not the body, while they withdraw from it the measure of food due unto it, bestowing nothing upon it whereby it may be fed. This superstitious worshiping of angels, yea, indeed superstition, did so deceive *Caiphas*, who

wife a notable man, that he praised the charter-house monks, for that they did so constantly abstain from flesh, that even when they were sick, they would eat none, although they might preserve themselves even from death thereby. But what if God should judge them as killers of their own body? For there can be none at all either ordinance or order, yea, or vow, contrary to the commandment of God, and if there be any such, surely it ought to be of no force, even as if thou hadst vowed adultery. Now God both here by *St. Paul*, and elsewhere, hath commanded that necessary provision should be made for the body, and hath forbidden, that we should procure the death of it: wherefore those things that are profitable to preserve it, whether they be flesh, or eggs, or any thing else, must be given unto it, in what day or time soever, whether it be the sixth or first day of the week, whether it be in *Lent*, or after *Easter*, in the mean season, whatsoever orders, laws, and vows, yea, even of the Pope being neglected. For it is not lawful for any man, no not for the angels to forbid any thing against the commandment of God. Howbeit, this madness proceedeth from that darkness and blindness, whereby miserable men do regard the work only, and think that they shall obtain salvation through the greatness and multitude of works. But *St. Paul* willeth, that our fastings and other chastisings of the flesh be the weapons of light, whereby the works of darkness may be overcome, and not the body destroyed; wherefore there ought to be no other use among christians of fastings, watchings and labours. As it is alone before God whether thou eat fish or flesh; whether thou drink wine or water; whether thou wear red or green garments; all these are the good creatures of God, made unto this end, that we may use them, have regard only to this, that thou mayest use them with a mean and mayst abstain thy self so much from them, as shall suffice to overcome the works of darkness. Wherefore it is impossible, that a common manner of this abstinence should be appointed indifferently to all, for the constitution of all men's bodies is not alike, it is above measure to one, which

to another is under measure ; one hath need of much, another of little, and therefore is it meet that every one have regard of himself, and govern his own body, according to the present doctrine of *St. Paul*, whereas he saith, *Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*, that is, obey the wisdom thereof so far, that ye deny not the necessary things which it requireth, but grant it not those things, which it requireth to the fulfilling of the lusts thereof, more than necessity, to pleasure only. If a better rule of moderation could have been given beside this, *St. Paul* would not have concealed it.

Hereby thou seest, that the popish ordinances, which forbid the eating of flesh and certain meats, are quite contrary to the gospel ; which *St. Paul* hath plainly foretold, *1 Tim. 4. 1. Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils ; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron ; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving. No man surely can deny that these words do briefly reprove the orders of *Monks*, and sacrificing priests, so clear and manifest are both these words, and also their preposterous religion. Moreover thou seest here also, godly reader, that *St. Paul* doth not teach that dotage and womanly holiness of certain, which choose unto themselves certain days, wherein to fast to certain saints, one to this, another to that, all which are blind proceedings, and builded upon their own works. True religion is without choice of meats and days, all the life long to use modesty and sobriety. For seeing that these must be the armour of light, and that it is requisite that our life be undefiled and chaste, it behoveth us surely never to put off this armour, but we must be found always sober, temperate, watching, labouring and praying. But those dotting holy ones, one day eat nothing but bread and water, and afterward three whole months they daily be drunken and eat excessively, even until they be not well in their wits. Others fast so, that at the evening they eat no meat, but in the mean time, they make themselves drunk with drinking : Who is able to rehearse*

all their dotages, and all their works of darknes; all which proceed from hence, for that foolish men consider and regard the work, and not the use of the work, they make their armour of glasse, they are altogether ignorant, whereunto it is profitable to fast and abtain; they are like unto him which carried a sword to the end, that he might look upon it, and knew not how to use it, when he was beaten. These things may suffice to have been spoken for the exposition of this text.

S E R M O N XIX.

Wherein is taught how the faithful ought to rejoyce in God, and let their patient Mind be known unto Men.

(*Pbil. 4. Ver. 4 to 7.*) *Rejoyce in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoyce, &c.*

THIS text indeed is but short, nevertheless it doth most plentifully abound with right christian doctrine, instructing first how we ought to behave our selves toward God, secondly, how toward our neighbours, saying first, *Rejoyce in the Lord alway*, This joy is a fruit of faith, most certainly following it, as *St. Paul* witnesseth, *Gal. 5. 22.* where he saith: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.* Neither can it be, that that heart should rejoyce in the Lord, which hath not yet believed in him. Whereupon it cometh to pass, that where no faith is, there can be nothing but fear, trembling, horror, and sadness, as often as such either remember God, or hear him named, yea, hatred and enmity of God remaineth in such hearts, the cause whereof is, for that the heart void of faith, findeth it self defiled with sins, whereby it doubted not but that it hath deserved the vengeance of God, that sins cannot be but hated of God, which is just, and so when it doth not believe that God will be merciful and favourable unto it, how can it not but de-
test

test all memory of him? so far is it off that it can rejoyce in the Lord, the revenger of sins. These two things, the knowledge of sin, and the vengeance of God prepared for sins are in the heart of the unbeliever, which heart as it is unbelieving, so hath it no hope of pardon, and therefore what other thing can these things work in it, but cause it to be troubled, cast down, always fearful, and greatly terrified, and to think that the vengeance of God doth every moment hang over it, that so that may be verified, which *Solomon* saith: *The ungodly fleeth when no man pursueth him.* And that which is said, *Deut. 28. 65. The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee.* If a man will much persuade such a heart, to have joy in the Lord, he shall do even as if he persuaded the water that it should burn like unto the fire, for it can taste none of this joy, it always feeleth in conscience, that the revenging hand of God, is heavy upon it. Whereupon the prophet saith, *Psal. 32. 11. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.* For this joy in the Lord cannot be but in the righteous and them that are upright in heart; and therefore it is manifest, that this part of scripture was written not for sinners, but to the righteous and saints. Sinners must first be shewed, how they may be delivered from sins, and may obtain God to be favourable unto them, which when they have learned and so obtained, it followeth, that they do of their own accord rejoyce in the Lord, being delivered from remorse of conscience. But if any demand, how one may be delivered from remorse of conscience, and have God merciful unto him, that is declared before at large, and shall be hereafter copiously spoken of. He which seeketh to have a free and glad conscience, and God gentle and favourable, let him not begin at his own works, as the deceitful *Papists* teach, only tormenting consciences, and increasing the wrath of God, but let him despair of himself and of all his own works, let him embrace God in Christ, having a sure faith in the gospel, that he shall receive whatsoever it promiseth. But the gospel promiseth that

Christ is given to us, that he may take away our sins, and be our High Priest, Mediator, and Advocate before God, that so we may nothing doubt, but that our sins through Christ only, and his works are forgiven us, and that we are reconciled to God, and that by this means our conscience is delivered and comforted.

When such a faith possesseth the heart, and the gospel is so received indeed, then God appeareth sweet and altogether loving, neither feeleth the heart any thing but the favour and grace of God, it standeth with a strong and bold confidence, it feareth not least any evil come unto it, it being quiet from all fear of vengeance and displeasure, is merry, and glad of so incomparable grace and goodness of God given unto it freely and most abundantly in Christ. Wherefore there must needs forthwith proceed from such a love, faith, joy, peace, gladness, giving of thanks, praise, and a certain marvellous delight in God, as in a most dear and favourable father, which dealeth so fatherly with us, and poureth forth his gifts so plentifully and in so great a measure, upon them that do not deserve them. Behold of such joy, *St. Paul* speaketh here, which truly where it is, there can be no place for sin, or fear of death or hell, yea, nothing is there, but a joyful, quiet and omnipotent trust in God, and in his favour. Wherefore it is called joy in the Lord, not in gold or silver, gluttony or drunkenness, in delicates or singing, health, knowledge, wisdom, power, glory, friendship, favour, no nor in good works, holiness, or whatsoever is without God. Of these thou shalt take but a deceitful and vain joy, which cannot pierce the heart, or enter unto the bottom thereof, whereof thou mayst rightly say that which is want to be spoken as a proverb among the *Germans*; This man rejoiceth, but he feeleth not any joy in his heart. There is one full and perfect joy, which the believers take of and in the Lord, which is nothing else, than to commit themselves unto him, and of him alone to rejoice, trust and presume, as a most favourable and loving father. Whatsoever joy is not after this sort, the
Lord

Lord doth contemn and reject it, whereof *Jeremiah* speaketh, 9. 23. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me.* And *St. Paul*, saith, *Let him that rejoiceth rejoice in the Lord*, He addeth, that we must rejoice always, where he toucheth them, which only half the time do rejoice in the Lord, and praise him, that is, when all things fall out according to their desire, but when adversity cometh, they change joy with sadness and sorrow, of whom the 48th *Psalme* speaketh, *So long as thou dost well unto him he will speak good of thee*, But the prophet himself saith, not so: *I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth*, *Psal. 34. 1.* And he hath just cause so to do, for who shall hurt him, unto whom God is merciful; surely sin shall not hurt him, neither death nor hell; wherefore the prophet saith in another place: *Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil*, *Psal. 23, 4.* and *Paul* saith, *Rom. 8, 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Again I say rejoice.* This repetition of the apostle confirmeth his exhortation, and truly not without a cause, forasmuch as we live in the midst of sins, and therefore in the midst of tribulation, both which do move us unto sadness and heaviness. Wherefore the apostle purposing to comfort us against these, exhorteth us that we should always rejoice in the Lord, altho' we sometime fall into sins. For it is meet, the more God with his goodness exceedeth the evil of sin; so much more always to rejoice in him, when we are sorrowful because of our sins, which altho' by nature they bring sadness and sorrow with them, yet forasmuch as they cannot bring so much hurt, as Christ, if we believe in him bringeth profit and safety, joy in the Lord

ought always to have the first place with us, and far to overcome the sorrow and sadness that cometh by reason of our sins; for we must always think on that which *John* writeth; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, 1 John 2. 1. Let your moderation be known unto all men.* He hath already taught, how men ought to behave themselves toward God, namely, that they must serve him with a cheerful heart and continual joy; now he declareth in few words, how the believers ought to behave themselves toward men, saying, *Let your moderation be known unto all men.* Which words are thus much in effect; Be joyful toward God, always rejoicing in and of him, but toward men be of a patient mind, and pliant, applying your selves to all, and so behaving your selves, that ye be ready to do and suffer all things, and to yield in every thing, as much as may be by any means without transgressing the commandment of God, whereby ye may approve your selves to all men, and please all in that which is good; not only hurting none, but also taking in good worth all things of all men, interpreting aright the sayings of all men, and accepting them in the better part, that men may plainly see you to be them, unto whom all things are alike, which take in good part whatsoever betideth you, which stick in nothing, which would not disagree with any man for any cause, which be rich with the rich, poor with the poor, rejoicing with them that rejoice, weeping with them that weep, and to be brief, be made all things to all men, that all men must needs acknowledge that ye are grievous to none, but agreeable, of a patient mind, pliant, and obedient toward all in all things. The *Greek* word *epieikes* which the apostle here useth, meaneth the same, which signifieth in our tongue a patient and pliant mind, whereby one doth so apply and shew himself indifferent to others, that he is the same to one that he is to another, applying himself indifferently to the will of all, not requiring himself to be counted for a rule, whereunto the rest ought to apply and order themselves. An old interpreter translateth it modesty, which, if thou understand it aright, and not

for the only moderation and temperance of meat and apparel, as it is want commonly to be taken, is not altogether unfitly translated, namely, if thou understand it to be a vertue, whereby one thinking modestly of himself, endeavoureth to order and apply himself unto all, according to the capacity and ability of every one, ready to permit, to take in good part, to obey, to give place, to do, to omit, to suffer all things, as he shall see it will profit his neighbour, altho' he must suffer hindrance and loss of his substance, name, and body thereby. That these things may be made more plain, it shall be good to declare them by examples, St. Paul 1 Cor. 9. 20. writeth thus of himself: *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law.* Behold, thou seest here the patient and pliant mind rightly observing those things which are here commanded. For those things that he writeth of himself have this meaning; sometimes he did eat, drink, and do all things as a Jew, altho' it was not necessary, that he should so do; sometimes he did eat and drink with the *Gentiles*, and did all things as free from the law; for only faith in God, and love toward our neighbour, are necessarily required, all other things are free, so that we may freely observe them for one man's sake, and omit them for another man's sake, as we shall perceive it to be profitable to every one. Now it is contrary to this modesty or meekness, if one having an impatient mind, trusteth to his own wit, and contendeth that one thing among the rest is necessary, which thou must neither omit or observe, and so applying himself unto none, but contending to have all others to apply themselves unto him, he neglecteth and perverteth the softness and meekness which is here taught, yea, and the liberty of faith also; such some of the *Jews* were, unto whom we must give no place, even as St. Paul yielded unto them. We see the same example commonly in Christ, but especially *Mat. 12*, and *Mar. 2*. where were

read that he suffered his disciples to break the sabbath, and he himself also, when the case so required, did break it; when it was otherwise, he did keep it, whereof he gave this reason, *The Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath.* Which is as much to say as, the sabbath is free, that thou mayest break it for one man's sake and advantage, and for the sake and advantage of another thou mayest keep it; so *Paul* caused *Timothy* to be circumcised because of the *Jews*, for that they thought that it was of importance to their salvation; again he would not have *Titus* circumcised, because certain *Jews* did unjustly urge it, so that the circumcision of *Titus* would have been rather a confirmation of error unto them, than have profited them any thing. *Paul* therefore would keep circumcision free, that he might sometime use it, and sometimes not use it, as he should perceive it to be profitable to every one.

So, to come to other matters, when the Pope commandeth to make confession, to fast, to abstain from, or use this or that kind of meat, &c. and exacteth these things as necessary to salvation, they are utterly to be contemned, and those things that are contrary to these, are most freely to be done; but if he should not command them as necessary, if any man might be helped or edified in any thing by the observation of them, surely they were to be observed, but freely and of love only, as also they are to be omitted, if the omitting of them may be profitable to any. The reason of this liberty is this: The Son of man is Lord of the sabbath; if of the sabbath, how much more of the traditions of men? Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon this liberty, it cannot hurt any, but to observe them of necessity, it extinguisheth faith and the gospel; likewise, if one live, yet as in a monastery, if he observe the vows and ordinances of that life upon christian liberty, and of love to his brethren that he may edify them, and of no necessity, neither with the hindrance of his own or other men's salvation, he shall do godly, for he is free; but if those things be straightly required as necessary to salvation, then before thou suffer thyself to be brought into this error, monasteries, shavings, hoods, vows, rules,

rules, ordinances, and all such like must be left, and the contrary must be done, to witteis, that only faith and love are necessary for a christian, and that all other things are free, so that he may either omit or do them for the edifying and cause of them with whom he liveth. Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon liberty and of love, is godly; but if thou observe any thing of necessity, it is ungodly. The same is to be said of all other ordinances and decrees of men, which are wont to be observed in monasteries, that whatsoever doth not agree with the word of God, thou mayest being free either observe or omit it, according as thou shalt know it to be profitable and acceptable to them, with whom thou art conversant; but if they be required as necessary, reject them all utterly, and tread them under thy feet. Hereupon thou now seest what a devilish thing the papacy and monasteries be; for whatsoever things be free and to be permitted to free love only, they make them necessary, and say the keeping of them is of importance to salvation, whereby truly as much as is in them they together pervert and extinguish the gospel and faith. I pass over with silence, that they hereupon set and sell the care of the belly instead of the service of God; for how many among them at this day do for God's cause, and not rather for their belly's sake, take upon them to be monks or clerks, do frequent the choir, sing, pray, say mass, or do any such thing, wherein they counterfeit and corrupt the true worship and service of God? The common subversion of all monasteries were the best reformation of all these things, from which so much disadvantage, and no whit of profit, may be looked for. Before our monastery could be perswaded concerning true christian liberty, infinite thousands of souls in others should perish; wherefore forasmuch as they bring no advantage at all, neither is there any need of them, and they are a cause of greater hindrance to a christian common wealth than can be thought, and cannot by any means be reformed, what can be more profitable, than that they be utterly overthrown and abolished? Moreover, that we may admonish here concerning the

civil magistrate, when he commandeth or requireth any thing, yea, if he compel thereunto we must obey, for there cometh no loss of christian liberty or of faith hereby, forasmuch as they do not contend that those things are necessary to salvation which they do ordain or require, but only to maintain outward rule, publick tranquillity and government, and so the conscience remaineth free. Wherefore, forasmuch as it doth nothing hinder faith to do those things which the civil magistrate commandeth, but doth also profit the common weal, it shall be without doubt a point of christian obedience to endeavour to do them with a willing mind, that we may be such as are pliant and agreeable to all men, willing to do all things, ready to deserve well of every one, and to gratify all. Howbeit if any should contend that those commandments of the civil magistrate be necessary to salvation, then, as it is said of the traditions of the Papists, the contrary rather were to be done, or at the least it were to be witnessed, that thou dost them only for the common weal's sake, because it is profitable to others, and not that thou mayest obtain salvation by them, which we have gotten by Christ Jesus alone, as many of us as believe in him. According to this doctrine and the example before-mentioned every one ought to behave himself in every thing and toward all men, as *Paul* here teacheth, that he stick not to his own judgment or right, but that he shew himself pliant to others, and have regard of those things, which he shall know will be acceptable and profitable to his neighbours. When therefore it doth nothing hinder thy faith, and profiteth thy neighbour to yield somewhat of thy own right, if thou do it not, thou art without charity, and neglectest that christian softness and patient mind that *Paul* here speaketh of; yea, if thou hast regard hereof, as he that truly believeth in Christ ought to have, thou must take it patiently even when any man doth injury unto thee, or endamage thee, and so interpret it in the better part, and always think on that which that martyr when all his substance was taken from him, said, *But they shall not take away Christ from me.* So whatsoever chanceth unto thee, say thou, I have as yet suffered no
 loss

loss of my faith, why should I not take it in good part, which my neighbour hath done? Why should I not yield unto him, and apply myself to his will? Thou canst scarce find a more manifest example hereof, than between two unfeigned friends; for as they behave themselves one toward another, so ought a christian to behave himself toward every one. Either of them endeavoureth to gratify other, either of them giveth place to other, suffereth, doth, and omitteth whatsoever he seeth to be for the profit and advantage of the other, and that freely without all constraint. Either of them doth diligently apply himself to the will of the other, neither of them compelleth other to follow his mind, and if one should use the goods of another, the other would not be offended, but would take it in good part, and would not grudge rather to give more, and that I may speak briefly, between such there is no exaction of law, no grudging, no constraint, no necessity, but liberty, favour, and good will. On the contrary, such as are impatient and obstinate, which take nothing in good part of any man, but go about to make all things subject to their own will, and to order all things according to their own judgment, such I say trouble the world, and are the cause of all discords, contentions, wars, and whatsoever difference there is, and say afterward, that they did those things for the love of justice, that they endeavoured to defend that which is right: So that that heathen man said not amiss, *Extreme rigour is extreme injury*. And Solomon also saith, *Eccles. 7. 16. Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself over wise*; for as extreme rigour is extreme injury, so too great wisdom is extreme folly; which also is meant by this common saying, *When wise men dote they dote beyond measure*. Surely if God should deal with us according to right, we should perish in a moment; wherefore, as Paul praiseth in him this moderation of right, and incomparable patience and gentleness, saying, *2 Cor. 10. 1. I Paul myself beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ*, so it is also meet that we do observe a measure of our judgment, right, wisdom, prudence, and in all things apply

apply ourselves to the profit of others. But let us weigh the words of the Apostle, for they are placed not without a spiritual skilfulness; he saith, *Let your moderation be known unto all men.* Where thou must not think that he commandeth thee to be made known unto all men, or that thou oughtest to tell thy moderation before all men; for he saith not, tell it forth, but let it be known, that is, endeavour to practise it toward men; I do not command that ye should think or speak of it, but that ye labour that it may be known indeed; while all men do try and feel it, that no man may say any other thing of you, than that ye be of a patient mind, and pliant, and applying yourselves to all men, being enforced so to say even by manifest experience. So that if any man were never so much bent to speak otherwise of you, his mouth might be stopped by the testimony of all other, witnessing of your patient mind and meekness; so saith Christ, *Mat. 5. 16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* And Peter saith, *1 Pet. 2. 12. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.* It is not surely in our power, that our moderation should be known and acknowledged of all men, but it shall be sufficient for us, if we endeavour that all men may have trial thereof in us, and that no man may find it wanting in our life. Moreover [*all men*] is not so to be taken, thou shouldest understand thereby all men which are in the world, but rather all sorts of men, that we have regard to be of a patient mind, as well toward enemies as friends, as well toward servants as masters, small as great, poor as rich, strangers as them at home, toward them that we know not, as toward them with whom we are familiar; for there are some which behave themselves very gently and patiently toward strangers, but toward them that are in the house with them, or with whom they always keep company, there are none more obstinate or froward than they. And how many are there, which at great and rich men's hands take all things in good part, interpreting every
 thing

thing at the best, and most gently bear whatsoever they say or do, but toward the poor they shew no gentleness or meekness, neither take anything of them in good part ; so we are all ready to do for our children, parents, friends and kinsmen, and most favourably interpret and willingly bear whatsoever they have committed. How often do we even praise the manifest vices of our friends, or at the least wink at them, and apply ourselves most fully unto them ? But to our enemies and adversaries we impart none of this favour, in them we can find nothing that is good, nothing that is to be borne, nothing that can be interpreted in the better part, but we dispraise every thing and take it at the worst. Against such imperfect patient minds *Paul* here speaketh, saying, *Let your moderation be made known unto all men ;* he will have our patient mind, and right christian meekness, to be perfect and entire toward all, whether they be enemies or friends ; he will have us suffer and take in good part all things of all men, without all respect either of persons or deserts. And such without doubt will our patient mind be, if it be true and not counterfeit ; no otherwise than gold remaineth gold, whether a godly or ungodly man possess it ; and the silver, which *Judas* who betrayed the Lord had, was not turned into ashes, but remained that which it was, as truly all the good creatures of God, whosoever have them, do continue toward all things that which they are : So a patient mind which is sincere, coming of the spirit, continueth like itself whether it light upon enemies or friends, poor men or rich. But our nature, which is full of deceit and plainly corrupt, doth so behave itself, as if that which is gold in the hand of *Peter*, were turned into a cole in the hand of *Judas*, and it is wont to be patient and pliant toward rich men, great personages, strangers, friends, and not toward every one, wherefore it is false, vain, vile, hypocritical, and nothing but deceit and mockery before God. Hereof now learn how far from being sound and entire, spiritual meekness and a patient mind is unto nature, and how few there be which mark this evil, by reason of that deceitful meekness and patient mind, though in outward shew very goodly,
which

which they shew unto some, thinking that they do well and justly, in that they are more hard and impatient toward others ; for so their defiled and filthy nature teacheth them, by her goodly reason, which always judgeth, and doth, against the spirit and those things that are of the spirit, because, as *Paul* saith, *Rom. 8. 5. They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh.* But to conclude, it is manifest that the *Apostle* hath comprehended in these few words the whole life worthy of a christian, which he ought to lead toward his neighbour ; for he that is of a patient mind, pliant and meek indeed, studieth to deserve well of all men, as well concerning the body as concerning the soul, as well indeed as in words, and doth also bear with a patient mind, the offences and malice of others. Where such a mind is, there is also *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness,* and whatsoever is the fruit of the spirit, *Gal. 5. 22.* But here flesh murmureth : If we should endeavour to be so meek and patient, saith the flesh, that we should take all things in good part of all men, it would come to pass, that no man should be able to keep a piece of bread safely and in peace, for the unjust which would abuse our meekness and patient mind, they would take away all things, yea, they would not suffer us to live. Mark how comfortably and abundantly the *Apostle* doth satisfy this distrustful and foolish thinking, even from this place unto the end of this text, *The Lord is at hand* ; as though he said, If there were no Lord or no God, one might fear, when by his meekness and patient mind he counteth all things alike, and taketh all things in good part, that that would be damage and hurt unto him ; but now there not only is a Lord which governeth all things most justly, but he is also at hand, he cannot forget or forsake thee, be thou only of a patient mind and gentle toward all, let him have the care of thee, nourish, and preserve thee. He hath given *Christ* the eternal good, how should not he also give things necessary for the belly ? He hath far more than can be taken away from thee, and thou, forasmuch as thou hast *Christ*, hast much more than the whole world ;

hereunto pertaineth that which is said, *Psal. 55. 22.*
Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.
 And *1 Pet. 5. 7.* *Casting all your care upon him, for he*
careth for you. And Christ saith, *Mat. 6. 26.* *Behold*
the fowls of the air, consider the lillies of the field, &c.
 All which agree with the present consolation of the
 Apostle, and have the same meaning which these words
 here have: *The Lord is at hand. be careful for nothing.*
 That is, take no care at all for yourselves, let God care
 for you, who knoweth and is able to do it, whom ye
 have now known that he is good and gracious. The
 heathen have not without a cause care of this present
 life, inasmuch as they are ignorant, and do not believe
 that they have a God who hath care of all, as Christ,
Mat. 6. 31. said, *Therefore take no thought, saying, What*
shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal
shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gen-
 tiles seek for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have
 need of all these things. Wherefore let the whole world
 take from thee, and do thee Injury, thou shalt always
 have sufficient, and it cannot be that thou shouldest
 perish with any adversity, unless they have first taken
 from thee thy God; but who can take him from thee,
 if thou thyself dost not cast him off? There is no cause
 therefore that we should be careful, seeing that he is our
 Father and provideth for us, which hath all things in his
 own hand, even those which seem to take away those
 things that be ours from us, and to endamage and hurt
 us wherein soever they are able. But we have exceeding
 great cause always to rejoice in the Lord, when we are
 of a patient mind toward all men, forasmuch as we are
 certain, if so be that we believe, that it can by no means
 come to pass, that good things should be wanting unto
 us, having Almighty God our favourable and careful
 Father; whom they that have not, let us suffer them to
 be troubled with care. It ought to be our only care,
 how we may be void of care, and be found always joy-
 ful in God; and meek, and of a patient mind toward
 men: So without doubt we shall try that which *David*
tried, Psal. 37. 25. saying, *I have been young and now*
am old: yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his
seed

seed begging bread; and that which he saith, *Psal. 40.* The Lord careth for me. But in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. In these words the Apollle teacheth, how our care is to be cast upon God, and the meaning of that which he saith is this, Only be not careful, but if any thing chance which may make you careful (as indeed innumerable such are wont to come unto those that live in the world) so believe yourselves, that ye attempt nothing at all with your care, whatsoever that shall be which chaunceth unto you, but cast off care, turn yourselves with prayer and supplication unto God, and desire him that he will bring to pass and finish that which yourselves otherwise should in vain have attempted with your care to accomplish. Howbeit desire this with giving of thanks, forasmuch as ye have such a God as hath care of you, and unto whom ye may safely commit all care for you; but he that will not so behave himself when any thing happeneth, but will first weigh all things by his own reason, and order them according to his own judgment, and so take to himself the care of his things, he shall wrap himself in innumerable disadvantages, he shall lose all joy and quietness thereby, and yet shall prevail nothing but labour in vain, and plunge himself so much more in troubles and miseries, that he shall not be able to escape out of them again, which we learn daily both by our own and by other men's experience. Now that which *Paul* here admonisheth concerning prayer tendeth unto this end, lest that any man should neglect all things and commit them to God, and he himself sleep and do nothing at all, no not so much as once pray for them; for he that should use this slothfulness, altho' he were now quiet, shall easily be wrapp'd in cares, whereof he shall not be able to rid himself; we must do our endeavour and not sleep, and therefore it is that many things be incident, which are wont to bring carefulness, whereby we might be as it were compelled to pray unto God. Wherefore *Paul* here not in vain joined together those two: *Be careful for nothing: but, In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known*

known unto God. Nothing and every thing do indeed greatly differ, howbeit the Apostle therefore put them together, that he might signify that it cannot be but that many and innumerable things be incident, which are wont to bring care, but that in all them we ought to admit no carefulness, but always fly unto prayer, and commit them all unto God, and desire of him those things whercof we have need. Now we must here see how our prayer must be framed, and what is the true manner of praying. The Apostle setteth down four things, prayer, supplication, giving of thanks, and requests or petitions. Prayer is those words or speech, wherein as sometimes something is desired, so also other things are declared, as is the Lord's prayer and the Psalms. Supplication is, when the petition is urged or made more earnest by something, as when one prayeth for his father, or for some other thing which is dear and excellent unto him, as when we pray unto God by his mercy, by his son, by his promise, by his name, &c. As *solomon*, Psal 132. 1. *Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions.* And *Paul*, Rom. 12. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God.* And 2 Cor. 10. 1. *I Paul myself beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, &c.* A petition or request is, when we name that which is desired, and for which prayer and supplication is made, as in the Lord's prayer, all that composition of words is called prayer, but those several things for which we pray, as *hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, &c.* are petitions, according to that saying, *Mat. 7. 7. Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* Giving of thanks is when the benefits of God are rehearsed, whereby faith in God is strengthened, and stirred up so much more confidently to look for that which is desired, and for which we do pray; wherefore prayer urgeth or earnestly asketh by supplication, but is strengthened and made sweet and acceptable by giving of thanks, and so by this strength and sweetness it prevaieth, and obtaineth, whatsoever it asketh. This manner of prayer we read to have been used in the church, and among the

holy fathers of the old Testament, which were wont always in their prayers to ask with supplication and giving of thanks; the same also we see in the Lord's prayer, which beginneth with giving of thanks and with praise, when as even in the beginning thereof we confess God a father, unto whom the godly mind hath access by his fatherly love, and by the love of his son, unto which supplication nothing may be compared; wherefore it is both the best and most excellent prayer of all which may be had. Moreover in these words *Paul* hath very well expressed the mystery of the golden censer in the old Testament, whereof we read many things in the books of *Moses*; it was lawful for the priests only to burn incense, now all we which believe in Christ are priests, wherefore it is lawful for all us, and for us only to burn the incense of prayers. The censer that golden vessel, is the words which we utter in prayer, surely golden and precious, as those are whereof the Lord's prayer consisteth, the Psalms, and other prayers of the scripture; for commonly in the scripture vessels signify words, for that our meanings are contained in words as in a vessel, and by words are uttered and received as out of a vessel, as wine, water, burning coals, and such like, are contained in vessels, and taken out of vessels; so by the cup of *Babylon*, Apoc. 17. the doctrine of men is understood, and by the cup wherein the blood of Christ is drunk, the gospel. Furthermore burning coals, whereupon the frankincense was laid, signify giving of thanks, and rehearsing of benefits in prayer, which we are wont to do in making supplication; for, that by fiery coals benefits are signified, it is manifest even out of the 12th to the *Rom.* where the Apostle reciteth the saying of *Solomon*, Prov. 25. 21. *If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.* And benefits may be rightly called coals of fire, forasmuch as they inflame the heart with love, although it be cold. In the law it was prohibited to lay the frankincense upon any other coals, but them that were of the altar of the Lord, which signifieth, that we must not rehearse our own good deeds in prayer, as that

Pharisee did, *Luke* 15. but only the benefits of God bestowed upon us in Christ. He is our altar, by him we must offer, for the benefits received by him we must give thanks, and make mention of them in prayer for the increasing of our faith. This *St. Paul* teacheth, *Colos.* 3, 17. where he saith, *Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him.* For God cannot suffer, that thou shouldest glory in any thing else in his sight, which he declared in a type or figure, *Levit.* 10, where we read that *Nadab* and *Abihu* the sons of *Aaron* were taken and consumed of the flame from the Altar of God, because they burned incense, taking other fire than of the altar of the Lord. The works of Christ only are acceptable to God, wherefore for these only we must both give thanks and rejoice in prayer. The incense signifieth the Petitions made in prayer; for petitions are, whereof prayer consisteth, and which ascend unto God, according as *St. Paul* saith, *Let your requests be made known unto God,* wherein he seemeth to have considered and interpreted them as a favour ascending from the center. As though he had said, when ye shall burn incense sweet and acceptable unto the Lord, make, that your petitions be shewed unto God with supplication and giving of thanks, this incense and this favour as it is most sweet unto God, so doth it ascend straight unto heaven like vapours of smoak, and entereth even unto the throne of God; and as burning coals do give a strong favour, and make it ascend upwards; so the memory of the benefits of God, which we rehearse by giving of thanks, and whereof we do as it were advertise God and our selves both, make prayer stedfast and bold, which cheerfully and gladly ascendeth into heaven, without which, truly prayer fainteth, is cold and of no force. Wherefore whosoever thou art, before thou pray with faith and effectually, thy heart must be inflamed with the memory of the benefits, which God hath bestowed upon us in Christ. But perhaps some men will demand how our petitions are made known or become manifest unto God, seeing then they are not only known unto him before we pray, but he also doth send us that,

which we ask ? Whereunto I answer ; the apostle adjoined this, that he might teach, of what sort true prayer ought to be, to wit, assured and having confidence and trust in God, which passeth not away into the wind, neither is made at adventure, as their prayer is, which pray, and have no regard whether God hear or not, yea, rather believe, that he doth not hear, which undoubtedly is not to pray or to ask of God, but to tempt and mock God. For if any man did desire money of me, whom I certainly knew, not to persuade himself that he should receive it, I could not suffer such an asker, of whom I might assure my self to be mocked ; how much more is God offended at our much crying out and babbling, when we do continually babble much, and cry out and do not think at all whether he heareth us. Learn therefore here, that thy petitions must be shewed unto God, that is, that thou must so ask, that thou doubt not, that thy petitions be known and accepted of God, and believe certainly that thou shalt obtain whatsoever thou dost ask, with which faith if thou be endued, it shall so come unto thee indeed. For as we believe, so it cometh unto us. Wherefore, as the smoak carrieth favour upward from the censer ; so faith carrieth the petitions of the believers into the sight of God, whereby we assuredly believe that our petitions shall come unto God, and that we shall undoubtedly obtain those things that we ask. *St. Paul* by these words (*be made known*) did undoubtedly mean that, which is often in the *Psalms* ; *God hath heard my petition, Give ear Lord unto my prayer,* and such like. Hereof *Christ* speaketh, *Mat. 21, 22.* and *Mar. 11, 24.* *Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive.* And *James* saith, chap 1. *Ask in faith and waver not, for he that wavereth shall receive nothing of the Lord.* Who may not now hereof perceive, that that much babbling, and crying out, which is made commonly through the world in monasteries, is a mocking and deluding of God ? The prayers of these, if they may be called prayers, are abundantly shewed before men, for they cry out and babble too much, but there is no regard of them with God, they

they are not known of him, neither come they unto his ears, that is, he doth by no means hear them, for that they do not believe, or are assured, that their crying out or much babbling is heard of God, wherefore as they believe, so do they receive. It was time therefore long since, that those mockings and blasphemies of God should be abolished. But if we pray as we are here taught, there shall be nothing surely which we may not obtain. Now we pray for many things continually, and receive nothing, neither is it any marvel, seeing we pray so, that our petitions be not shewed unto God, for that we do not believe that they be manifest unto him. Wo to our diffidence and incredulity. *And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* In how goodly an order doth St. Paul here instruct a christian man? First he teacheth him to be glad and joyful in the Lord by faith; secondly, to shew himself meek and gentle to all his neighbours. And if thou say, how can I do that without loss or hindrance? he answereth *the Lord is at hand.* If thou again object; but what if men persecute me, and even bereave me of that I have? He addeth; *Be careful for nothing, but let thy requests be made known unto God.* Where if the flesh again murmur, what if in the mean season I be oppressed and spoiled? he concludeth that there shall be nothing less, *the peace of God shall preserve and keep thee*; whereof I must now treat somewhat; by the peace of God is not meant here that peace whereby God is peaceable and quiet in himself, but that which he giveth unto us, and poureth into our hearts, even as also it is called the word of God which he giveth us, that we may preach it and believe it. So when he giveth this peace unto us, it is called the peace of God, even because we have the same with him, when in the world notwithstanding we suffer affliction. Now this peace passeth all understanding, reason, and knowledge of man; which is not so to be understood, as though man cannot at all perceive or know it, for if we have peace with God, truly it must be felt in our heart and conscience, otherwise our hearts and minds could

not be preserved by it, but it is thus to be understood ; when tribulation cometh upon them, which know not to flie unto God with prayer and supplication, but trust to their own wisdom and care, whereby they seek peace, but that which reason is able to know, which is that whereby tribulation taketh an end, and is changed with outward tranquility ; this peace doth not pass reason, but is agreeable unto it, inasmuch as it is sought and found out of it ; wherefore they that are void of faith are exceedingly disquieted, and troubled until according to the reason of the flesh they obtain this peace by hardly delivering or ridding themselves of adversity, not regarding whether they bring that to pass by force or by craft, as he that hath received a wound seeketh to have it healed, &c. But they that rejoyce sincerely in the Lord, it is sufficient for them, that they know that they have God favourable unto them, and have assured peace with him, they abide willingly in tribulation, being nothing careful for that peace of reason by the removing of outward troubles, but they endure them valiantly, looking to be strengthened inwardly by faith, taking no care whether the adversities which they suffer, shall remain a short or a long time, whether they shall be temporal or continuing, neither are disquieted with caring what end they shall have ; they commit all things to God, seeking not to know, when, how, where, or by whom he will give them quietness ; wherefore God again sheweth them this favour, that he maketh the end of their tryal to be such, and with so great advantage, as no man could either suspect or wish for ; Lo, this is that peace of the cross, the peace of God, the peace of conscience, true christian peace, which maketh that a man outwardly also, as much as is in him, liveth quietly and peaceably with all men, and troubleth no man. This peace, reason is not able by any means to know or comprehend, that a man under the cross may have quietness of mind and joy of heart, and peace even in the very invasion of his enemies ; this is the gift and work of God known to none, but to him that hath it, and hath tried it. Whereas *St. Paul* saith, *Now the God of hope fill*

you with all joy and peace in believing, Rom. 15, 13. That which he called in these words peace in believing he calleth in our present text the peace of God. Moreover, St. Paul signifieth in these words, that whosoever will rejoice in the Lord by faith, and be meek and of a patient mind toward all by love, the devil undoubtedly is against him, and will raise up some cross, that he may drive him from so christian a purpose, wherefore the apostle will have every one to be prepared against this assault of Satan, and to place his peace there where Satan cannot trouble it, namely in God, and not think how he may cast off the cross, but suffer the adversary to take on, and rage as he list, he in the main time patiently looking for the Lord, that he coming may make an end of adversities and troubles, for by this means, his mind, heart, and conscience are preserved and kept in peace. Neither can patience endure, where the heart is not confirmed with this peace, for that he only which hath this peace doth thoroughly persuade himself that God is favourable unto him, and careful for him, and maketh no account what chanceth unto him from creatures. Moreover let no man understand here the hearts and minds, to be the will and knowledge of nature, but as St. Paul himself interpreteth, the hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, that is, such as we have in Christ, of Christ, and under Christ. These are the hearts and minds which faith and love cause, with which they that be endued, do behave themselves most godly towards God, and most lovingly and gently toward their neighbour; toward God they so behave themselves, that they believe in him, and love him with their whole heart, and are also most ready, with their whole heart and with all their cogitations to do those things which shall be acceptable to God and their neighbours, as much as, yea, more than they are able. Such hearts and minds the devil goeth about with the fear of death and other troubles to terrify and drive from this godliness, erecting a false hope, by the devices and imaginations of men, wherewith the mind is seduced, that it may seek to be comforted and helped of it self or other

creatures,

creatures, which if it do surely, he hath drawn such a man from the care of God, and wrapped him in his own vain care. Thus hast thou, godly Reader, out of this short text a most plentiful instruction of christian life, how thou must live toward God and thy neighbour, namely, that thou must believe that God is all things unto thee, and thou again must be all things unto thy neighbours, that thou must shew thy self such a one to thy neighbour as God hath shewed himself unto thee, that thou must receive of God and give to thy neighbour ; all which are contained in faith and love, the whole sum of all christianity.

S E R M O N

S E R M O N XX.

Concerning them that are under the Law, and
them that are under Grace.

*Gal. 4. Ver. 1. to the 7th. Now I say, that the heir as
long as he is a child, &c.*

THIS Text toucheth the very pith of *St. Paul's* chief doctrine, the cause why it is well understood of so few, is not, for that it is so obscure and hard, but because there is almost no knowledge of faith left in the world, without which it cannot be that one should rightly understand *St. Paul*, who every where treateth of faith with such force of the spirit as he is able. I must therefore speak somewhat, that this text may be made plain, and that I may more conveniently bring light unto it in expounding it, I will speak a few words in manner of a preface. First therefore we must understand that that treatise, wherein is treated of good works, doth far differ from that wherein is treated of justification, as there is very great difference between the substance and the working, between a man and his work. Now justification is of man, and not of works: for man is either justified and saved, or judged and condemned, and not works; Neither is it in controversy among the godly, that man is justified by no work, but righteousness must come unto him from some other source, than from his own works; for *Moses* writeth of *Abel* after this sort; *The Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his oblation.* First he had respect to *Abel* himself, then to his oblation, because that *Abel* was first counted righteous, entire, acceptable unto God, and then for his sake, his oblation also was allowed, and not he because of his oblation. Again, God had no respect to *Cain*; and therefore neither to his oblation, where again thou seest, that regard is had first of the worker then of the work. Of this place it is very plainly gathered, that no work can be allowed of God, whereas he which worketh

worketh that work, was not first acceptable to him ; and again, that no work is disallowed of him, unless the author thereof be disallowed before. I think that these things will be sufficient concerning this matter in this place, of which it is easy to understand, that there are two sorts of works : some going before justification, and some following it, and that these last are good works indeed, but that those others do only appear to be good. Hereof cometh such disagreement between God, and those counterfeit holy ones, for this cause Nature and Reason rise and rage against the holy Ghost ; this is that, whereof almost all the whole Scripture treateth. The Lord in his word defineth, that all works that go before justification are evil, and of no importance, and requireth that man himself before all things be justified. Again, he pronounceth all men, which are yet regenerate, and have not changed that nature, which they received of their parents, with the new essence of Christ, to be unrighteous and wicked, according to that saying, *Psalm 116, All men are liars,* that is, unable to perform their duty, and to do those things, which by right they ought. And *Gen. 6, 5. And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,* whereby undoubtedly it cometh to pass, that he is able to do nothing that is good, which hath the fountain of actions, that is his heart corrupted ; and if he do many works which in outward shew seem good, they are no better than the oblation of *Cain*. Against this cometh forth reason, our reverend mistress, seeming to herself marvelous wise, yet indeed, is unwise and blind, and is not ashamed to gainsay her God, and to reprove him of lying, she being furnished with her follies and very strawye armour, to wit, the light of nature, free-will, the strength of nature, also with the books of the heathen, and with the doctrines of men. She dareth with her evil founding strings make a noise against God, that the works of a man even not yet justified, are good works, and not works like unto *Cain's*, (which God pronounceth) yea, and so good, that he that worketh them is justified by them ; for so *Aristotle* hath taught, that he that worketh well is made good.

good. Unto this saying she leaneth and sticketh unmoveably, and wresteth the scripture clean contrary, contending that God will have respect first to the works, then to the worker; such very devilish doctrine beareth the sway now every where in schools, colleges and monasteries, wherein no other saints than *Cain* was, have rule and authority. Now of this error another immediately springeth; they which attribute so much to works, and do not accordingly esteem the worker and sound justification, go so far, that they ascribe all merit and sovereign righteousness to works done before justification, making almost no account of faith, alledging that which *James* saith, *that without works it is dead*; which sentence of the Apostle when they little understand, they attribute almost nothing to faith, they always stick to works, whereby they think they do merit exceedingly of God, and are persuaded that for their works sake they shall obtain the favour of God, and by this means do they continually disagree with God, shewing themselves to be the right posterity of *Cain*. God hath respect unto man, these to the works of man; God alloweth the works for his sake that worketh, these require that for the works sake the worker may be crowned. Now God goeth not from his sentence, as it is meet and just, and these will seem nothing less than to err in any respect; they will not have their good works contemned, reason to be nothing esteemed, free-will to be counted uneffectual, or surely, if thou dost here strive against them, they begin to be angry with God, and count it a small matter to kill their brother *Abel*. But here perhaps thou wilt say, What is needful to be done? By what means shall I first of all become righteous, and acceptable to God? How shall I attain to this perfect justification? The gospel answereth, preaching that it is necessary that thou hear Christ, and repose thyself wholly in him, denying thyself, and distrusting all thine own strength; by this means thou shalt be changed from *Cain* to *Abel*, and being thyself acceptable, shalt offer acceptable gifts to the Lord. This faith, as it is preached unto thee for no merit of thine own, so is it given unto thee for no deserving of thine, but of meer grace; and this faith justifieth thee, thou being
endued

endued herewith, the Lord remitteth all thy sins, and that by the contemplation of Christ his Son, in whom this faith believeth and trusteth. Moreover he giveth unto such a faith his spirit, which doth thoroughly change a man and make him new, so that now he hath other reason, and another will, than before, namely, that which is ready unto good; such a one worketh nothing but good works, neither can it be but good, which he being good before, shall do, whereof I have spoken somewhat before. Wherefore nothing else is required unto justification, than to hear Jesus Christ our Saviour, and to believe in him, howbeit neither of these is the work of nature, but only of grace; he therefore that goeth about to attain hereunto by works, shutteth the way to the gospel, to faith, grace, Christ, God, and all things that help unto salvation. Again, unto good works there is need only of justification, which he that hath attained, doth work only good works, and beside such a one, none. Hereof it sufficiently appeareth, that the beginning, the things following, and the order of man's salvation, are after this sort: First of all is required, that thou hear the word of God, next that thou believe, then that thou do work, and so at the last become saved and happy. He which changeth this order, without doubt is not of God. *Paul* also describeth this order, saying, *Rom. 10. 13. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher. And how shall they preach, except they be sent?* Therefore Christ teacheth us to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that is, sincere preachers. When we hear these preach the true word of God, we may believe which faith justifieth a man, and maketh him godly indeed, that he now calleth upon God in the spirit of the sons, and worketh nothing but that which is good, and thus becometh a man saved; which is no other thing, than if I say, *He that believeth shall be saved.* Again, he that worketh without faith is condemned, as Christ saith: *He that doth not believe shall be condemned, from which no works shall deliver him.*

Confer

Confer now herewith those things which are wont commonly to be spoken of honesty and righteousness. Are they not wont thus to say? I will endeavour, that I may yet become honest. It is meet surely that we study to lead an honest life and to do good works: Well, admit this to be so; but if one then ask them how we may apply ourselves unto honesty, and by what means we may attain unto it? They answer, that we must fast, pray, frequent temples, avoid sins, &c. Hereupon one becometh a *Charter-house* monk, another choseth some other order of monks, another is consecrated a priest; some torment their flesh by wearing of hair-cloth, others scourge their bodies with whips, others afflict themselves after other sorts. But these are even of *Cain's* brood, and their works are no whit better than the works of *Cain*; for the man himself continueth the same that he was before, ungodly, and without all justification, there is a certain change made only of outward works, of apparel, of places, &c. Neither are these any other than very apes of saints, for they do preposterously imitate the manner and works of saints, when as they think themselves nothing less than saints, they scarce think of faith, they presume only of such works as seem good unto themselves, thinking by them to come unto heaven, Of whom Christ said, *Enter ye in at the straight gate*; for I say unto you, many seek to enter in at it, and cannot. Why is this? Because they know not what this narrow gate is; for it is faith which doth altogether annihilate or make a man nothing in his own eyes, and requireth that he put no trust in any of his own works, but that he lean only to the grace of God, and be prepared for it to leave and suffer all things. But those holy ones of *Cain's* brood think their good works to be the narrow gate, and are not therefore extenuated or made less, whereby they might enter; they do not leave confidence in their works, but gather them together in great couls, they hang them about them, and so go about to enter in, being burdened, and as it were swollen big, which is as possible for them, as for a camel with his bunched back to go through the eye of a needle. When thou shalt begin to preach unto these of faith, they laugh and hiss at thee: Dost thou count us, say they,

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they, for Turks and Heathens, whom it behoveth now first to learn faith? Is there such a company of priests, monks and nuns, and is not faith known? Who knoweth not what he ought to believe? Even manifest sinners know that. And being after this sort animated and stirred up, they think that they be abundantly endued with faith, and that the rest is now to be finished, and made perfect by works; whereupon they make a small and slender account of faith, as I have said, because they be ignorant both what faith is, and that it alone doth justify. They call it faith, when they believe those things which they have heard of Christ, which kind of faith the devils also have, and yet are nothing therefore justified; but this deserveth to be called rather an opinion of men than faith; for as we do oftentimes admonish, it is not sufficient that thou mayest worthily be called a christian, to believe those things to be true, which are preached of Christ: Which kind of faith they of *Cain's* brood also have. But thou must also nothing doubt, that thou art of the number of them, unto whom all those benefits of Christ are given and exhibited; which he that believeth, must plainly confess that he is holy, godly, righteous, the son of God, and certain of salvation, and that by no merit of his own, but by the only mercy of God poured forth upon him for Christ's sake; which he believeth to be so rich and plentiful, as it is indeed, that although he be as it were drowned in sins, he is notwithstanding thereby made holy, and the son of God. Wherefore if he should any thing doubt, he should procure exceeding ignominy and reproach to baptism which he hath received, and to the Lord's supper, and also reprove the word and grace of God of falshood; wherefore take heed that thou nothing doubt, that thou art the son of God, and therefore righteous by his grace, let all fear and care be here away. Howbeit thou must fear and tremble, that thou mayest persevere such a one unto the end: Thou must not, being in this case, be careful that thou mayest become righteous and saved, but that thou mayest persevere and continue; neither must thou do this, as though it consisteth in thine own strength, for all thy righteousness and salvation is only of
grace.

grace, whereunto only thou must trust : But when thou knowest that it is of grace alone, and that thy faith is also the gift of God, thou shalt for good cause live in fear and care, least that any temptation do violently move thee from this faith. Hereupon pertaineth that which is written in the 9th chap. of *Ecclesiastes* : *The righteous, and the wise, and their works are in the hand of God : no man knoweth either love, or hatred, by all that is before them. All things come alike to all, &c.* For the present time every one by faith is certain of our salvation, but constantly to stand and persevere as it is the gift of the Lord, and not in our own strength, so ought we always to have care and fear thereof. When they of *Cain's* brood hear faith to be treated of after this sort, they cannot sufficiently marvel at our madness, as it seems unto them. God turn this way from me say they, that I should affirm myself holy and godly, far be this arrogancy and rashness from me ; I am many ways a miserable sinner, I should be mad, if I should arrogate holiness unto myself. And thus they mock at true faith, and count such doctrine as this for execrable error, and go about with might and main to extinguish the gospel. These are they that deny the faith of Christ, and persecute it in the whole world, of whom *Paul* speaketh, *1 Tim. 4. 1. In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, &c.* For we see it brought to pass by the means of these, that true faith lieth every where oppressed, is not only not preached, but also commonly disallowed and condemned, with all them that either teach or profess it. The pope, bishops, colleges, monasteries and universities have now above five hundred years persecuted it with one mind and consent, yea, and that marvellous stiffly and obstinately, and have done no other thing unto the world, but every where as much as they were able driven many unto hell ; which truly both hath been and is at that last and most hurtful persecution of Antichrist : The Lord at the last bring it to an end. If any object against the admiration, or rather mad senselessness of these men, that we do nothing but that that is meet, if we count ourselves even holy, trusting to the goodness of God justifying us, seeing that *David* prayed thus :

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thus: *Preserve my soul, for I am holy*, Psal. 86. 2. And for that Paul saith, *The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God*. They answer, that the Prophet and Apostle would not teach us in these words, or give us an example, which we should follow, but that they being particularly and special enlightened, received such revelation of themselves, that they were holy. And after this sort they misinterpret and wrest whatsoever place of scriptures affirmeth that we are holy, saying that such doctrines are not written for us, but that they are rather peculiar miracles and prerogatives as they call them, which do not belong to all; which forged imagination we account of, as having come from their sick brain, who when as they themselves void of faith, and favour nothing of the spirit, think and contend that there be none which have found faith and the spirit, whereby surely they believe themselves to be thorns and thistles, not christians, but rather enemies and destroyers of christians, and persecutors of the christian faith. Again, they are of this belief, that they shall be righteous and holy by their own works, and that because of them God will give unto them salvation and eternal blessedness. But here see the madness of men: In their opinion and judgment it is a christian thing to think that we shall be righteous and saved because of our works, and to believe that these things are given by the grace of God, they condemn as heretical. They attribute that to their own works, which they attribute not to the grace of God; they affirm that they do save us, and not this; they trust to works, they cannot trust to God's grace; which blindness worthily cometh unto them, inasmuch as they will not build upon the rock, let them build upon the sand, and so be drowned by their own means, that by their own works and satisfactions they may torment themselves even unto death, gratifying Satan herein, for that they will not rest upon the grace of God, and serve the Lord with a gentle and sweet service; for they that are endued with true faith, and do rest upon the grace of the Lord, it is marvellous how they are in God, by his goodness, of most quiet minds, and greatly rejoicing with holy joy; whereupon
they

they do also with pleasure apply themselves to good works, not to such as these which *Cain's* brood do, as to feigned prayers, fasting, base and filthy apparel, and such like trifles, but to true and right good works, whereby their neighbour is profited, and from whence no small commodity redoundeth unto men. Moreover, they are of most ready minds to suffer all things, inasmuch as they are certain that God doth favour them, and hath a care of them. These are right honest and profitable men, by whom both God is glorified, and men much profited; when as those of *Cain's* brood serve to no use, either before God or before men, no, they do not so much as profit themselves, but are only an unprofitable lump of earth, yea, not only unprofitable, but exceeding pernicious and hurtful also both to themselves and to others; for inasmuch as they are destitute of true faith, they cannot give unto God his due glory, nor do those good works which may truly profit their neighbour; for those works that they apply themselves unto, are their own inventions, consisting in gestures, apparel, places, times, meats, and such like trifles, whereby their neighbour can be helped neither in body, nor mind, nor in any thing else; for what can it profit me that thy crown is shaven very broad; that thou wearest a grey coul; what profit bringeth it, that thou fastest to day, and keepest holy day to morrow; that thou abstainest from this meat, and eatest that; that thou remainest in this place; that thou readeest and mumblest up daily so many words? Surely thou dost nothing else by these, but torment thyself to please Satan, and to be a pernicious and hurtful example to thy neighbour; for there is no christianity in thy life, being such thou believest not as it behoveth a christian to believe, and therefore neither dost thou pray christianly: Thy fasting also is not true chastising of the body, but rashly taken upon thee instead of a good work: In fine, this thy service and study of religion is no other thing than, in time past among the *Jews*, was the religion of *Moloch* and *Baal*, in the honour of whom they did kill and burn even their own children. So pernicious and pestilent an example is this thy holiness, which seemeth so

godly unto thee, which when it marvellously counterfeiteth a shew of goodliness, it draweth miserable men to the following thereof, and utterly extinguisheth true religion. Here perhaps some godly man will think, If the matter be so, and our works do not save us, but only to hear Christ and believe in him, who is given unto us of the Father to be our righteousness and salvation, to what end then are so many precepts given unto us, and why doth God severely require that they be obeyed? The present text of the Apostle shall give unto us the solution of this question, and upon this fit occasion we will now enter into the exposition thereof. The *Galatians* being taught of *Paul* the faith of Christ, but afterwards seduced by false apostles, thought that the matter of our salvation must be finished and made perfect by the works of the law, and that faith only doth not suffice; these *Paul* calleth back again from works unto faith, with great diligence, and words marvellously effectual, plainly proving that the works of the law, which go before faith, do make us only servants, and be of no importance to godliness and salvation; but that faith doth make us the sons of God, and that from thence true good works do without constraint forthwith most plentifully flow. But here we must accustom ourselves to the words of the Apostle: He calleth him a servant that is occupied in works without faith, whereof we have already treated at large; he calleth him a son, which is righteous and lively by faith alone, without works. The reason hereof is this: The servant, although he apply himself to good works, yet he doth it not with that mind with which a son doth, that is with a mind that is free, willing, and certain that the inheritance and all the good things of the Father are his; but doth it as he that is hired with a stipend in another man's house, who hopeth not that the inheritance shall come unto him. The works indeed of the son and the servant are alike, and almost all one according to the outward appearance, but their minds do differ exceeding much, and their hope is nothing like, even as Christ himself saith, *The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever*, John 8.

35. These of *Cain's* brood want the faith of sons, which they themselves confess, for they think it a most absurd thing, and wicked arrogancy, to affirm themselves to be the sons of God and holy, therefore as they believe, even so are they counted before God, they never become the sons of God, or holy, nevertheless they are exercised with the works of the law, and are well wearied, wherefore they are and remain servants for ever. And they receive no other reward, but these temporal things, namely, quietness of life, abundance of goods, dignity and honours, &c. which we see to be usual among the followers of the *Popish* religion, than whom there is none at this day that liveth more pleasantly, more wealthily, more gloriously and honourably. But this is their reward, they are servants and not sons, wherefore in death they shall be thrust from all good things, neither shall any portion of the eternal inheritance come unto them, who in this present life would believe nothing thereof; so therefore it is that servants and sons are not much unlike in works, but in mind and faith they are most unlike. Now the Apostle endeavoureth here to prove, (which indeed is the very matter) that the law with all the works thereof doth make us no other than servants, if this faith in Christ, whereof we have spoken, be away; for that alone doth make us the sons of God. Neither the law nor nature can give it, only the gospel bringeth it, when it is heard with an holy silence of mind; it is the word of grace, which the Holy Ghost doth forthwith follow, as it is shewed in very many places, and especially *Acts* 10. where we read, that the Holy Ghost did by and by fall on *Cornelius* and his family, hearing the preaching of *Peter*. Moreover the law was given for this, that we might learn by it, how void we are of grace, and how far from being of the mind of sons, yea, that we are plainly of a servile mind; for we being left to ourselves, can in no wise be free from the law, neither if we do any good thing, do it willingly, forasmuch as that faith of sons is wanting, where-with he that is endued, knoweth assuredly, that the eternal inheritance shall come unto him, and is of his own accord inclined and bent, with a willing and ready spirit,

spirit, to do those things that are good. Now these men do willingly confess that they are void of this faith, and if they would confess the truth indeed, they should also plainly confess, that they had far rather be without all law, and that they are against their wills subject thereunto; wherefore all things are amongst them constrained, and void of faith, and they are in very deed compelled to confess that by the law they cannot attain any further; which one thing they ought to learn by the law, and know, that they are servants, and have nothing belonging to sons whereby they might be inflamed with desire to come from servitude to the state and condition of sons; and might take no account of their own things, as indeed they ought to do, that God of his grace might advance them unto another state by faith. Now this were a sound understanding of the law, and the true use thereof, whereof this is the office, to reprove and convince men hereof, that they are servants and not sons, as many as follow the law without faith, and that they do exercise themselves therein plainly against their wills, and with no confidence of grace; for it causeth and maketh such to be offended at it, and learn by it how unprepared and unwilling they are to that which is good, inasmuch as they are void of faith, whereby it moveth them to seek help some other where, and not to presume of their own strength to satisfy it; for it requireth a ready will, and hearts of sons, which alone can satisfy it; it utterly refuseth servants, and them that are unwilling. But these of *Cain's* brood do not only of their own accord confess that they want this faith, which maketh the sons of God, but also they persecute it; they feel and know also full well, how unwillingly they bear the law, and had rather be free from it, nevertheless they think that they shall become righteous by these their unwilling and constrained works. They will continue servants, and will not be changed into sons, and yet they would enjoy the goods of a strange father. They do all things clean out of order, where by the law they ought to learn, that they are servants, and unwilling to do that which is good, and therefore should by faith aspire to the state of sons, notwithstanding they

go so far, that they seek to satisfy and fulfil it by their own works only; and thereby they do altogether hinder the end of the law, and strive against faith and grace, whereunto, if they were not blind, the law would direct and drive them; and so they continue always a blind, blockish, and miserable people. These things St. Paul teacheth, *Rom.* 3 and 7. and doth freely pronounce that no man is justified before God, by the works of the law, adding no other cause hereof, than this, for that the knowledge of sin only cometh by the law. If thou wilt know how this cometh to pass, consider well some one of Cain's brood, and thou shalt by and by see it verified. First, he worketh his works according to the law, with great grief and labour, and yet he therewith confesseth, that he is uncertain whether he be the son of God, and holy; Yea, he condemneth and curseth this faith, as the most pernicious arrogancy and error of all other, and will continue in his doubting, until he be made certain by his works. Here thou seest plainly, that such a man is not good or righteous, seeing that he wanteth this faith and belief, that he is counted acceptable before God and his son, yea, he is an enemy to this faith, and therefore of righteousness also; Wherefore, neither can his works be counted good, although they pretend a fair shew of fulfilling the law. And thus it is easy to understand that which St. Paul saith; that no man is justified before God, by the works of the law; For the worker must be justified before God, before he worketh any good thing, although before men, which esteem a man by outward things, and not by the mind, they are counted righteous which apply themselves to the doing of good works; For men judge the worker by the works, God judgeth the works by the worker. Now, the first precept requireth, that we acknowledge and worship one God, that is, that we trust and rest in him alone, which indeed is the true faith, whereby we become the sons of God; But how easy is it by this precept to know, that sin is both in him of Cain's brood, and in thy self, inasmuch, as both of you want such a
faith,

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faith, even by your own nature? which thou couldest not know but by means of this law. And this is that which St. Paul meaneth when he saith, *That by the law cometh the knowledge of sin.* Now thou canst be delivered from this evil of infidelity, neither by thine own power, nor by the power of the law, wherefore all thy works whereby thou goest about to satisfy the law, can be nothing but works of the law, of far less importance, than that they are able to justify thee before God; who counteth them only righteous, which truly believe in him, for they that only acknowledge him the true God, are his sons, and do truly fulfil the law. But if thou shouldst even kill thy self with works, yet is it so far off, that thy heart can obtain this faith thereby, that thy works are even a hindrance that thou canst not know it, yea, they are a cause that thou dost persecute it.

Hereupon it is, that he that studieth to fulfil the law without faith, is afflicted for the devil's sake, and not for God's sake, and continueth a persecutor both of faith and of the law, until he come unto himself, and doth plainly cease to trust in himself and in his own works, doth give this glory to God, who justifieth the ungodly, acknowledgeth himself to be nothing, and fighteth for God his grace, whereof he doth now know, being taught by the law, that he hath need. Then faith and grace come and fill him being empty, satisfy him being hungry, by and by follow good works which are truly good: Neither are they now the works of the law, but of the spirit, of faith and grace, and they are called in the Scriptures the works of God, which he worketh in us; For whatsoever we do of our own power and strength, and is not wrought in us by his grace, without doubt, it is a work of the law, and availeth nothing to justification, but is both evil and hated of God, because of the infidelity wherein it is done. Again, whatsoever he of *Satan's* brood worketh, he doth nothing from his heart, nothing freely, and with a willing mind, except he be as it were hired with some reward, or be commanded to do some such thing, whereunto he ought
otherwise

otherwise to be ready of himself; even as an evil and unthrifty servant suffereth himself to be brought to no work, unless he be hired with a reward, or commanded, whereunto he ought otherwise to be willing of himself. Now how unpleasent is it to a man to have such servants? But they of *Cain's* brood be plainly such, they would do no good works at all, if they were not either compelled by the fear of hell, or allured by the hope of present good things; whereby again thou seest, that these have no mind to the law, they gape only for gain, or are moved with fear, whereby they bewray themselves that they do rather hate the law from their heart, and had rather that there were no law at all: Wherefore it is plainly manifest, that they are not good, and consequently that neither their works be good: for how should evil men work good works? Moreover those their works, which in appearance and shew, seem to be good, are either wrested from them by fear, or are bought with promises. An evil heart can do nothing that is good. But this naughtiness of the heart and unwillingness to do good, the law bewrayeth when it teacheth, that God doth not greatly esteeme what the hand doth, but what the heart doth, which, seeing it hateth the law that is good, who will deny it to be most evil? Surely it is a sin to be against the law, which is very good. Thus therefore sin is known by the law, according as *St. Paul* teacheth, forasmuch as we learn thereby, how our affection is not set on that which is good, which ought to terrify us, and drive us to cease to trust to our selves, and to long after the grace of God, whereby this naughtiness of the heart may be taken away, and our mind may become such, as is of itself ready to do good things, and loveth the law, which voluntarily, not for fear of any punishment, or respect of reward, but because it doth of its own accord like the law, and love righteousness, and worketh those things which are truly good; By this means only one is made of a servant a son, of a slave an heir; which mind and spirit thou shalt receive by no other means, than by faith in Christ, as it is before spoken at large.

Now

§12 *Of being under the Law, and under Grace:*

Now let us come to treat of the text of *St. Paul, Ver. 1. The heir as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all.*

He propoundeth a similitude taken of the custom of men; for we see that children, unto whom their parents have left some substance, be brought up no otherwise than if they were servants, they are fed and cloathed with their goods, but they are not permitted to do with them, nor use them according to their own mind, but are ruled with fear and discipline of manners, that so even in their own inheritance they live no otherwise than as servants; after the same sort is it also in spiritual things; God made unto the elect a covenant, when he promised that it should come to pass, that in the seed of *Abraham*, that is in Christ, all nations should be blessed, *Gen. 22.* That covenant was afterwards confirmed by the death of Christ, and revealed and published abroad by the preaching of the Gospel; for the gospel is no other thing, than an open and general preaching of this grace, that in Christ blessing and grace is laid up for all men, which so many only shall receive as shall believe. Now before that this covenant is truly opened and made manifest to men, the sons of God live after the manner of servants under the law, and are exercised with the works of the law, although they cannot be justified by them, inasmuch, as they are servile and do nothing avail to justification, as it is said before; notwithstanding, because they are even then predestinate to life, when they are after the manner of servants held under the law, they are true heirs of heavenly good things, that is, of this blessing and grace of this covenant; altho' they as yet do not know, or enjoy it, but are wearied with works no otherwise than others that are void of faith. So at this day thou mayest find not a few, which now having faith, as they are the sons of God, so do they also enjoy the grace of God in the liberty of sons, when as a little before being drowned in works, they knew nothing at all of faith, being in all things like unto other hypocrites. Nevertheless, because they were before the foundation of the world appointed

appointed of God unto this faith and state of sons, they were even then the sons of God before, when they were as yet altogether ignorant of faith. Where are some also which being as yet as it were drowned in works, are like to servants and those of *Cain's* brood, who notwithstanding before God are sons and heirs, which shall be brought unto the faith of sons, leaving the state of servants, and shall embrace the liberty and right of sons, shall cease from the works of the law, and come unto the inheritance of justification, that being justified by grace, they may work freely those things that be good, to the glory of God, and advantage of their neighbours, being far from all fear, or hope, as well of justification, as of all other good things; for they shall then have and possess it by the covenant of the Father confirmed by Christ, and revealed, published, and as it were delivered into their hands by the gospel, through the only grace and mercy of the Father. This covenant, both *Abraham* and all the fathers, which were endued with true faith, had no otherwise than we have, although before Christ was glorified, this grace was not openly published and preached. They lived in like faith, and therefore they obtained also like good things. They had the same grace, blessing and covenant with us, for there is one Father, and the same God of all. Thou seest therefore that *St. Paul*, as almost in all other places, so here also doth treat much of faith, that we are not justified by our works, but by faith alone, whereby not certain good things by piece-meal, but all good things at once do come unto us, for there is no good thing, which this covenant of God doth not contain in it, it giveth and bringeth righteousness, salvation, and God himself; works cannot be done at once, but by faith the whole inheritance of God is together received. From thence also good works do come, tho' not meritorious, whereby thou mayest seek salvation, but which with a mind already possessing righteousness, thou must do with great pleasure to the profit of thy neighbours; for thou shalt now have need of nothing, being endued with faith, which bringeth all things, yea, surely more things than one dare wish.

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wish, much less can deserve; wherefore it is no marvel if such work all things freely, and so do unto their neighbour, as they both believe and rejoice, that God of his goodness, and by the merit of Christ hath done unto them. What reward shall they hope for which already have all things? the shadow whereof those most miserable ones of *Cain's* brood seek by their works, but they shall never find it, they follow it but they shall never come unto it. *Ver. 2. But is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the Father.* Tutors and Governors are they which do bring up the heir and so rule him, and order his goods, that neither he waste his inheritance by riotous living, neither his goods otherwise perish or be consumed. They permit him not to use his goods at his own will or pleasure, but suffer him to enjoy them as they shall be needful and profitable unto him. First, whereas they keep him at home, and inform him with good manners, what do they else but prepare and instruct him, whereby he may most commodiously and long enjoy his inheritance? Again, the most straightly and severely they bring him up, so much greater desire they stir up and enflame in him to come to, and enjoy his inheritance. For as soon as he beginneth to be of any discretion and judgment, it cannot be but grievous unto him, to live at the commandment and will of another. After the same sort standeth the case of the elect, which are brought up and instructed under the law, as under a Master, to the liberty of the sons. First the law profiteth them in this, that by the fear of it, and of the punishment, which it threatneth, they are driven from sin, at the least from the outward work, lest that the liberty of sinning encrease overmuch, and remove them from all religion of God, that hope of salvation being past, and God quite contemned, they should run headlong without all fear into all kinds of evil, as some desperate persons are wont to do. Again, the law is profitable to them in this, that by it they are brought unto knowledge of themselves, and learn how unwillingly they live under the law, and that they do no good at all with a will-

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ing and ready mind as it becometh sons, but with a fervile and unwilling mind : whereby they may easily see, what is the root of this evil, and what is especially needful unto salvation, to wit, a new and a willing spirit to that which is good ; which surely neither the law, nor the works of the law, are able to give, yea, the longer and the more that they apply themselves unto them, so much more unwilling shall they find themselves, and with so much more grief to work those things that are good. Hereupon now they learn, that they do not satisfy the law, although outwardly, they live according to the prescript rule thereof ; for as they do pretend to obey it in work, so in mind they do hate it, wherefore in mind also they remain sinners, although they pretend themselves righteous by works, that is, they are like unto those of *Cain's* brood, and to hypocrites, whose hand indeed is compelled to good, but they have a heart, which as it is an enemy to the law, so doth it verily consent unto sins, and is miserably subject unto them. To know this concerning themselves is not the lowest degree to salvation. Hereof also we may see, how fitly *St. Paul* calleth such constrained works the works of the law ; For they flow not from a ready and willing heart, but are enforced by the law, the heart declining another way. Howbeit, the law doth not require works alone, but much rather the heart itself, so that we might say, not only the works, but rather the heart of the law ; not only the hands of the law, but rather the mind, will, and all the strength of the law. Whereupon it is said in the first *Psalms* of the blessed man, *But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.* Such a mind the law requireth indeed, but it giveth it not, neither can it give it of its own nature, whereby it cometh to pass, that while the law continueth to exact it of a man, and to condemn him as long as he hath not such a mind, as disobedient to God, he is in anguish on every side, his conscience is grievously terrified, and without all counsel and help. Then indeed, he is most ready for grace, and this is that time

appointed of the Father, when his servitude shall end, and he should enter into the state of the sons. For being thus in distress and terrified, seeing that by no other means he can avoid the condemnation of the law, he turneth himself wholly to pray to the Father for grace, he acknowledgeth his frailty, he confesseth his sins, he ceaseth to trust in works, and doth altogether as it is meet, humble himself, perceiving now full well, that between him and a manifest sinner, there is no difference at all but of works, that he hath a wicked heart, even as every other sinner hath; yea, it may be that such hypocrites do far more hate the law in their heart, than those famous sinners, which are even as it were drowned in sin. For while these are even wearied with the works of sins, and do try the filthiness of them, it oftentimes cometh to pass, that they do in some part, loath and detest them, when as those righteous ones do always think those things that they have not tryed, to be more sweet, neither can they believe that there is so much gall in sins, whereof they are by nature inflamed with such a desire, and therefore as they do more earnestly love sin, so consequently, they do much worse hate the law, which as a certain school-master, is always against their desire. Moreover, forasmuch as the condition of mans nature is such, that it is able to give to the law, works only, and not the heart, who doth not see how greatly it is contemned of us? An unequal division truly, to dedicate the heart, which doth incomparably excel all other things, to sin, and the brutish hand of the law, which is nothing else, but to offer chaff to the law, and the wheat to sin; the shell to God, and the kernel to Satan. So it cometh to pass which is in the gospel, that the wickedness of him, which is in thy judgment a desperate sinner, are counted as a mote; and thine, which so playest the hypocrite, are counted as a beam. If this evil be added hereunto, that such hypocrites do not see a beam in their own eye, but being blinded, do persevere in their accustomed works, not marking this their inward abomination of the heart, they by and by
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burst forth to judge and condemn others, they despise sinners, as he did in the gospel, they think themselves not like unto them, they are not as other men are, they think themselves alone godly and righteous; whose ungodliness if one reprove, and as it is meet, bewray, they by and by, are in a rage and fury, and stick not to kill innocent *Abel*, and to persecute all those that follow the truth; and they will seem to do that to defend good works, and to obtain righteousness; neither do they promise to themselves a small reward for this, inasmuch as they do, as they say, persecute hereticks, blasphemers, them which be seduced and do seduce with mischievous error, which labour to seduce and pluck even them from good works. Here thou mayest see that that sheweth it self, whatsoever the scriptures attribute to these men being surely most pestilent spirits, to wit, that they are a generation of *Vipers*, and *Serpents*. They are no other but *Cain's* brood, and so they do continue, servants they are, and servants they do remain. But they whom God hath chosen *Abels* and sons, do learn by the law, how unwilling a heart they have unto the law, they fall from their arrogance, and are by this knowledge of themselves which the law bringeth, brought even unto nothing in their own eyes. Then by and by cometh the gospel, and lifteth them up being humbled, whereby the Lord giveth his grace unto them, thus casting down themselves, and endueth them with faith. Hereby they receive that covenant of the eternal blessing, and the holy Ghost, which reneweth their heart, that now it is delighted with the law, hateth sin, and is willing and ready to do those things that are good; and here now thou mayest see not the works, but the heart of the law. And this is the very time appointed to be heir of the father, when he must be no longer a servant but a son, and doth now begin to be led by a free spirit, being no more kept in subjection under tutors and governors, after the manner of a servant; which is even that that *St. Paul* teacheth in the words following, *Ver. 3. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.*

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By the word elements, thou mayest understand here the first principles or law written, which are as it were the first exercises and instructions of holy learning, whereof it is spoken also, *Heb. 5, 12. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God.* And *Colos. 2, 8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world.* Again *Gal. 4, 9, 10. How turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.* Here as it were in contempt he calleth the law elements, he addeth also, impotent, and beggarly, both because it is not able to perform that righteousness, which it requireth, and also for that it maketh men indeed poor and impotent. For whereas it earnestly requireth a heart and mind given to godliness, and nature is not able to satisfy it herein, it plainly maketh man feel his poverty, and to acknowledge his infirmity, that that is by right required of him, which he not only hath not, but also is not able to have. Hereunto pertaineth that which *St. Paul* hath left written, *2 Cor. 3, 6. For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

Moreover, *St. Paul* calleth them the elements of the world, for all that observing of the law, which men not yet renewed by the spirit do perform, doth consist in worldly things, to wit, in places, times, apparel, persons, vessels, and such like. But faith resteth in no worldly thing, but only in the grace, word, and mercy of God, neither doth it make a man righteous and safe by any outward thing, but only by the invisible and eternal grace of God; wherefore it counteth alike, day, meats, persons, apparel, and all things of this world; for none of these by it self doth either further or hinder godliness and salvation, as it doth the righteousness of those of *Cain's* brood, which is as it were tied to those outward things. Faith therefore deserveth nothing less, than to be called the elements of the world, by which we obtain the fulness of heavenly good things;

things ; and altho' it be occupied also in outward things, yet it is addicted to no outward thing, but doth freely in all things, that which it seeth may be done to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbour, always continuing free and the same, and yet is made all things to all men, that so the conversation thereof may want all peculiar respect and difference. With those of *Cain's* brood it agreeth neither in name nor in any thing ; one of them eateth flesh, another abstaineth from it ; one weareth black apparel, another white ; one keepeth this day holy, another that ; every one hath his elements, under which he is in bondage ; all of them are addicted to the things of the world, which are frail, and perish. Wherefore they are no other but servants of the elements of the world, which they call holy orders, godly ordinances, and ways to go to heaven, against these *St. Paul* speaketh, *Colos.* 2, 20, to 23. *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world ; why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances ? Touch not, taste not, handle not : Which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men ? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.* By this and other places above-mentioned, it is plain, that all monasteries and colleges, whereby we measure the state of spiritual men as we call them, do plainly disagree with the gospel, and christian liberty, and that therefore it is much more dangerous to live in these kinds of life, than among most prophane men ; For all their things are nothing but rudiments, and ordinances of the world, consisting in the difference and use of apparel, place, times, and other present things, whereunto seeing they are so addicted, that that hope by them to attain righteousness and salvation, faith is made no account of amongst them, neither are they christians but in name, wherefore all their life and holiness, is meer sin, and most detestable hypocrisy. It is needful therefore, that they that are occupied in such ordinances, should above all other men most diligently look unto themselves, that they trust

not to these ordinances, that they be not too much addicted unto them, but that they do persevere in a free faith, which is tied to none of these outward things, but resteth in the only grace of God ; For the fair shew of life and feigned holiness, which is in those ordinances, doth with a marvellous and secret force withdraw from faith, more than those manifest and gross sins, whereof open sinners are guilty, and doth easily make men such as *St. Paul* here speaketh of, *When we were children, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the World,* that is, when we were as yet ignorant of faith, and were exercised only with the works of the law, we did those outward works of the law, consisting in worldly things, but with an unwilling mind, and with no faith, hoping that by these rudiments of the world we should obtain salvation, wherefore we were no other than servants. Now this false and servile opinion, faith alone taketh away, and teacheth us to trust unto, and rest upon the only grace of God, whereby at once is given freely, that which is needful to work all things. For these works of the law, if that false opinion were away, were not ill of themselves. *Verse 4. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law. Verse 5. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* After *St. Paul* had taught, that righteousness and faith cannot come to us by the law, neither can we deserve it by nature, he sheweth him by whom we obtain true righteousness and faith, and which is the author of our justification. Now this could not come unto us without any price, for it cost a very great price, even the son of God ; The apostle therefore saith, *When the fulness of time was come,* that is, when the time was ended, that time, I say, wherein it behoved us to live children and servants under the discipline of the Law. Wherefore the matter of sentences hath erred here, who interpreted the fulness of time, the time of grace, which began at the birth of Christ, plain contrary to the apostle, who whereas he hath written, the
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fulness of time, this man hath interpreted, the time of fulness; for *Paul* speaketh of the time, which was appointed of the Father to the Son, wherein he should live under tutors. Now as this time was full come to the *Jews* and ended, when Christ came in the flesh, so is it daily fulfilled to others, when they come unto the knowledge of Christ, and do change the servitude of the law, with the faith of the sons. And this indeed is that coming, whereby alone we obtain the liberty of sons, without which that corporal coming would avail nothing; for Christ even for this cause hath come unto us, that believing in him, we may be restored to true liberty, by which faith they of the ancient time also obtained the liberty of the spirit. And so whereas he should come to the holy men of old time, he came even then, forasmuch as by faith they felt him to be their true Saviour and Deliverer, howbeit he is not yet come to our *Jews*, although he is gone away again in body long since, for they do not believe in him. All from the beginning of the world to the end. must traile unto the coming of Christ, whereby alone servitude is changed into liberty, but yet by faith, either in Christ being to come, as it was before he was born, or in him being come, as it is now; wherefore as soon as thou beginnest to believe in Christ, he cometh unto thee a Deliverer and Saviour, and now the time of bondage is ended, that is, as the Apostle speaketh, the fulness thereof is come. This place surely is very copious, and containeth in it divers things most worthy to be known, so that I greatly fear, that it shall not be handled by us according to the worthiness thereof; for it teacheth that it is not sufficient to believe that Christ is come, but that we must also believe that he was sent of God, is the son of God, and also very man, born of a virgin, who alone hath fulfilled the law, and that not for himself, but for us, that is, for our salvation's sake. Let us weigh and consider these things in order: First, it is sufficiently taught in the gospel of *John*, that Christ is the son of God, and was sent of God, which he that believeth not is in a most miserable case, as Christ himself pronounceth, *John* 8. 24. *If ye believe not that I*

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~~am~~ he, ye shall die in your sins. And *John* 1. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* For this cause the mind of man neither may nor ought to enjoy any other thing than that soveraign good, so that it should be satisfied with any other than with it, whereof it was made, and which is the fountain of all good things; wherefore it is not the will of God that we should believe or repose our trust in any other thing, neither doth this honour belong to any other, and therefore God himself joined himself to man, being made man, that he might more forcibly allure men into him, and stir them up to believe in him. No good could come unto God hereby, but it was necessary for us that he should be made man, lest that we should believe in any other thing than in God alone; for if we should believe in Christ, and not in God, as God should be deprived of his honour, so should we be deprived of life and salvation; for we must believe in one God, who is the very truth, and we without him can neither live nor obtain salvation. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith, *God sent forth his son*, it is thereby manifest, that he was before he came, and was made man. Now if he be a son, he is more than a man or an angel, which seeing they are the highest creatures, surely he is also true God; for to be the son of God, is more than to be an angel, as it is elsewhere declared. Again, seeing that he is sent of God, and is his son, he must needs be another person; and so the Apostle teacheth here, that the Father and the Son are one God, and two persons. Of the Holy Ghost it shall be spoken hereafter.

The second thing which ought here to be considered, is, that Christ is very man, and the son of man. This *Paul* teacheth, when he saith, *made of a woman*; for surely that that is made or born of a woman, is man; A woman by nature bringeth forth nothing but very man. This it is necessary that we believe, as the Lord himself declareth, *John* 6. 53. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* But to eat and drink his flesh and blood, is nothing else but to believe that Christ took these upon him indeed, and did also yield them to death for our sake. This is
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that covenant which was promised to *Abraham*, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, Gen. 22. 18. Christ is this seed, and therefore the true son of *Abraham*, his flesh and blood. Hereupon it appeareth that they prevail nothing, which make a proper way unto themselves to God, by their own works and godliness, and neglecting Christ, strive to come directly unto God, as the *Turks* and *Jews* do. This Christ alone is the Mediator and blessed Seed, by whom thou must receive blessing, otherwise thou shalt continue for ever in malediction; this covenant of God shall not be violated because of any. Thus Christ himself saith, *John* 6. *No man cometh to the Father, but by me.* The nature of God is otherwise higher than that we are able to attain unto it; wherefore he hath humbled himself unto us, and taken upon him that nature which is best known and most familiar unto us, to wit, even our own. Here he looketh for us, here he will receive us; he that will seek him here, shall find; he that will ask here, shall be heard; here is the throne of grace, and the true mercy-seat, from which none is driven or thrust, which with true faith resorteth unto it. They which do here neglect him, as though he were made man for nought, and in the mean season do without a mediator pray unto God, who hath created heaven and earth, they shall pray indeed, but none shall help them; they shall cry, but none shall hear them. The third thing which is here set forth unto us to believe, is, that *Mary* the mother of *Jesus* is a virgin; this *Paul* affirmeth, when he saith, that he *was made of a woman*, and not of a man, as others are wont. This is that one man, which was born only of a woman: He would not say of a virgin, for that a virgin is not a name of nature, but a woman signifieth a sex and certain condition, whereunto it belongeth to be with child, and bring forth, that is, to do the parts of a mother. Seeing therefore that *Mary* was a mother indeed, she is rightly called a woman; for she brought forth fruit unto us, which belongeth to a mother, and not to a virgin, although she brought it forth alone, without the means of man, wherein she was
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declared both a singular virgin and woman. But because it is of greater importance to the Apostle, and unto all us, that *Mary* is a woman, and thereby the mother of *Christ*, than that she is a virgin, for that is only an ornament unto her, but in that she was a woman, she brought forth him which was salvation unto all, for this cause, I say, the Apostle calleth her rather a woman than a virgin: Neither was it considered in choosing her, that she was a virgin, but that she was a woman; for that she being a virgin, became a mother, the cause was, for that it behoved that *Christ* should be born without sin, and therefore without the commixion of man; for of the seed of a sinful man, nothing could be born but that which is defiled with sin; but it behoved that *Christ* should be that blessed Seed, whose blessing should be poured forth upon all, as the manner of the divine covenant required. Whereupon it is gathered, that *Christ* could not be born of the seed of man, for that all men are by nature under the curse; for how should blessing be promised to come unto all by *Christ*, if all were not subject to the curse? Forasmuch then as the covenant of God promised to *Abraham*, did require these two things, both that *Christ* should be the true son of *Abraham*, that is, his seed, his true flesh and blood, and that also he should be born pure from sin; this mean was invented, that he should of *Mary*, being very woman and the daughter of *Abraham*, be born very man, and the right off-spring of *Abraham*; and that also he should be born without the commixion of man, a virgin being conceived with child by the only means of the Holy Ghost, that being full of blessing, he might derive the same unto all believers. So was the covenant of God fulfilled on either side; and it came to pass, that *Christ* became both the true seed of *Abraham*, and yet free from all contagion of *Adam*, and is also the author of eternal blessing to them that believe. Wherefore although *Mary* be holily to be revered by the name of virgin, yet by no comparison greater reverence is due unto her than by the name of woman, for that her most holy members, inasmuch as she was a woman, were advanced unto this dignity, that they were as means toward

toward the fulfilling of the holy covenant of God, and by them he was brought forth, which was to put away all curse from them that believe in him, that so he might be both the blessed Seed of *Abraham*, and the blessed Fruit of the womb of *Mary*. Unto which benefit the virginity only had not been sufficient, yea, it had been even unprofitable. The fourth thing whereof the present place of the Apostle doth admonish us, is, that Christ hath satisfied the law for us; which he also witnesseth of himself, *Mat. 5. 17. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* This also the reason of the covenant requireth; for if by this Seed of *Abraham* all men must be delivered from the curse, it is necessary that by it the law is fulfilled; for as men are by nature the children of wrath, and subject to the curse, so it must needs be accursed, whatsoever they do, for it is before proved at large, that he which is evil himself, can work nothing that is good; likewise that we can do nothing that God will approve, unless we ourselves be approved of him before: And seeing that the law requireth the heart, which cannot be performed by them which are not as yet regenerate by the Spirit, it must needs be that all the sons of *Adam* are guilty of transgressing the law, and unless, whereas they themselves are not able, another, to wit, Christ, should perform that which the law requireth, and to satisfy the law for them, they should altogether perish by the curse of the law. But when as Christ, going about to shew that the heart is required of the law, did condemn the works which proceed not from a heart that is godly and consenting unto the law, he was accused of the *Pharisees*, that he was come to destroy the law. Because therefore he would take away this false opinion of himself, he said, *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil; yea, and I will give a spirit unto them that be mine, which shall justify their heart by faith, and incline it unto true good works.* The same is usual with *Paul* also, who, *Rom. 3. 31.* when he had rejected the works of the law, and extolled faith, answering such an objection, saith, *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

law. For we teach, that the true fulfilling of the law is by Christ. The like also is wont to be objected to us, as though we did forbid good works, when we disallow monasteries with their works, and teach that they must first by faith become good and approved of God, whereby they may afterward do true good works, by which both their flesh may be chastised, and their neighbours edified. Here we must note moreover, that the law can be fulfilled by no man, but by him which being free from the law is no more under it; we must accustom ourselves also to the manner of *Paul's* speech, that we may know assuredly who is under the law, and who is not under the law. As many therefore as work good works, because the law hath so commanded, being brought thereunto either with fear of punishment, or hope of reward, are under the law, and are compelled to do good things and to be honest, being not brought hereunto of their own voluntary will. Wherefore the law hath dominion over them, whose servants and captives they are; now such are all men, that are not yet regenerate by Christ, which every one may easily learn with himself by experience, every man's own conscience shewing it unto him. We all find ourselves so affected, that if no law did urge us, and both the fear of punishment, and hope of reward were away, and it were plainly free for us to do what we list, we would do altogether those things that are evil, and omit the things that are good, especially either temptation moving us, or occasion provoking us; but now, forasmuch as the law stayeth us with the threatnings and promises thereof, we do oftentimes abstain from evil things, and do those things that are good, howbeit we do them not for the love of goodness, and hatred of evil, but only for fear of punishment, and respect of reward; wherefore being left wholly to ourselves, we are servants of the law, neither do we hear it any otherwise than servants do their hard and cruel master.

But they that are not under the law, that is, are not so against their wills in subjection under the dominion thereof, they of their own accord do good works, and abstain from evil, being neither terrified with the threat-

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nings of the law, nor allured with the promises thereof, but even for that they do of their voluntary will bear a love to honesty, and hate that which is dishonest, and are also from their heart delighted with the law of God, so that if there were no law made, notwithstanding they would desire to live no otherwise than the law commandeth; as, to shun those things that are evil, and apply themselves to honest studies and exercises. They that are such, are sons, whom not nature, but that only blessed seed of *Abraham*, that is, Christ, could make such, renewing by his grace and spirit the hearts of them that believe in him; wherefore not to be under the law, is not to be free from the law, that they may do those things that are contrary thereunto, and omit those things that are good, but it is to do good things and abstain from wicked things, not through compulsion or necessity of the law, but by free love and with pleasure, even as if no law commanded them, and their own nature brought them hereunto, as indeed it doth, howbeit the new nature of the spirit, not that old nature of the flesh; for as there is need of no law for the body, which may compel it to eat, to drink, to digest, to sleep, to go, to stand, to sit, and to do the other works of nature, for that it is ready to do them of its own nature when the case so requireth, and when it is meet, without all respect either of reward or punishment, and may not unfitly be said, as concerning these things, not to be under a law, notwithstanding thereupon nothing less followeth, than that it doth therefore abstain from such works, unto which indeed it so much the more applieth itself as they are less commanded, and are more natural unto it: After the same sort altogether doth the godly man behave himself concerning the works of godliness, he is carried to the doing of them by that his new nature of the spirit, altho' there were no law at all, and all both hope of reward and fear of punishment were away. This only is the true liberty of a christian man, and the deliverance of him from the law, whereof *Paul* speaketh, *1 Tim. i. 9. The law is not made for a righteous man.* Which is as much as if he had said, A righteous

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man of his own accord doth good things, abstaineth from evil, having no regard either of reward or of punishment. The same thing also he meaneth by that saying, *Rom. 6. 15. We are not under the law, but under grace?* That is, ye are sons, not servants: Ye live holily, being compelled or enforced with nothing, but of your free and of itself ready will. To the same effect pertaineth that saying also, *Rom. 8. 15. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption.* The law maketh a fearful, that is, a right servile and *Cainish* spirit, but grace giveth the free spirit of sons, like unto *Abel's*, by Christ the blessed Seed of *Abraham*. Wherefore the *51th Psalm* speaketh, *Uphold me with thy free spirit.* Whereupon, in the *118th Psalm*, christian people are said to be of a free will; moreover Christ hath so fulfilled the law, that he only of all mankind hath of his own accord satisfied it, being with nothing compelled or enforced thereunto, neither is any other able to do the same, unless he receive it of him, and by him: And therefore *Paul* saith here, *God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.* The fifth thing therefore that *Paul* here commendeth unto us to be believed, is, that Christ for our sake was made under the law, that he might deliver us from the bondage of the law, and of unwilling servants make us free sons; whereupon he saith, *To redeem them that were under the law,* that is, might deliver them from the law. Now he delivereth from the law by the means aforesaid, not by destroying or utterly abolishing the law, but by fulfilling it, and giving a free spirit, which shall do all things willingly, without any respect either of the threatnings or the promises of the law, no otherwise than if there were no law at all given, and is carried thereunto of his own nature. After which sort *Adam* and *Eve* were affected before they had sinned. But by what means is this spirit given, and liberty gotten? No otherwise than by faith, for he that truly believeth that Christ came for this cause, that he might deliver us from the law; and that he hath delivered him already, he, I say, hath indeed

indeed received the spirit of liberty, and doth verily obtain that which he believeth ; for both faith and this spirit of fons come together. Whereupon *St. Paul* faith here ; that *Christ* hath delivered us from the law, for this, that we might receive the adoption of fons ; both which come unto us by faith. Thus therefore we have those five things, whereof *St. Paul* admonisheth us in this so plentiful and fruitful a place. But here riseth a question, forasmuch as to be under the law, is to be subject to the law by compulsion, and to obey the law no otherwise than unwillingly, so that none of them which are under the law, are able to satisfy the law. Why *St. Paul* faith, that *Christ* was made under the law, I answer, that the apostle maketh a very great difference between *Christ*, who was made under the law, and other men who are born under the law. For whereas he faith, that *Christ* was made under the law, he would signify, that *Christ* did put himself under the law of his own accord, and was with his will made subject unto it of the Father, when as he might not have been under the law ; but we were under the law, being the servants of the law by nature, and bearing the dominion thereof unwillingly, as *Christ* was willingly, not by nature, and against his will. Wherefore there is as great difference between, to be made under the law, and, to be under the law by nature, as between these, to be subject to the law of free will, and to be subject to the law by servile constraint. It was free unto *Christ*, to be under the law, or not to be under it, and he made himself subject to it of his own accord, that he might most diligently do all things that the law requireth ; but we were under the law, even against our will.

Thou mayest see a resemblance hereof in *St. Peter*, and the angel which came into the prison to *Peter*, to deliver him. Both of them were then in the prison, but *Peter* was there being cast into it of *Herod*, not of his own accord, wherein he was also to abide, for he could not go forth when he would, But the angel went into the prison of his own accord, whereupon it was free for

him also to go forth when he would ; he was there only for *St. Peter's* sake, and not for his own, and freely even at his own will, whom when *St. Peter* heard and followed, it was free for him also to go forth of the prison, whereas before it was not. This prison is the law ; *St. Peter* is our conscience : The angel is Christ ; Christ being absent, our conscience is held captive of the law, and being unwilling of itself, is moved unto good things, by the threatenings and promises thereof, and is tyed and bound unto honest things with these as with two chains. The keepers of this prison are the teachers of the law, which declare the force of the law unto us. So we being bound in the prison of the law, Christ cometh unto us, and willingly maketh himself subject to the law, and doth the works of the law of his own accord, which we did bend ourselves to do against our wills, yea, and doth them for our sake, that he may join us unto him, and also bring us out together with himself ; for he may easily go forth, who is held in the prison by no necessity. If now we cleave unto him, and follow him, we also do go forth. But this cleaving to him and following of him is nothing else, than to believe in him, and not to doubt that he became man, and was made subject to the law, for thy salvation sake : together with this faith cometh the spirit, he by and by maketh thee ready and willing to do with pleasure all things that the law requireth ; and so truly delivereth thee from the captivity of the law, those chains of threatenings and promises fall off from thee, and thou mayest now go whether thou list, that is, thou mayest live according to thine own will, or rather according to the will of the holy Ghost ruling all things in thee ; finally, what good things soever thou dost, thou dost them from the heart, and with great pleasure. Moreover, that it may be made more plain, after what sort Christ made himself subject to the law, we must understand that he was made under the law after two sorts ; both for that he did perfectly perform the works of the law, and also for that he suffered and overcame the curse and punishment thereof for our sake. For
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he was circumcised, presented in the temple, and the time of the purification being finished, was obedient to his parents. All which things he might have omitted, being Lord of the law, and over all; Howbeit he applied himself to these things freely of his own will, not being either compelled by any fear, or allured by any hope. In outward works he was in the mean season altogether like unto them which were under the law, that is, which did the works of the law against their wills, inasmuch, as his free spirit was hidden from others, even as also the fervile and constrained will of others is hidden; and so he both was under the law, and not under the law. He behaved himself outwardly in works, as they which are unwillingly held under the law, when as notwithstanding he was not under the law as they, but of his own free will; Wherefore in respect of his works he was under the law, but in respect of his will he was free from the law; but we as well by will as by works are under the law by nature, for that we do works according to the rule of the law, of necessity, yea, and we do them with that will the law constraineth and urgeth, inasmuch, as we do not endeavour to do them of our own accord. Christ made himself subject to the punishment of the law also for our sakes of his own will. He did not only perform those works which the law commandeth, but he suffered the punishment also which was due to us being transgressors thereof. The law condemneth to death and the eternal curse, all those that continue not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them, as *St. Paul Gal. 3.* reciteth out of *Moses, Levit. 18.* Now it is declared at large before that the law is fulfilled by no man, but that all men are against their wills held captives of the law, wherefore every one is subject to death and the curse, so that there is no man subject to the law in respect of works, and will, which is not also subject to it in respect of the curse; for it curseth and condemneth all that do not perform it with their whole heart. But here Christ maketh intercession for them that are his, and the judgment which we have deserved, he taketh upon himself, he suffered

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suffered the punishment due unto us, willingly making himself subject to death and the curse, that is, to eternal damnation, no otherwise, than if he had transgressed the whole law, and had more than all, deserved the sentence thereof against transgressors, when as he did not only break the law, but himself alone fulfilled it; yea, and fulfilled it, when as he ought nothing to it, so that he suffered otherwise than he deserved, in two respects; both for that he ought nothing to the law, if he had not observed it, and also for that moreover he most diligently observed it, so that if the law had especial dominion over him, yet had he come in no danger thereof. But on the other side whereas we suffer, we suffer by double right; both for that by the transgression of the law, we have deserved all the punishment thereof, and also for that, if we had deserved nothing, yet being creatures, we ought to be obedient to the will of our Creator. Hereof it now plainly appeareth, what this meaneth, that Christ was made under the law, that he might redeem them which live under the law; for our sakes, for our sakes, I say, and not for his own he performed that, and that of no necessity, but of his great love toward us, and thereby he hath declared both his unspeakable goodness and mercy towards us, being made accursed for us, that he might deliver us from the curse of the law. He willingly made himself subject to the judgment of the law, and did himself bear the sentence pronounced against us, that as many of us as do believe in him, might be free for ever; whereby mark what an incomparable treasure faith bringeth unto thee, whereby thou enjoyest Christ, and all his works, that thou mayest trust unto them no otherwise than if thou thy self hadst done them; for Christ did them not for himself, whom surely they could profit nothing, he having no need of any thing, but by them he laid up the treasure of salvation for us, whereunto we should trust, and being made blessed might enjoy it; with which faith also the spirit of the son cometh, which beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons and heirs of God. What should God now add unto these?

these? How can a mind hearing these things contain it self, that it should not love God again with a most ardent affection, and be most sweetly delighted in him? What in any wise may come to be done or suffered, which thou wouldst not willingly take upon thee with exceeding joy, and most high praise of God, with a rejoicing and triumphing mind; which mind if thou wantest, it is a certain argument of a faint, or surely a dead faith; for the greater thy faith is, so much more ready also and willing is thy mind to those things, which God either sendeth or commandeth. This indeed is the true deliverance from the law, and the damnation of the law, that is, from sin and death, which deliverance cometh to us by Christ; yet not so that there is now no law or death, but that they do not now trouble the believers any thing, that is, they are as though they were not; for the law cannot convince them of sin, neither can death confound them; but by faith they must happily pass from sin and death to righteousness and life. Here Munks, Nuns, &c. were to be exhorted, if there were as yet left any place with them for counsel and admonition, that they would observe their ordinances, ceremonies, prayers, apparel, and such like, as Christ observed the law, by which means surely they should bring unto them no damnation; that is, that they would set the faith of Christ in the first place, and commit the rule of their heart unto him, acknowledging that by that faith only they do obtain righteousness and salvation; and that all their ordinances and works do avail nothing hereunto. Again that they would make themselves subject to them of their own accord, in no other respect than that by them they might serve their neighbours, and subdue the arrogance of the flesh. But now seeing they are occupied in them with this double erroneous opinion, as though they were necessary to salvation and righteousness, and if they did not observe them, they should grievously sin, they are unto them a most certain destruction, nothing but delusion and sin, whereby with their great affliction they draw unto hell, where they shall fully suffer the vexations and torments under the abbat the devil, which being miserable and foolish

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foolish men they have here begun ; for all their life doth utterly disagree, with the faith of sons, and that which belongeth only to faith, to wit, to justify and save us, they attribute to their works ; wherefore these men cannot both thus stick unto their ordinances, and therewith all have faith, which suffereth it self to be addicted to no certain works, but what things soever the Lord either sendeth or commandeth, or the necessity and need of our neighbour requireth. it suffereth and doth them with great willingness and joy. These he that is indued with faith, counteth his works, having in the mean season no regard of masses, or fasting, which some appoint to certain days, of choice of apparel, of meats, of persons, of places and such like ; yea, he greatly disalloweth of these, inasmuch as they trouble christian liberty. These things shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the exposition of this place of *St. Paul*, where about the matter itself required to spend so many words, forasmuch as the nature of faith is so unknown ; for unless thou do well understand the nature of faith, thou shalt perceive nothing or very little in the writings of *St. Paul*. ver. 6. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

Here we see very plainly, that the holy Ghost cometh unto the Saints, by no works, but by faith alone, for *Paul* saith : *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit, &c.* Sons believe, when servants only work ; sons are free from the law, servants are held under the law, as appeareth plainly by those things that are before spoken. But how cometh it to pass that he saith, *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit, &c.* seeing it is before said, that by the coming of the spirit we are changed from servants, unto the state of sons, so that the spirit must be first sent unto us, before we are sons. But here as though we could be sons before the coming of the spirit, he saith, *Because ye are sons, &c.* To this question we must answer, that *St. Paul* speaketh here after the same sort that he spake before. Before the fulness of time came, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world ; all the elect,

elect, which are predestinate of the Lord, that they shall become sons, are counted in the place of sons with God. Therefore he saith rightly, *Because ye are sons,* that is, because the state of sons is appointed unto you from everlasting. *God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son,* to wit, that he might finish it in you, and make you such as he hath long since of his goodness determined, that he should make you. Moreover he calleth him the spirit of the son of God, that he might continue in commending unto us this benefit of God, that he hath chosen us to be sons. For Christ is the Son of God, and that most beloved. Now if the Father give unto us his spirit, he will make us like to his only begotten son, his true sons and heirs, that we may with certain confidence cry with Christ, *Abba Father,* being his brethren, and fellow heirs with him: wherein the apostle surely hath notably set forth the goodness of God, which, maketh us partakers with Christ, and causeth us to have all things common with him, so that we live, and are led by the same spirit. Moreover these words of the apostle do shew, both that the holy Ghost is another from Christ, and yet doth proceed from him, when as he calleth him his spirit. The spirit indeed dwelleth in the godly, and no man will say that he is their spirit, as here St. *Paul* maketh him the holy spirit of Christ, saying, *God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son,* that is of Christ; for he is the spirit of God, and cometh from God to us, and not ours, unless one will say after this sort, my holy spirit, as we say, my God, my Lord. Wherefore, whereas he is here said to be the holy spirit of Christ, it proveth him to be God, as of whom that spirit is sent, and is peculiarly counted his spirit.

Furthermore, christians may perceive by this place, whether they have in themselves the holy Ghost, to wit, this spirit of Sons, whether they hear his voice in themselves; for St. *Paul* saith, that he crieth in the hearts which he possesseth, *Abba Father,* according as he saith also *Rom. 8. 15. We have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father.* Now thou
hearest

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hearest this voice, when thou findest so much faith in thy self, that thou dost assuredly without any doubt, presume, not only that thy sins be forgiven thee, but also that thou art the beloved Son of God, which being certain of eternal salvation, dareth both call him Father, and be delighted in him with a joyful and most confident heart; thou must be so certain hereof, that thou canst be no more certain of thy life, and must sooner suffer death, and hellish torments, than suffer this trust and confidence to be taken from thee. For to doubt any thing herein were no small reproach and contumely to the death of Christ, as though that had not obtained all things for us, and ought not far more effectually to provoke and encourage us to have a good trust in God, than all our sins and temptations are able to put us out of hope and fray us from it. It may be indeed, that thou shalt be so tempted, that thou shalt fear and doubt of thine opinion, and think plainly that God is not a favourable Father, but a wrathful Revenger of sins, as it fell out with *Job* and many other Saints, but in such a conflict this trust and confidence, that thou art a Son ought to prevail and overcome, or else thou shalt come in a miserable and desperate estate. When one of *Cain's* brood heareth these things, he is as it were beside himself, by reason of admiration and astonishment, yee, saith he, away with this arrogancy, and this most pernicious error, God turn this mind from me, that I do not presume to think that I am the Son of God, I am a sinner, most miserable and wretched, and will never esteem more of my self. But thou which desirest to belong unto Christ, shie this kind of men, who are most hurtful enemies of christian faith, and of thy salvation. We also know that we are sinners, and miserably wretched; but here we must not weigh or consider, what we either do, or are, but what Christ is, and what he hath done for our sake. It is not spoken here of our nature, but of the grace of God, which so far exceedeth our sins, as heaven is higher than the earth, and the *East* is distant from the *West*, as the 103 *Psalme* saith, Now if it seem
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unto thee a great honour, that thou art the Son of God, as indeed it is very great, consider that it is no less marvellous, that the Son of God for this cause did come, was born of a woman, and made under the law, that thou mightest become the Son of God. These are great benefits of God, and do cause in the elect a great trust and confidence in the goodness of God, and a spirit which is afraid of nothing, but is bold and able to do all things. On the contrary, the religion of those of *Cain's* brood, as it is a thing marvellous strait and careful, so doth it make hearts exceeding fearful, which serve to no use, but are unapt to all things, fit neither to suffer or do any thing, which tremble and are afraid even at the shaking of the leaf of a tree, as it was before spoken of them, *Levit. 26.* Wherefore thou must lay up these words of the apostle well in thy mind, thou must feel this cry of the spirit, which crieth so in the hearts of all the faithful. For how shouldst thou not hear the cry of thine own heart? Neither doth the apostle say, that he doth whisper, speak, yea, or sing, it is greater than all these which the spirit doth in the heart, he crieth out a main, that is, with all the heart. Whereupon it is said, *Rom. 8. That he maketh intercession for us with groanings, which cannot be uttered, and that he beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* How therefore can it be, that our heart should not hear this cry, sighs, and testimony of the spirit? Howbeit hereunto temptations and adversity are very profitable, they move to cry, and do exceedingly stir up the spirit; notwithstanding, we foolish men do greatly fear and fly the cross, wherefore it is no marvel, if we do never feel the cry of the spirit, and do continually remain like them of *Cain's* brood. But if thou dost not feel this cry, take heed that thou be not idle and slothful, neither secure, pray instantly, for thou art in an evil case. And yet do not desire, that thou mayest feel nothing but this cry of the spirit, thou must feel also another terrible cry made, whereby thou mayst be provoked and urged to this cry of the spirit, which happeneth to all the saints; that is, the cry of sins, which call most strongly and instantly unto desperation, but

This cry must be overcome of the spirit of Christ, by
 godly calling upon the Father, and crying for his grace,
 that the trust and confidence of grace may become greater
 than desperation. Wherefore this cry of the spirit
 is nothing else, but to be with all our heart touched with
 a very strong, firm, and unmoveable trust of most dear
 sons toward God, as our most tender and favourable
 Father. Hereby we may see how far a christian life
 exceedeth nature, which can do nothing less than trust
 in God, and call upon him as a Father, but is always
 afraid, and uttereth a voice which is a witness of ex-
 ceeding fear: Wo is me, how cruel and intolerable a
 judge art thou, O God? How heavy is thy judgment
 unto me? As *Cain* said, *Gen. 4, 13, 14. My punish-*
ment is greater than I can bear. Behold thou hast driven
me out this day from the face of the earth: and from thy
face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vaga-
bond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every
one that findeth me, shall slay me, &c. This is a terrible
 and dreadful cry, which is necessarily heard of all such
 as be of *Cain's* brood, forasmuch as they trust to them-
 selves and their own works, and put not their trust in
 the son of God, neither weigh and consider that he was
 sent of the Father, made of a woman, made under the
 law, much less that all these things were done for their
 salvation; they are continually tormented in their own
 works, the miserable men do in vain go about by them
 to help themselves, and to obtain the grace of God.
 And while their ungodliness is not herewith content,
 it beginneth to persecute even the sons of God; as it
 is always want to do, yea, at the last, they grow unto
 such cruelty, that after the example of their father
Cain they cannot rest, until they slay their righteous
 brother *Abel*, in whom they do also kill unto themselves
 Christ. Then the blood of righteous *Abel* crieth unto
 heaven against unrighteous *Cain*, neither ceaseth it to
 cry until the Lord hath revenged it. He asketh those
Cains of their brother *Abel*, yea, of Christ; but they
 deny all knowledge of Christ, which labour not to be-
 come the sons of God, and heirs by Christ, but to be-
come

come righteous by their own works. In the mean time the blood of Christ continually crieth out against them, even nothing but punishment and vengeance, when as for the elect, it crieth by the spirit of Christ for nothing but grace and reconciliation. The apostle useth here a *Syrian*, and a *Greek* word, saying, *Abba Pater*. For this word *Abba* in the *Syrian* tongue signifieth a Father, by which name at this day the chief of monasteries are wont to be called, and by the same name Hermits in time past being holy men, did call their presidents, at the last by use it was also made a *Latin* word. Wherefore that which St. *Paul* saith is as much as Father, Father, or if thou hadst rather, as, my Father. But what is the cause why the apostle doth double the word, Father, that is, the cry of the spirit? I will by your leave bring forth my judgment and opinion hereof. First I think that he would hereby shew the force and straining of this holy cry; for when as we call any with great affection and through necessity, we are wont often to double his name. Now because that sin, and *Cain*, do always go about with desperation to stop this cry of the spirit for the grace of the Father, it is need surely to cry most strongly, and with a voice both doubled, and exceedingly strained forth, that is, the trust of the grace of the Father ought to be most strong, and notable to be overcome. Again, such is the manner of the scripture, to witness the certainty of a thing, sometime to double or iterate the words, as *Joseph* did to *Pharaoh*, *Gen.* 41. So here also the spirit twice calleth upon the Father, whereby it may shew the certainty of his fatherly favour and grace; for the trust hereof ought to be no less certain, than great and unmoveable. Finally it is meet also to persevere, which again this doubling of the name of Father doth note unto us: for as soon as we begin to call God Father, Satan with all his band moveth war against us, and omitteth no means to wrest from us this trust of sons toward God our Father, wherefore the word Father must be diligently doubled, that is, our trust and confidence must be confirmed, neither must we ever cease from calling upon this Father, but must most earnestly

continue in this cry of the spirit, whereby we may obtain a certain sure experience of his fatherly goodness, by which our trust in him may be made most certain and safe; and perhaps *St. Paul* had respect hereunto, when he first set down *Abba*, which is a word strange to them, to whom he wrote, after adding *Pater*, that is, Father, a familiar word and of their own language, meaning to signify hereby, that the beginning of so great trust in God is unaccustomed, and even strange unto men, but that when the mind hath a while exercised it, and continued in it although assailed with temptations, it becometh even familiar and almost natural, that we now enjoy God as a domestick Father, and do in every thing most confidently call upon him.

Verse -. *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.* Now, saith he, that is after the coming of the spirit of the sons, after the knowledge of Christ, *thou art not a servant.* For as it is said, a son and a servant are so contrary one to another, that the same man cannot be both a son and a servant. A son is free and willing, a servant is compelled and unwilling; a son liveth, and resteth in faith, a servant in works; and so by this place also it appeareth, that we can obtain no salvation of God by works, but before thou workest that which is acceptable unto him, it is necessary that thou have received of him and possess salvation and all things, that thereupon works may freely flow forth, to the honour of so gracious a father, and to the profit of thy neighbours, without any fear of punishment, or looking for reward. This, that which *St. Paul* saith, proveth, *and if a son, then an heir.* For it is said before, that we become the sons of God by faith, without any works, and therefore heirs also, as this place witnesseth; for by nature they that are sons, the same also are heirs. But if this inheritance of the Father be now thine by faith, surely thou art rich in all good things, before thou hast wrought any thing; for how should it be, that by faith thou art the heir of God, without any works through only grace, and that thou mayest again first merit it by works? Wherefore
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the case standeth, as I oftentimes say, To a man that is baptized and believeth in Christ, the heavenly inheritance of the Father is already given at once, that is, all good things, they are only hid as yet by faith, for that the manner of the present life cannot suffer, that he should enjoy them being revealed. Whereupon *St. Paul* saith *Rom. 8.* Ye are saved, but by hope, for ye do not as yet see it, but do yet wait, when the possession of your good things shall be revealed. And *1 Pet. 1.* it is said, Your salvation is reserved in heaven and prepared for you, to be shewed in the last time: Wherefore the works of a christian ought not to have regard of merit, which is the manner of servants, but only of the use and commodity of his neighbours, that he do not live and work to himself, but to his neighbour, whereby he may truly live to the glory of God. For by faith he is rich in all good things, and truly blessed. Now the apostle addeth, through Christ, lest that any think that so great inheritance cometh unto us freely, and without all cost; for although it be given unto us without our cost, and without all our merit, yet it cost Christ a dear price, who, that he might purchase it for us, was made under the law, and satisfied it for us both by life and also by death. So those benefits which of love we bestow upon our neighbour, do come unto him freely, and without any charges or labour unto him, notwithstanding they cost us something, inasmuch as we bestow upon him, although freely, and of meer goodness, yet those things that are our own, whether it be labour or part of our substance, even as Christ hath bestowed those things that be his upon us. And thus hath *St. Paul* called back his *Galatians* from the teachers of works, which preached nothing but the law, perverting the gospel of Christ. All which things are very necessary to be marked of us also; for the pope with his prelates and monks, hath now too long a time with intruding and urging his laws, which are foolish and most pernicious, inasmuch as they do every where disagree with the word of God, seduced almost the whole world from the gospel of Christ, and plainly extinguished the faith of sons, according as the scripture

hath in divers places very manifestly prophesied of his kingdom, wherefore let every one that desireth to obtain salvation, most diligently take heed of him and all his apostles, no otherwise than of Satan himself, and his chief and most pernicious apostles.

S E R M O N XXI.

Of Faith and Diffidence in Danger and Trouble.

Mat. 8. Verse 23. to the 27. When he was entered into a ship, &c.

A Ccording to the history, this text setteth before us an example of faith and diffidence, whereby we may learn both what a strong and invincible thing faith is, and that it must be exercised and tried even in great matters, and full of peril; and also how desperate a thing on the other side diffidence is, and how full of fear and trembling, which can never do any thing rightly or well. This doth experience most lively set forth in the disciples; they, when they entered into the ship with Christ, and whilst there was a calm in the lake, were nothing disquieted in mind, neither felt any fear. Then if one should have asked them whether they believed, they would have answered without doubt that they did believe; for they did not know that their heart did trust in that quietness, for that all troubles were absent, and therefore did rest upon a thing visible, and not upon the invisible grace of God; which then was made manifest, as soon as the tempest was risen, and the waves did cover the ship, by and by all their trust and confidence ceased, for that the quietness and calmness whercunto they trusted was taken away, and diffidence, which before, when all things were prosperous, did lurk in their minds, did appear; for this is the nature of diffidence, that it believeth, or knoweth no more than it feelth. Forasmuch therefore as it had possessed

possessed the breasts of the apostles, they felt nothing now but the fearful tempest, and the waves covering the ship, they saw the sea swelling and greatly raging, threatening nothing but death; these things only did they think upon, these only did they consider, and therefore could there be no measure or end of fear and trembling in their minds; the more they weighed in their mind the peril, so much more were they terrified, and seemed now to stick in the very jaws of death, hoping for no life or deliverance. And as they could not so much as think anything else because of their unbelief, so all comfort also was far from them; for diffidence or unbelief hath nothing whereunto it may trust or flee, wherefore when outward adversity cometh, it admitteth nothing into the mind but it, and therefore it can never feel any peace or quietness, while it remaineth. So in hell, where diffidence exerciseth full tyranny, there can never be any intermission of desperation, trembling and terror. But if the disciples had been then indued with a sound faith, and if it had ruled in this danger, it would have removed from the mind the wind and all this tempest, and instead of these would wholly have thought upon the power of God and his grace promised, whereunto it would no otherwise have trusted, than if it had sat upon a most strong rock, far from the sea and from all tempest; for this is the chief virtue of faith, that it seeth those things which are not seen or felt, and seeth not those things which are felt, yea, which are now fore upon us, and do press and urge us; as on the contrary, diffidence seeth nothing but that which it feeleth: For this cause those things are of God laid upon faith, which the whole world is not able to bear, as sins, death, the world, and the devil, neither suffereth he it to be occupied with small matters; for who flieth not death? who is not terrified and overcome by it? Against this invincible faith standeth, yea, it courageously setteth upon it, which otherwise tameth all things, and overcome and swalloweth up that insatiable power of life. So even the whole world is not able to conquer and subdue the flesh, but it rather bringeth it under and maketh the world subject unto it, and beareth rule over it,

it, so that he liveth carnally whosoever is of the world; but faith subdueth this subduer of all other, holdeth it in subjection, and teacheth it not only to be ruled, but also to obey. Likewise who is able to bear the hatred and fury, ignominy, and persecution of the world; who doth not yield unto it, and is oppressed with it? But faith even laugheth at all the iniquity, rage, and fury thereof, and maketh that unto itself matter of spiritual joy wherewith others are even killed; it doth no otherwise behave itself against Satan also; who is able to overcome him, which practiseth so many crafts, and coils, whereby he stayeth and hindereth the truth, the word of God, faith and hope, and soweth against them innumerable errors, sects, delusions, heresies, desperations, superstitions, and such kind of abominations, without number? all the world is to him as a spark of fire to a fountain of water, it is wholly subdued unto him, in these evils, as (alas) we both see and try; but it is faith which troubleth him, for it is not only not made subject to his delusions, but it also discovereth and confoundeth them, that they are no more of any importance, that they are able to do nothing, but do vanish away, as we have experience at this day, by the decaying and vanishing of the papacy and indulgences: Finally, sin hath that force, that that which is even the least, cannot be appeased, or extinguished by any creature, that it doth gnaw and tear the conscience, yea, if all men should go about together to comfort the conscience, wherein sin hath begun to live, they should go about it in vain; but faith is that noble champion, which overcometh and extinguisheth every sin, yea, if all the sins which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon an heap, it would extinguish and abolish them altogether. Is not faith therefore most mighty, and of incomparable strength, which dareth encounter with so many and mighty enemies, and beareth away the certain victory? Wherefore *John* saith in his first Epist. chap. 5. 4. *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.* Howbeit this victory cometh not with rest and quietness, we must try the fight,

not without blood and wounds, that is, we must needs feel sin, death, the flesh, the devil, and the world, yea, and that assailing us so grievously, and with so great force, that the heart of man do think that he is past all hope, that sin hath overcome, and the devil gotten the upperhand, and on the contrary, very little feel the force of faith. We see an example of this fight here in the disciples, for the waves did not only strike the ship, but did even cover it, that nothing could be now looked for, but that all should be drowned, especially Christ being asleep, and knowing not of this peril; all hope was then past, life seemed to be overcome, and death appeared to have the victory. But as it fell out with the disciples in this temptation, so also doth it fall out, and must fall out with all the godly, in all kind of temptations, which are of sin, the devil, and the world. In the temptation of sin, we must needs feel the conscience, thrall unto sins, the wrath of God, and hellish pains to hang over us, and all things to be in that case as though we were past all recovery. Likewise when we have conflicted with the devil, it must appear, as though truth should give place to error, and Satan should drive the word of God out of the whole world, and he himself reign for a God with his delusions and deceits; neither standeth the case any otherwise when it cometh to pass that we are tryed of the world, it must needs be that it should greatly rage, and cruelly persecute us, so that it shall seem that no man is able to stand, that no man is able to obtain safety, or profess his faith; that *Cair* only shall bear rule, and suffer his brother in no place. But we must not judge according to such feeling and outward appearance of things, but according to faith, the present example ought to stir us up hereunto, and to be received of us instead of special comfort; for we learn hereof, that altho' sins do urge us, death disquiet us, the world rage against us, and the devil lay snares for us, that is, although the waves do cover the ship, yet we must not be discouraged; for although thy conscience being wounded doth feel sin, and the wrath and indignation of God, yet shalt thou not therefore be plunged into hell; neither shalt thou therefore die,
although

although the whole world do hate and persecute thee, and gape so wide to devour thee, as the morning spreadeth forth itself: They are only waves, which falling upon the ship do terrify thee, and compel thee to cry out, We perish, Lord save us. Thou hast therefore in the former part of this text, the nature of faith set forth, how it is wont and ought to behave itself in temptation, also how desperate a thing diffidence is, and nothing to be counted of; the other part commendeth unto us love in Christ, whereby he was brought so far, that he brake off his sleep, arose, and counted the danger that his disciples were in for his own, and helped them freely, asking and looking for nothing of them. Even as it is the nature of christian love to do all things freely and of good will, to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbours, seeking to itself nothing thereby; for the exercising of which love, man, adopted of God, is left in the earth, even as Christ, being made man, lived in the earth, that he might do for us, as he witnesseth of himself: *The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*, Mat. 20. 28. [*The Allegories of this deed.*] In this deed Christ hath set forth the life of christians, and the state of such as preach and teach the word of God. The ship signifieth the church, the sea the world, the wind the devil, the disciples of Christ are the preachers and godly christians; Christ the truth, the gospel and faith. Now, before that Christ and his disciples enter into the ship, the sea is calm, and the wind quiet, but when Christ with his disciples are entered in, by and by ariseth a tempest. This is that which he said, *I came not to send peace, but a sword*, Mat. 10. 34. For if Christ would suffer the world to live after its own manner, and would not reprove the world thereof, it would be quiet enough; but now seeing that he preacheth that they which are counted wise men, are fools; they that are counted glorious, are sinners; they that are counted rich, are made less, but miserable, it rageth and is in great fury. So thou mayest at this day find wise men of this world, which indeed would suffer the gospel to be preached, if the words of the

scripture

scripture should be simply declared, and in the mean season the state of ecclesiastical persons not reprov'd; but as soon as thou shalt begin to condemn by the scriptures all those things which have been hitherto brought in under a false name of religion, and to teach that they are to be rejected as being of no importance, thou preacheest seditiously, and troublest the world with unchristian doctrine.

But how doth the present text pertain unto us? A great tempest did arise where that ship went, wherein Christ and his disciples were. Other ships did pass the sea quietly, nothing tossed of the winds, this ship only must be tossed and covered with waves, because Christ was carried in it; for the world can suffer any kind of preaching beside the preaching of Christ: The cause is, for that he condemneth all things of the world, and challengeth all righteousness to himself, according to that which he saith, *Mat. 12. 30. He that is not with me, is against me.* And again, *The Spirit will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment,* John 16. 8. He saith not, will preach, but *will reprove*, and not this or that man, but *the world*, and whatsoever is in the world. Against this ship of Christ all this tempest is raised, and it is brought into danger; for the world doth not suffer his own things to be condemned, but Christ cannot allow them, and if he should allow them, he had come in vain; for if the world were wise by itself, and did know and follow the truth, what need had there been that Christ and his disciples should preach? Wherefore it is not a small comfort to christians, especially to preachers, that they are certain before, that as soon as they shall begin to preach Christ to the world, they must suffer persecution, and that it cannot be otherwise. So that it is a sure sign, and therefore to be wished, that it is true christian preaching if it be tried with persecution, especially of the holy, learned and wise men of the world; as it is an undoubted sign also, that it is unchristian preaching, if it be praised commonly and honoured of the world, according to that saying, *Luke 6. 22. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate*

separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake—for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. Now mark how our spiritual men do behave themselves, and of what sort their doctrine is: They have got into their subjection the riches, glory, and power of the world, and they that praise them, enjoy the honour and pleasures thereof, their case in all things agreeth with the case of the false prophets, and yet they dare boast themselves to be preachers and teachers of Christ, and worshippers of God. The next thing whereby this deed doth comfort and encourage the preachers of Christ, is, that it sheweth where help is to be asked, when a tempest is risen; to wit, not of the world, for not man's wisdom or power, but Christ himself, and he alone is able to help them. Him they must call upon in every distress with full confidence, in him they must trust, as his disciples here did; for unless they had believed that Christ was able to take away the danger wherein they were, they would not have awaked him, and prayed him to save them; although their faith then was very weak, and very much diffidence was in them, for that they did not confidently commit themselves with him unto danger, doubting nothing but he was able to deliver them out of the midst of the sea, and from death itself. Hereof therefore let it be acknowledged as certain, that no judge or moderator can be given to the word of God, but God only, so there can be had no other maintainer or defender thereof; who as he sendeth it out whither he will, without any merit or council of men, so he alone also will defend and preserve it without the aid or strength of men; and therefore he that seeketh aid unto this word of men, shall without doubt fall, being forsaken as well of men as of God. Whereas Christ did sleep, it giveth us to understand that in the time of persecution he doth sometimes withdraw himself, and seemeth as though he slept, whilst that he giveth not strength valiantly to resist, the peace and tranquillity of mind being now disturbed, but suffereth us to wrestle; and labour with our infirmity for a while, that we may acknowledge how we are altogether nothing, and that

all things do depend upon his grace and power ; as *Paul* confesseth of himself, *2 Cor. 1.* that it behoved that he should be so pressed and troubled out of measure, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead. Such sleep of God *David* oftentimes felt, and maketh mention thereof in many places : *Arise, awake, O Lord : Why sleepest thou ? Why dost thou forget us ? &c.* In fine, the present text offereth unto us two principal things, full of confidence and godly boldness. The first, that when persecution is risen for the word of God, we may say, We knew that it would so come to pass. Christ is the ship, therefore the sea so rageth, the winds trouble us, the waves fall upon us as though they would drown us ; but let them rage and be furious as much as they may, it is certain the sea and the winds do obey Christ, which is the other principal thing which this text offereth. Persecution shall extend no farther, nor rage any longer than he will, and altho' the waves do even overwhelm us, yet must they be obedient at his beck. He is Lord over all, wherefore nothing shall hurt us ; he only endues us with his grace, that we be not overcome by unbelief, and so despair. Whereas the men marvelled and praised the Lord, as unto whom the sea and winds do obey, it signifieth that the gospel and word of God is so far from being extinguished by persecution, that thereby it is spread farther abroad, and faith also is increased and becometh stronger. Wherein it appeareth how divers the nature of this divine good thing is from the good things of the world, which decay by calamity and misfortune, and are increased by prosperity and fortunate affairs : But the kingdom of Christ is increased and strengthened by tribulation and adversity, but is diminished and weakened by peace and tranquillity. Whereupon *Paul* saith, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* *My strength is made perfect in weakness ; which God perform in us also. Amen.*

SERMON XXII.

Of the Life of a Christian.

2 Cor. 6. ver. 1. to the 10. *We then as workers together with him, &c.*

THis is an admonition and exhortation to the *Corinthians*, to apply themselves to those things, which they did already know. The words surely are easy to be understood, but hard to be done, and in use most rare; for in such marvellous order and colours he painteth out christian life, as it cannot be pleasant to the flesh to behold. First he saith, *We then as workers together with him, beseech you.* He calleth the ministers of the word workers together, as 1 Cor. 3. 9. he also saith, *We are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building,* Which is thus much in effect: We preach and labour in the word among you by teaching and exhorting, but God inwardly with his Spirit doth bless and give the increase, lest that the outward labour in the word be in vain; and so God is the inward and true master, which bringeth to pass all things, whom we serve in the office of outward preaching. Now he calleth himself and his fellows, workers together, lest they should contemn the outward word, as though they either had not need of it, or had already sufficiently attained to the knowledge thereof; for although God can alone by his Spirit, without the outward word, work all things in the minds of the elect, yet he will not do it, but rather will use together working preachers, and work by their word when and where it pleaseth him. Forasmuch therefore as it seemeth good unto God to give to preachers this office, name and dignity, that they be counted workers together with him, it is not lawful for any man to challenge either that learning or holiness unto himself, that he neglect even never so simple a sermon wherein the word of God is preached, much less that he

he contemn it; for we know not when that time will come, when God by his preacher will vouchsafe to accomplish his work in us. Secondly, the Apostle admonisheth of the danger of losing the light of the gospel, when he saith, *That ye receive not the grace of God in vain.* Whereby he giveth us to understand, that the preaching of the gospel is not a perpetual, continuing and permanent doctrine, but rather that it is like rain that suddenly cometh and soon passeth away, when the sun and heat come by and by, and take away all the moisture that is left thereof, and afterward scorch and hurt things. This very experience proveth, for no man shall be able to bring forth even one place in the world, where the gospel hath remained pure and sincere above the age of one man, but continued and increased while those lived, by whose ministry it began, they departing, that also almost wholly departed, and by and by after followed hereticks and false teachers, with their delusions and false doctrine, perverting and corrupting all things; so *Moses* foretold his *Israelites*, that by and by after his death it should come to pass, that they should depart from the way of the Lord, and corrupt their own ways, which the book of *Judges* witnesseth to have come to pass. Moreover the same book saith, that as often as any Judge which had called again to the word of the Lord, did die, they fell again forthwith to their ungodliness, and made all things worse and worse; so *Joash* the king continued in his duty so long as *Jehoiada* the priest lived, who being dead, he began by and by to be a king unlike himself, and left the office of a good and godly king. Neither fell it out otherwise after Christ had received his apostles to himself, almost the whole world was filled with heresies and false doctrine; which *Paul* pronounced before, *Acts 20. 29. I know this, saith he, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, &c.* So standeth the case at this day also, the pure and sincere gospel hath shined unto us, the day of grace and salvation, and the acceptable time are present, but they shall shortly be ended if the world stand. To receive

grace in vain can be nothing else than to hear the pure and sincere word of God, whereby the grace of God is preached and offered, and notwithstanding, embrace it with no diligence, neither be changed or altered in life. By this unthankful slothfulness we deserve to have it taken away again as being unworthy of it; for we making so light of the gospel are undoubtedly they which are bidden and called to the marriage, but whilst being busied about other matters we despise this grace, the good man of the house is angry with us, and swear-eth that he will never taste of his supper. The same doth *Paul* now here admonish of, that we take heed to ourselves, lest that we receive the gospel unthankfully and without fruit; yea, *Christ* also admonished us of the same, *John 12. 35. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.* It ought surely to make us more wary and heedful, even for that we suffered so grievous and pernicious darkness under the Pope; but we have now forgotten all such things, no thankfulness, no amendment is found among us; which how greatly to our own hurt we neglect, we shall shortly feel: *For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time.* He describeth here the marvellous felicity which is there where the gospel flourisheth, there is no wrath, no revengement, all things are replenished with grace and salvation, yea, it is unspeakable how great felicity these words do speak of. Whereas he first saith a time accepted, it is spoken by an *Hebrew* figure, and is as much as if thou say, A gracious time and replenished with the favour of God, wherein God turneth away his anger, and declareth nothing but love toward us, and a ready will to help us. Our sins are blotted out, not only those that be past, but those also which as yet stick in our flesh; and that I may speak in a word, the kingdom of mercy is present, wherein nothing but forgiveness of sins, and restoring of grace is shewed; heaven standeth open, the right year of jubilee is come, wherein all debts are remitted, and no grace is denied. Whereupon he saith, *I have heard thee in a time accepted; that*

is, now I favour thee and am merciful unto thee, whatsoever thou wilt have, pray for it, and thou shalt obtain it, and certainly receive it; only let not the fault be in thyself, pray while this time endureth. *Behold, now is the day of salvation.* He calleth this the time and day of salvation, that is, of help and felicity; for we are not only certain hereof, that God is merciful and favourable unto us, and we acceptable unto him, but also, as we believe, and by faith are sure of his goodness towards us, so he declareth indeed, heareth them that cry unto him, helpeth and saveth them, yea, and maketh them plainly blessed. We therefore worthily acknowledge and confess this time to be the wished, prosperous, happy, and very day of salvation; for it behoveth that both be together, both that God favour us, and also that he declare his favour towards us by work or deed. That he favoureth us, the accepted time which is now present doth witness; that he doth also help us and finish our salvation, this other witnesseth, to wit, the day of salvation, the day of help. But as the state of the life of christians is, if thou wilt judge according to the outward man, thou wilt judge it rather a time of affliction, wrath and indignation, wherein the gospel is preached, and wherein they live, than a time of grace and salvation; wherefore the words of the Spirit must be spiritually understood, so shall we easily see and perceive, that these noble and most pleasant names do most rightly and properly belong to the time wherein the gospel flourisheth; that it is a time accepted, that is full of grace, and a time of salvation, whereby freely all the riches and felicity of Christ's kingdom are notably commended and set forth unto us. *Giving no offence in any thing.* Forasmuch therefore as there is so acceptable and gracious a time, let us, saith he, use it worthily, and not receive it in vain. First, endeavouring to give no occasion of offence to any man, least that our office of preaching Christ be reprehended, whereby he sufficiently declareth what offence he meaneth, namely, that the doctrine of the gospel may not be stumbled at, as though he taught that

which is not perfect and sound. Now there may be given a double occasion of offence, whereby the gospel is reprehended; one, whereby the heathen are offended, when as some under a pretence of the gospel, seek the liberty of the flesh, will not be obedient to Magistrates, turning the liberty of the spirit, into fleshly licentiousness. These do marvellously offend the discreet and wise sort of the heathen, so that they hate the gospel without a cause, which they think doth teach this licentiousness; and as it were with a certain force they do by this their insolence repel and drive them from the faith of Christ; for they measuring all christians by these, do detest them as light men, and troublers of the common-wealth, and therefore not to be suffered. This offence therefore, and this reprehension, or rather hatred and persecution of the gospel we acknowledge to come through these preposterous christians. Another offence is, whereby even christians among themselves are sometimes offended through the unseasonable use of all christian liberty, in meats and other indifferent things, whereat the weaker sort in faith do sometimes stumble, whereof the apostle hath given many precepts, *1 Cor. 8. Rom. 14.* He exhorteth therefore here unto that, whereof he admonisheth in other words, *1 Cor. 10. 32.* So behave your selves, that ye give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. The same he teacheth also *Philip 2.* that every man look not on his own things, but on the things of other men, so all offence should be easily taken away, nay, none at all should be given. *That the ministry be not blamed.* Who can bring to pass, that our ministry shall not be blamed, seeing that the gospel is necessarily subject to persecution, no less than Christ himself? Indeed it is not in us to make that the word of God be not blamed and persecuted of them which are ignorant of God, and do not believe; for it is a rock of offence, *Esai. 8. Rom. 9.* this offence cometh because of our faith, and cannot

cannot be avoided of us, and therefore the blame thereof ought not to be laid upon us. Howbeit, there is another offence which proceedeth hereof, for that our love is not sufficient dutiful, this cometh through us, inasmuch as our works are the cause thereof, because they do not so shine by faith, that they which are conversant with us, may thereby be provoked to serve God, as it is meet. This offence is given through our fault, whom it becometh so to live, that the *Jews*, Heathen and princes of the world might have no occasion to say, Behold how light and naughty these men are, yea, and very wicked wretches, the doctrine of life, which they follow must needs be evil and pestilent. So our infamy and crimes are occasion of offence to others, and of hatred and detestation of the most holy word of God. For whereas we ought so to know, preach and follow it, that thereby both our neighbours might be brought unto God, and to the leading of a godly life, and also the glory of God set forth, so we by our naughty and slothful life bring to pass, that it doth not only bring no profit and advantage to our neighbours, but is brought into hatred and made detestable through our means, bearing our ignominy and reproach. Now it is a most horrible sin and wickedness by our naughtiness to make the word of God which is most holy and bringeth salvation, to make it, I say, so odious, and to repel and drive men from it to our own, and their most certain destruction.

But in all things approving our selves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, &c. Here he describeth in order the signs and proper tokens of a christian life, wherewith it ought to be adorned in outward conversation; Not meaning that one is made a christian and godly hereby, but as he saith, that by these as by proper fruits and figures of christianity, we should shew our selves to be both, and behave ourselves as the ministers of God, that is as christians and godly men; and mark well that he saith; *as the ministers of God.* It may seem very strange, that the ministry of God consisteth in these, in *afflictions, in necessities,*

ties, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, &c. Among these he numbred not masses, and prayers for the dead, or other trifles of feigned worship of God. He rehearseth those things that pertain to the true and right service of God, whereby the body is chastised, and the flesh tamed. Which is well to be noted, lest that any neglect fastings, watchings and labour, and make no account of them for that they do not justify. They bring not righteousness indeed, yet are they fruits of righteousness being obtained, wherein thou mayest be exercised, and whereby thou mayest keep thy flesh in subjection, and inforce it to do his duty. *In tumults.* He rehearseth tumults or seditions among the rest, not that it becometh us to teach or move them, who ought to obey magistrates, and with quietness to live obedient unto all in that which is good, as St. *Paul* teacheth, *Rom. 13.* and Christ, *Matt. 22. Give unto Cæsar those things that are Cæsar's:* But that we must bear tumults of others, as also necessities, distresses, stripes, and imprisonments, which we must cause or procure unto none, but suffer being procured and laid upon us by others. Wherefore in the first place he setteth much patience, which surely moveth no sedition or tumult, but rather suffereth it, and appeaseth it if it can. But in the mean time, it singularly comforteth us at this time, when as tumults are commonly imputed unto us, for that this is incident to a christian life, that for the preaching of the gospel it is accused to raise sedition, which it rather suffereth being raised of others against the word of God; for as in time past *Achab* accused the most holy prophet *Elias* of sedition, affirming that it was he that troubled *Israel* when as he himself indeed did trouble it; so is it neither a shameful nor new thing, for us to be accused of the same, when we preach the same word. Let us think when the enemies of God lay this reproach and slander upon us, that not only *Elias*, not only the apostles, but Christ himself was counted of the *Jews* a seditious fellow, and crucified, a title being written in three languages and put on the cross, that he should of all

all be counted a seditious king of the *Jews*, which would have moved that people against *Cæsar*, and adjoined them unto himself, who indeed by word and example of his life, taught nothing more then submission and obedience, and lived so that he was ready to profit and minister unto all. As for the rest whereof the apostles here maketh mention, as patience, affliction, necessity, distress, stripes, prisons, labour, watchings, fasting, purity; it is easy to understand how they pertain to the ministry of God, who truly disdaineth to have slothful, idle, gluttonous, and drowsy ministers, and such as cannot abide adversity and trouble. But he especially proveth our delicate ones, which quietly enjoy revenues and rents, and take their delight and pleasure, thinking that it is an unworthy thing, that they should labour, for they are shaven, wear long gowns, and cry out in temples, &c. Howbeit these shall not be able to approve themselves before God, who will have all to labour, and eat their own, and not other mens bread, as it is written by *St. Paul* to the *Thessalonians*, Who therefore teacheth here also, that God is served by labour, and not that only, but that we also are thereby proved and commended to be the ministers of God.

By knowledge. *St. Paul* taketh knowledge here for that which we call prudence or wisdom, whereby we use things with reason, behaving ourselves with discretion and comeliness; of which knowledge the saying also of *St. Paul*, *Rom. 10. 2.* is understood, *They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*, that is, they bear a zeal to the law not prudently, not weighing and considering all things well, that they might do no undecent thing, wherefore he here expressly requireth knowledge in the ministry of God, he thereby admonisheth us, that we frame our life with reason, and order it prudently, in all things keeping a mean, and having an advised regard of our neighbours, lest that in any thing we offend the weaker sort, with unseasonable use of christian liberty, and that we do all things to the edifying of all; so we must labour, fast, watch, and apply ourselves, to chastity,
and

and such other things, not above measure, that either the body may be in danger by too much hunger and watching, or the true purity of life by overmuch abstinence from matrimonial company, but we must use these things with knowledge, that is, with convenient wisdom and discretion, that they may not any whit hurt, but always edify. Whereupon *St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7.* expressly admonisheth married folks, that they abstain not overmuch from mutual company, lest that they be tempted of Satan. In all these therefore, in fastings, watchings, labours, chastity, &c. the apostle would prescribe and appoint no rule, law, or measure, which the councils of the pope and monks do, but the mean or measure to be observed in them he left free to every mans knowledge and discretion, that every one may consider with himself how much or long he must labour, fast, watch, or abstain, to this end, that the flesh may be tamed and made obedient to the spirit. *By long suffering, by kindness, by the holy ghost.* What the two former are, the apostle hath sufficiently declared, *Rom. 2. Gal. 5.* But whereas he saith, *By the holy Ghost,* it may be understood after two sorts, either that he speaketh of the holy Ghost, God himself, or that he meaneth by the holy Spirit, the true force and manner of a spiritual life, as though he would admonish in this manner; Beware of an hypocritical spirit, which will be counted for a holy spirit through a marvellous shew and crafty counterfeiting of spiritual things, when it is indeed an unclean, prophane, and evil spirit, and bringeth in nothing but Sects and Heresies. But live ye in the true and holy spirit which is given of God, which giveth and maintaineth unity, one mind, heart and affection, whereof he speaketh also, *Eph. 4. 3. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* They therefore which persevere in the same true faith, mind and sentence, behave themselves as the ministers of God in the holy spirit, being truly spiritual, and living a spiritual life; for a sincere spiritual life, which is led by the assistance of the holy spirit of God, is also led in the unity of minds, the hearts by faith being affected after the

the same manner. *By love unfeigned, By the word of truth.* As he set the holy spirit against hereticks and false prophets, so he setteth unfeigned love against slothful and sluggish christians, who altho' they have the same meaning and mind in the true spiritual life, as concerning opinions of doctrine, yet are they remis, cold and feint in love; so he setteth the word of truth against them which abuse the word of God, and interpret it according to their own affections, that thereby they may get them a name and profit; for as false spirits do contemn the word of the scripture, and prefer themselves before it; so these do indeed boast of the word, and will be counted masters of the scripture, but by their interpretations do pervert the sense and meaning thereof. Against these *Peter* speaketh, *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*, that is, let them take heed that he be certain that those words which he speaketh, be the words of God, and not his own vain imagination. Now *St. Paul* calleth that the word of truth, which is the sincere word, of God, not which is insincere and feigned, which forasmuch as it is ours, is falsely called the word of God. For that which we call the true and right word, the *Hebrews* call the word of truth.

By the power of God. Of this power *St. Peter* also speaketh, *1 Pet. 4. 11. If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.* And *St. Paul* *Colos. 1. 29. Whereunto I also labour striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.* Again *Rom. 15. 18. I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, &c.* Christians must be certain that they are the kingdom of God, and do nothing at all, especially in spiritual functions, and those things that pertain to the salvation of Souls, whereof they are not certain, that it is not they which work, but God that worketh by them. For in the kingdom of God it is meet, that God alone do speak, command, do, dispose, and work all things. This Christ meant when he said, *Matt. 5. 16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,*

heaven, as the author of them, which doth them and not you, *By the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left, By honour and dishonour, &c.* This armour he describeth more at large in the epistle to the *Ephesians* and *Theſſalonians*; He rehearſeth there the girdle of verity, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shoes of preparation to preach the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, &c. This armour of righteousness, he calleth in his epistle to the *Ephesians*, the armour of God, both are to this end, that he may turn christians from corporal and prophane armour, and admonish them, that they are a spiritual people, and therefore must be furnished with spiritual armour, wherewith they must always fight a spiritual fight with spiritual enemies, which here he rehearſeth, and sheweth that they do assail us both on the right hand and on the left. On the left hand he setteth dishonour, evil report, and that we are counted as deceivers, unknown, dying, chastned, sorrowing, poor, having nothing. For all these things come unto christians, they are openly defamed, being reproached to their face, and by infamy falsely accused and railed on, counted as deceivers and followers of most wicked trades. They are as unknown, although noble, all refusing to be friends with them, because of the perilous confession of the name of Christ, yea, it many times cometh to pass, that they that were their most familiar friends are ashamed of them, for that they have so evil a report, and are very ill spoken of among the chief, richest, wisest, and mightiest of the world, they are dying, that is, as sheep appointed to the slaughter, they look for death every moment, by reason of the great hatred and envy which the evil bear toward them, being always persecuted of the chief of the world. They are chastised, for it oftentimes falleth out, that they are stricken and beaten, and do by other disadvantages try how they are envied of the world, and how great indignation the mighty of the world bear against them. They are as sorrowing, for all outward things are against them, and the whole world giveth many causes of griefs unto them; they are as

poor,

poor, for there is no man of the world which will give them any thing, every man is ready to hurt and endamage them; neither do they possess any thing, for although all things be not taken from them at once, yet are they in that state, that they daily look for it; against these adversities and as enemies assailing us on the left hand, it is needful, that we be fortified and fenced with the armour of God, lest that we either despair or faint. Now this armour is a sure and invincible faith, continual consolation and exhortation of the word of God, and a lively hope and undoubted expectation of the help of God. When being furnished with these, we suffer all things patiently, standing stedfast in our duties, we declare our selves the sincere ministers of God, which the false apostles and hypocrites can never do, although they feign that they serve God.

On the right hand he setteth glory, praises, that we are counted true, known, do live, are not killed, do rejoice, enriching many, possessing all things; for it always falleth out, that there be some which make account of christians, and reverence them, among whom they are well reported of, and counted true in doctrine, wherefore some are not wanting which join themselves unto them, and do openly pretend friendship with them, freely pronouncing them to be the ministers of God; neither do they dye so oft as they are brought into danger, and being chastened are not always killed. Finally, it cometh to pass by the consolation of the spirit, that they do then most of all rejoice, when they are in greatest affliction; for their heart rejoiceth in God, which joy bursteth forth, and uttereth it self in words, works, and gestures. And altho' they be poor in temporal substance, yet are they never famished with hunger, but with the word of God, do enrich very many in spirit, and stand not in need of any thing, although they have nothing, for all things are in their hands, for that all creatures must serve the believers, as Christ saith; to him that believeth all things are possible. These things altho' they be the excellent gifts of God, notwithstanding if the fear of God should be absent, even they should be turned into enemies unto us, and therefore

fore it is needful that we be strongly fenced against them with the armour of God, lest that they make us wax proud, or insolently puff us up. A christian man therefore is marvellously free, and delights in nothing but God alone, he setteth God only before his eyes, he endeavoureth to come streight unto him by the middle and high way, between those things which assail on the right hand and on the left, so that he is neither thrown down by adversity, nor puffed up by prosperity, but useth both most rightly, both to the glory of God and profit of his neighbours; we must, saith the apostle, live such a life, while it is the time of grace and of the lively light of the gospel, lest that while this day shineth we work not, and so have shined unto us in vain. This is the true ministry of God, which only he alloweth, wherein he grants that we may serve him, and that most dutifully, *Amen.*

S E R M O N X X I I I .

Of Temptation.

Matth. 4, ver. 1. to the 11th. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted, &c.

THIS text hath therefore been appointed to be read in the beginning of the solemn fast which hath hitherto been commanded for forty days, that the example of Christ being commended to christians, they might thereby be provoked to keep that fast so much more religiously, which surely was nothing but a vain trifle. First, for that no man is able to follow the example of Christ, who lived without any meat, forty days and so many nights, Christ rather followed the example of *Moses* herein, than gave unto us any example to follow. *Moses* received the law, was forty days and forty nights in mount *Sinai* without meat, so long time would Christ also fast, coming to bring and publish a new law. Again, this fasting is a perverse thing, in-
as much

asmuch as it was ordained of men. For altho' Christ fasted forty days, yet have we no word of his, whereby he hath commanded us also to do the same. He did many other things besides, notwithstanding he will not have us also to do them; those things that he hath commanded us to do, those things, I say, we must endeavour to do, that thereby we may obey his will; but the most pestilent thing of all herein was, that we took upon us, and used fasting as a good and meritorious work, not to tame the flesh thereby, but to satisfy for sins, and to procure the favour of God unto ourselves; which wicked opinion made our fasting so foul, filthy, and abominable before God, that no feasting, banquets, gluttony, and drunkenness are so filthy and detestable before him, and it were better to drink and bib day and night, than so to fast; and although this ungodly and wicked intent had not defiled our fasting, but that it had been ordained for chastising the body, nevertheless, forasmuch, as it was not left free, that every one might have taken it upon him of his own accord, but it was enforced by the laws of man, so that most which fasted, fasted against their wills, and with a grudging mind, it could not be but vain and unacceptable to God. I speak not what other hurt it did to women with child, in young children, in the weak and aged. Wherefore, we will more rightly consider this text, and see what manner of fasting it teacheth by the example of Christ. The scripture commendeth unto us two sorts of fasting which are laudable: one, which is taken upon us of our own accord, to tame the flesh, whereof the apostle speaketh, 2 Cor. 6. where he exhorteth us to behave our selves as the ministers of God, by labours, watchings, and fastings among the rest. Another, which indeed is not taken upon us willingly, yet is willingly born of us, when by reason of need and poverty we have not whereon to feed; whereof St. Paul speaketh also in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 4. *Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst.* And Christ, Matt. 9. *When the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast.* This fasting Christ teacheth us

by his present example, who being alone in the desert, and having no meat, did suffer hunger and need patiently. The first of these two facts, may when we please be left and broken with eating of meat; but this last must be suffered until the Lord end and break it. Now the cause why the evangelist did so diligently first declare, that Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness, that he should there fast and be tempted, is this; lest that any taking upon him to fast of his own mind, and for his own profit sake, should in vain endeavour to follow this example of Christ; for he must look for the leading up of the spirit, he will cause fasting and temptation enough: for he that without the leading of the spirit, should voluntarily bring himself into danger of hunger, or any other temptation, when by the blessing of God, he hath what to eat and drink, and whereby to live quietly, he, I say, should plainly tempt the Lord. We must not procure to ourselves poverty and temptation, they will come soon enough of themselves, only when they are sent of the Lord, we must endeavour to bear them patiently; Jesus, as the evangelist writeth, *was led up of the spirit into the wilderness*, he did not chuse to himself the wilderness; they are led with the spirit of God, which are the sons of God. *Rom. 8.* The good things which the Lord giveth, he giveth for this, that we may enjoy them with thanksgiving, not that we should neglect them, tempting him. Moreover, this history is written unto us both to instruct, and also to exhort; to instruct, that we may learn hereby, that Christ by this his fasting, hunger, temptation and victory against Satan did serve us, and furthered our salvation; that whosoever believeth in him, may never need, or be hurt by any temptation, but rather shall abound with good things in the midst of poverty, and be safe in the midst of temptation, for that his head and Lord Christ hath overcome all these things for him, whereof by faith he is most certain, according as the Lord himself saith *John 16. 33.* *Be ye of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* And if God could without meat nourish his

Christ

Christ forty days and so many nights, so he can also christians; we are exhorted also here, that according to this example of Christ, we suffer hunger, temptation, and other necessities when they come, and when the case so requireth, to the glory of God and profit of our neighbours, and surely if we do earnestly confess and stick to the word of God, these things will undoubtedly come unto us. The present text therefore containeth a marvellous consolation and strengthening of faith, against the filthy and incredulous belly, which being diligently and faithfully weighed, our conscience shall be very much comforted and strengthened. that we may not be careful for living, but trust with a full confidence, that God will give us plentifully those things that be necessary. Now, that this temptation also is incident unto us it is manifest; for as Christ was led aside into the wilderness, that is, was left alone of God, angels, men, and all creatures, which might help him: so also falleth it out with us; we are led up into the wilderness, we are forsaken and left alone; and this indeed is it, which especially grieveth us, to feel or perceive nothing whereunto we may trust, or from whence we may look for help; as when it lieth upon me to prepare sustenance for me and mine, and I have nothing at all of my self, neither perceive any help coming from any man, neither know where to look for any. This is to be led up into the desert, and to be left alone, I being in this case, am in the true exercise of faith, then I learn how I my self am nothing, how weak my faith is, how great and rare a thing sound faith is, and how deep abominable incredulity is settled in the hearts of all. But he that hath as yet a purse heavy with money, a feller full of wine, a garden replenished with grain, he is not yet led up into the wilderness, or left alone, and therefore cannot feel temptation while these things remain. Secondly, Satan cometh, and tempteth Christ with this care for the belly, and diffidence of the goodness of God, saying, *If thou be the son of God, command that these stones be made bread*, as if he should say according to the Dutch proverb, Trust in God, and in

the mean time neglect to bake bread, tarry till a roasted chicken fly into thy mouth. Go now and say that thou hast a God, who is careful for thee; where is now thy heavenly Father, who hath so great a care of thee? Hath he not goodly forsaken thee? Eat now and drink of thy faith, and let us see how thou shalt be sufficed; it were well with thee, if thou couldst feed on stones; what a goodly son of God art thou? How fatherly doth he behave himself toward thee? He sendeth thee not so much as a piece of bread, but suffereth thee here to be pined with hunger. Go now, and believe yet that thou art the son of God, and he thy Father. Surely with these and such like cogitations he tempteth all the children of God, which Christ also undoubtedly felt, for he was not a block or stone, but very man, although pure from sin, as he also continued, which is not given unto us. Now that the devil tempted Christ with care of the belly, diffidence and wicked desire, the answer of Christ doth sufficiently declare: *Man liveth not by bread alone*; which is as much as if he had said: thou wilt have me have regard to bread alone, thou dealest with me, as though I ought to have no other care but of meat and food for the belly. This temptation is very common, even among men that are of the most perfect sort, but they especially feel it, which when they are poor, have notwithstanding a wife and children to nourish and maintain, and therewithal an empty house. Hereupon St. *Paul* called covetousness the root of all evils, for that it is the right offspring of diffidence; and what thing else, but this diffidence and care of the belly, is the cause that many are so loath to marry? What else doth hold so many thousand men in whoredom and unchast living, and detaineth them from matrimony, but this immoderate care of the belly, and ungodly fear, lest they should be pined and perish with hunger? But the present deed and example of Christ should be thought upon, who although he had been without meat forty days and so many nights, yet was he not quite forsaken and left destitute. But the angels at the last came, and ministred all things necessary

necessary unto him. Thirdly, we may see here how Christ meeteth with this temptation of the belly, and overcometh it. He seeth nothing indeed but stones, and that which cannot be eaten, therefore from those things that were before his eyes he removeth his mind to the word of God, thereby both strengthening himself, and overthrowing the devil. On which word christians, especially when poverty presseth them, and all things seem to be turned into stones, and the mind doth now tremble for fear of hunger, ought with a strong faith to lay hold, and answer the temptation that would quite discourage them: What if the whole world were full of bread? yet doth not man live by bread alone, there is need of another thing, that is, of the word of God. Now forasmuch as these words are of marvellous force and efficacy, we must a little stand upon them, and endeavour to declare them, and not lightly pass them over. These words therefore Christ took out of the fifth book of *Moses*, Deut. 8. 3. where *Moses* speaketh thus unto the *Israclites*: The Lord thy God *be humbled thee, and suffereth thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna* (which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know) *that he might make thee know, that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live.* Which is as much as if he had said, Whereas he suffered thee to hunger, and yet thou didst not perish, thou mayest thereby easily know that it is God which sustaineth thee by his word, even without bread; for if we did live and were nourished by bread alone, it were necessary that we should be always filled with bread; but it is the word of God that nourisheth us, which he will have preached, that we may know that he is our God, and that he will shew himself bountiful and gracious unto us. We are taught therefore by this answer of Christ, and testimony of *Moses*, that he which believeth in the word of God, shall undoubtedly have experience of two things. First, that when meat is wanting, and he is pinched with hunger, he is as well sustained and strengthened by this word, that he die not or perish with hunger, as if he might abundantly enjoy meat; this word of God, which he

he obtaineth in heart, nourishing and strengthening him without meat and drink ; and if he have but a little meat, he shall perceive that little, although it were but even one piece of bread, to feed and nourish him no less than if he did enjoy princely fare ; for not by bread, but by the word of God the body is nourished and preserved, like as by it it was made, as also all other things, like as by the word they were created, so also by it are they preserved. The other thing, which we are here taught that the believer shall have experience of, is, that at the length he shall assuredly receive bread, from whencesoever it come, yea, although it should rain down from heaven, as manna did to the *Israelites*, in a place where no other bread could be gotten. Let a christian quietly promise to himself and look for these two things, his hope cannot be frustrate, either he shall have in hunger somewhat to eat from whencesoever it be given him, or his hunger shall be made so tolerable unto him, that he shall be no less fed than if he were fed with bread, the power of the word of God nourishing and sustaining him. Those things that I have said of bread, that is, of meat, are also to be understood of drink, apparel, house, and all things necessary unto this life. It may be indeed that a godly man do need apparel, or an house, &c. but at length he shall have them ; the leaves falling from the trees shall sooner be turned into coats and cloaks, than we can be left naked, or surely those garments which we have shall not wax old, which the *Israelites* tried, whose clothes and shoes in the desert were not torn, as also a most wide wilderness was unto them instead of houses, places unpassable passable, unwatry watry, finally, the stony rocks fountains of water ; for the word of God standeth sure and unmoveable : The Lord *he careth for you* ; and *Paul* saith, *God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, 1 Pet. 5. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 17. Also *Christ* saith, *Mat. 6. 33. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow.* Such words and promises of God must needs remain true for ever, and therefore no good thing can be wanting to them that believe ; this even daily experience

rience may teach us. We see commonly poor folks and their children to be better liking than many rich folks and their children, for that the use of their small sustenance is by the blessing of God increased, and doth much more feed and nourish them, than all that most abundant sustenance doth feed and nourish the rich. Now, whereas the wicked do sometime suffer need in the time of famine, some do even die through hunger, that is, the special vengeance of God, as is also the pestilence, war, and such like ; otherwise it plainly appeareth, that not meat, but God doth feed and sustain us. Howbeit, whereas God feedeth the world with bread, and not with his word alone without bread, he therefore doth it, that he may so hide his work, and exercise our faith ; so he commandeth the *Israelites*, that they should prepare themselves to battle, and yet he would not have the victory to be gotten by their sword and labour ; but he himself would, by means of their sword and labour, overcome and vanquish the enemies. Here also it might be said, that the soldier doth slay and overcome the enemies, not by his sword alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God ; whereupon *David* saith, *Psal.* 44. 6. *I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.* And again, *He delighteth not in the strength of the horse : He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man, &c. Psal.* 147. 10. Nevertheless God useth men, swords, horses, and bows, howbeit not by the power and strength of them, but by them as by certain means and instruments, he himself fighteth and overcometh ; this he hath sufficiently declared oftentimes, when he hath overthrown the enemies and delivered his people, which surely he daily doth, when the case so requireth. After the same sort God useth bread also, by it, forasmuch as it is made for that use, he feedeth us, howbeit when it is wanting, he nevertheless feedeth them that be his, even by his word, without bread, as he doth at other times by bread, so that bread doth as it were work under God, as the apostles and preachers of the word in spiritual and evangelical meat serve under him, as it is mention'd, *1 Cor.*

3. for as God useth their ministry to teach men, he himself by his Spirit speaking in their hearts through it, and doing all things alone, which he both is able to do, and oftentimes wont to do without the ministry of the preachers of his word, although he will not in the mean season have the ministry of his to be despised, and so himself tempted; so to the nourishing of our outward man, he outwardly useth bread, although he doth make by his word inwardly, that we be nourished and strengthened, which he can as well do, and is wont to do when bread is away, that all our nourishment may be attributed to the word, and not to bread, which he useth as an instrument, but yet of no necessity. That I may speak briefly, all creatures do as it were serve under him, and are his instruments, without which notwithstanding he is able, and oftentimes wont to work; by this means providing, that we may depend on his word alone, neither trusting more unto him, when we have bread and other things which our life useth, neither less when we want them, but may use them with giving of thanks when he bestoweth them upon us, when otherwise, we may patiently be without them, being certain nevertheless, that we shall live and be nourished in both times, both when we have them, and when we have them not. And by this faith that vain and ungodly care of the belly, greedy desire of things, and carefulness of life are overcome. *Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, &c.* This temptation is quite contrary to the former; he assaileth us with such temptation also, whereby he goeth about to move us to tempt God, even as he willeth Christ to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, and so tempt God, when there were ladders, by which he might descend; and that this temptation provoketh to tempt God, it is manifest even by the answer of Christ, who answereth Satan in this manner: *It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Hereby he signifieth, that the devil would provoke him to tempt God. Now this temptation doth not amiss follow the former; for when the devil perceiveth the heart, that in poverty and necessity it trusteth in God, he by and by maketh an end of tempting by care of the belly

belly and desire of things, as being weaker than that by it he may overthrow one so strong in faith. He thinketh therefore with himself, If he profess himself to be of so religious and assured a mind, I will on this side also give occasion to sin ; and so he setteth upon him on the right side, affirming that that is to be believed, which the Lord hath neither spoken, nor commanded to be believed, as is this : If he should bring thee to such madness, that when thou hast bread at home given thee of God, as he of his goodness giveth unto us every day, thou wouldest not use it, but wouldest procure to thyself necessity and hunger, saying, I must trust in God, I will not feed on this earthly bread, I will tarry till God give me other from heaven. This were to tempt God ; for he doth not command thee to believe, that that thing shall come unto thee whereof thou hast need, if it be already come of his liberality ; for why shouldest thou believe that he will give that which thou hast already of his gift ? Thou seest therefore that the devil doth here object a certain necessity and need unto Christ, where there is none ; for there was a sufficient mean to descend from the pinnacle of the temple, neither was it reason to attempt this new unaccustomed and unnecessary mean whereunto Satan perswaded. Moreover, allegorically, we may by this doing of Satan perceive his craft and subtilty. *The devil taketh him, saith the Evangelist, up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.* By this temptation he replenisheth men with cogitations that seem most holy, that they may think themselves most plentifully endued with faith, and to stand in a very holy place, when as notwithstanding they are set not in the temple, but on the temple, that is, not in the sincerity of faith, but in a vain outward shew of faith ; nevertheless he is in the mean season in the holy city, because that this kind of men is wont to be no where but among christians, where the word of the Lord and the preaching of faith is daily heard, who also like unto Satan have sentences of scripture in a readiness as concerning the words, although they always pervert and wrest them to their own error and false imaginations ; so Satan recited here unto Christ, out of the 91st Psalm, that God doth command

mand his angels concerning his children, that they keep them, lifting them up with their hands. But the deceiver concealed that which is added, that is, in their ways. For thus hath the Psalm 91. 11. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.* So that the custody of Angels is not by the commandment promised unto us, unless we walk in our ways which he hath prescribed us. If we walk in them, we shall assuredly be kept of angels; notwithstanding the devil saith nothing of the ways of the Lord, but promiseth by corrupting the saying of the Psalm, that it is commanded to the angels, to keep us in what ways soever, whereof the Lord hath commanded nothing. And this is Satan's seducing, and persuasion to tempt God. But this temptation doth not easily happen in these outward things, as are bread, apparel, houses, &c. Thou mayest find indeed some rash heads, which for no cause do put their life, goods, and good name in great danger, as they do which go on warfare of their own accord, which leap rashly into most deep waters, or go voluntary into other no small dangers. Of whom Jesus the son of Syrach saith, *He that loveth danger, shall perish therein,* Ecclesi. 3. 26 whereof the Germans have a proverb, *Self do, self have,* what every one followeth, that he cometh unto. So it is almost usual that none are oftner drowned, than they that are most exercised in swimming, and none fall more perilously, than they which use to attempt high matters. But he shall be hardly found, which having a false and overmuch confidence in God, attempteth any such thing, or useth not the things present, as bread, apparel, house, and such like, looking with peril, while God provide otherwise for him by miracle. We read of a certain Hermite, who because he had vowed to take bread of no man, brought himself into peril by hunger, and so perished, and undoubtedly went strait unto hell, because of that false faith and tempting of God, which he learned no other where but of the devil, so that his madness was altogether like that, whereunto Satan here persuadeth Christ, to wit, that he should

should cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple ; howbeit thou shalt find very few which do follow this hermit, and do defer to enjoy temporal things present, for that they hope that God will give them other from heaven.

But in spiritual things, which concern the nourishment, not of the body, but of the soul, this temptation is wont to be both mighty and often ; in these God hath appointed a certain manner, whereby the soul may be fed, nourished and strengthened, both most commodiously, and also most blessedly, so that no good thing at all can be wanting unto it. This nourishment, this strength, this salvation, is Christ our Saviour, in whom the Father hath most abundantly offered and given all good things. But there are very few which desire him, the most part seek some other where, whereby their souls may live, and obtain salvation. Such are all they which seek salvation by their works. These are they whom Satan having set on a pinnacle of the temple, biddeth them cast themselves down, and they obey him ; they descend, whereas it is no way, that is, they believe and trust in God, yet so, as they trust also in their own works, in which is no place at all for faith and trust, no way or path unto God, wherefore throwing themselves down headlong, they break their neck, falling into utter desperation. Now Satan persuadeth miserable men unto this madness, as also he persuaded Christ to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, by places of scripture perverted and misapplied, wherein works are commanded, whereby he maketh them believe, that the angels shall keep them, that is, that they shall be approved of God, when as indeed they can by nothing so offend him, as by that mad trust and confidence in works ; for they acknowledge not, that the scripture doth no where require works without faith, or that it doth every where require a sound and lively faith from which works proceed. We have at large declared who are such, namely, incredulous hypocrites, which are given to works without faith, which falsely boast of the name of Christians, challenging to themselves to be chief in the flock of Christ ; for this temptation must

be in the holy city. Now these two temptations, and the causes of them do greatly differ. In the former cause why men do not believe, is need and hunger, for they are thereby moved to distrust God, and despair of his goodness. In the latter, the cause why they do not believe, is overmuch abundance, for that miserable men are full of most plentiful and abundant treasure, so that they loath it, coveting to have some other special thing, whereby they may procure the salvation of their souls. So our case standeth ill in both respects: if we have nothing we despair, and distrust God; if we have plenty of things, we loath them, and require other, being then also void of faith. Concerning the first, we fly and hate scarcity and seek plenty; concerning the latter, we seek scarcity, and fly plenty. Howsoever God dealeth with us, we are not content; our incredulity is a bottomless pit of malice and ungodliness. *Again, the Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain.* Here he tempteth with vain glory and power of the world, as by the words of the devil doth plainly appear, who shewing Christ the kingdoms of the world, offered them to him, if he would worship him. By this temptation they are overcome which revolt from faith, that they may enjoy glory and power here, or at least do so temper their faith that they lose not these things: in the number of these are all hereticks and troublers of the Church, which do therefore either leave, or oppugn the sincerity of faith, that being exempted out of the common number they may be extolled on high. So we may place this temptation on the right hand, as the first assaileth us on the left; for as the first temptation is of adversity, whereby we are moved to indignation, impatience, and disdence, so this third temptation is of prosperity, whereby we are provoked to delights, glory, pleasures, and whatsoever is excellent and delectable in the world. The second temptation is altogether spiritual, whereby Satan by deceit, and marvelous and secret subtlety goeth about to withdraw man from faith; for whom he cannot overcome with poverty, scarcity, necessity, and misery, them he tempteth
with

with riches, favour, glory, delights, power, &c. and so he assaileth us on either side, yea, when he prevaileth by neither way, he goeth about, as *St. Peter* saith, and attempteth all means, that whom he can overcome neither by adversity, that is, by the first temptation; nor by prosperity, that is, by the third temptation, he may overcome either by error, blindness, or false understanding of the scriptures, that is, by the second temptation which is spiritual, and therefore most hurtful; by which if he prevail against any, they are also overcome both on the left side and on the right; for whether they suffer such poverty, or enjoy plenty of things, whether they contend, or yield unto all things, both is nothing, while they are in error, either patience in adversity or constancy in prosperity can be of no importance. For in both even hereticks oftentimes do notably excel, and it is a practice of the devil oftentimes, to feign himself overcome in the first and third temptation, that he may reign victor by the second; he can be content, that they that be his, do oftentimes suffer poverty patiently, and do also contemn the world, although they do neither of both with a simple heart, and sincere faith; Every one therefore of these three temptations is grievous and very hard, but the middle one is most perilous of all, for it assaileth the doctrine of faith, and is spiritual and wont to deceive in spiritual things. The other two also do assail faith, howbeit in these outward things, as adversity and prosperity, although they do also urge us very sore; for it cannot be a little grievous to suffer poverty, to want bread, and such other things necessary: Again, it is no less grievous to neglect, and wholly to deny favour, glory, riches, friends, companions, and other commodities which we have; but an entire and sound faith in the word of God can perform both notably, and if it be a strong faith, they seem very easy and delectable unto it. We cannot certainly know the order of these temptations which happened to Christ, for that the evangelists have not described them after one order; for *St. Luke* hath set that last, which *St. Matthew* hath set in the midst, and that which *Mat-*

~~Matthew~~ hath set last, *Luke* hath placed in the midst. But they doth not so much consist in the order; notwithstanding, when any will teach the people concerning these temptations, it were better to follow the order of *Luke*; for he may fitly say, and thus rehearse; that satan doth first tempt us with poverty and adversity, whereby if he prevail not, then he tempteth us with prosperity and glory, which if he do in vain, then he assail-eth us with all his might, and tempteth us with error, lies, delusion, and other spiritual subtilties; yet neither is this order always observed of satan; but he tempteth christians sometime with the first, sometime with the third temptation, as he hath and seeth occasion. *Matthew* was not careful to rehearse them in that order, which they have almost by their own nature, and which may be commodious for him that shall teach of them. Yea, it may be that they happened not unto Christ by any certain order, but that he was assailed of satan one day with this, another day with that, during the space of those forty days, as satan thought it most convenient and meet for his purpose. *And behold, angels came and ministered unto him.* This I think was done corporally, that they having taken bodies appeared and ministered unto him meat and drink, as his servitors at the table, and ministers of all other things necessary for his life. Yea, and I think that the devil also appeared unto him in a corporal form, perhaps as an angel; for in that he took Christ, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, also whereas in a moment he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, he sufficiently declared, that he was more than man, and such a one surely he shewed himself openly, when he offered that he would give unto him those kingdoms, and required that he would worship him; and undoubtedly he did not appear like a devil when he did these things, for he loveth to appear after a fair sort, especially when he will lie and deceive: for then he transformeth himself into an angel of light, as *St. Paul* witnesseth. Now this is written chiefly for our consolation, that we may not doubt, that many angels shall minister unto us, when one devil tempteth us,
if

if we fight valiantly ; for if we stand fast in faith, God will not suffer us to be troubled and pinched with poverty, more than is meet, that he will sooner send his angels to minister unto us, to be our butlers, our cooks, and to help us in all our necessities ; neither are these things written for Christ's cause, whom they cannot profit, but they are written for us, that we may learn to believe, that if the angels ministered unto him, they shall also when the case so requireth minister unto us his brethren and members. The Lord give us faith to believe this.

S E R M O N XXIV.

Concerning the leading of a godly Life.

Ephes. 5. ver. 1. to the 9th. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, &c.

THIS text is exhortatory, wherein St. *Paul*, according to his manner, and accustomed care for the brethren, exhorteth christians not to leave or slack the study and care of godliness, and give themselves to slothfulness, but to declare by their works the word that they have learned of him, that is, to shew it forth by the fruits of faith, and make it plausible and honourable, to the edifying of the *Heathen*, lest that by the vices of them which profess the doctrine of the gospel, they take occasion to hate that doctrine, and so be offended by them, whom it behove to win unto Christ. *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.* First, therefore he exhorteth us, forasmuch as we are by Christ made the sons of God, to imitate such a Father, as dear children, marvellous gently, and alluringly he speaketh unto us, calling us dear children, that by the love of God our Father toward us. he may provoke us to love him again, and them whom he commandeth us to love, even as he hath loved us first ; but how hath

he loved us? Surely not after that common sort alone, whereby in this life he nourisheth and sustaineth us being unworthy, together with all the ungodly; making his Sun to arise on the good, and on the evil, and sending rain on the just and unjust; whereof Christ speaketh, *Mat. 5. Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect.* But he loveth us also after another special manner, in that he hath given his Son for us, *John 3.* For he hath abundantly bestowed upon us all temporal, and also eternal good things, yea, his own self, and hath as it were poured himself with all that he is, hath, and can, into us who were sinners, unworthy enemies, and servants of satan, so that he could not do and give unto us more and greater things. Now he whom this divine fire of love which filleth heaven and earth, and yet is not comprehended, doth not kindle and inflame to love likewise his neighbour, whosoever he be, friend, or enemy, he, I say, will neither by law, precepts, doctrine, threatenings, and force be ever moved to godliness and love. *Walk,* saith the apostle, *in love,* whereby he signifieth, that our life should be nothing else, but meer love. Howbeit he will not have us walk in the love of the world, which in love seeketh those things which are his own, and loveth so long as there is any thing, whereby it looketh for profit and lucre. Therefore he saith, *As Christ also hath loved us,* who neither sought nor could look for any profit or advantage of us, and yet he loved us so greatly, that he gave himself for us, and not only his other good things which he giveth us daily, and he so gave himself for us, that he might be an oblation and sacrifice, to obtain the good will and favour of the Father toward us, and to bring to pass, that we might now have God a merciful and favourable father, being become his true children and heirs, &c. So also it behoveth us to give and lend, not only to our friends, but also to our enemies, neither to count this sufficient, but to be ready also even to dye both for friends and foes, thinking nothing else, but that we may serve and profit our neighbours both in body and goods, as long as we shall be

in the pilgrimage of this life, seeing that we possess all things being given unto us by Christ. *And hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.* This manner of speech *St. Paul* borrowed out of the old Testament, wherein those corporal sacrifices are written oftentimes to have yielded to the Lord a sweet favour, that is, to have been acceptable unto him; notwithstanding that was not because of the work and sacrifice in it self, as the *Jews* falsely thought, and therefore were very often reprov'd of the prophets, but for Christ's sake who was to come, the one and only sacrifice of a good favour, whom all those sacrifices of the law did shadow forth, and represent: wherefore that which *St. Paul* here saith, is as much as if he had said, All the sacrifices of the old Testament have an end, they can now be of no price, Christ himself is the only sacrifice, which yieldeth unto God a sweet smelling favour, that is, is pleasing and acceptable unto him, whereby we are assured that we are acceptable unto God, and do please him; wherefore there is no other sacrifice in the Church which may be offered for us, beside this only sacrifice, which being once offered, hath at once satisfied for the sins of all the elect; and although we after the example of this sacrifice, do offer our bodies to God, as *St. Paul* teacheth, *Romans 12.* yet we offer them not either for our selves, or for other, forasmuch as that is proper to Christ, the only sacrifice, whereby the salvation of all is obtained; Wherefore those things should most thinkingly before God, whatsoever men offer with this mind, as though they would satisfy for their own sins, or for the sins of other, whereof we both have and will elsewhere speak more.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you. By the name of uncleanness beside fornication he understandeth all lust, and lecherous filthiness, which is committed out of matrimony, which for the filthiness of them he doth not vouchsafe to name by name, as *Rom. 1.* he speaketh very grossly of them; although in matrimony also a mean may be exceeded, and it is the duty of christians so to moderate the use of marriage, that they re-

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quire and perform due love and benevolence only for avoiding fornication, but we are fallen so far, that they are most rare, which come together only for procreation of children and to avoid fornication, which surely were best, and should very well become us. Now the apostle saith, *Let it not be once named among you*, that is, be so far from these evils, that they may not so much as be spoken of; altho' it will never come to pass in this exile, that none among christians be weak, and do not oftentimes fall, yet true christians will never wink at those things; they will reprove, amend, put away, cover, and cure whatsoever such thing shall burst forth amongst them, that the heathen may not be offended and say: See what vices the christians suffer among themselves, how unclean and low a life do they lead, thinking that all their whole life is defiled with like vices as is their own; we must needs confess, that among christians some do oftentimes fall, which we must needs bear; it is well if only the better part liveth well, and winketh not at their sins, neither teacheth them, but rather reproveth and amendeth them. So *St. Paul* exhorteth, *Gal. 6* that they which are spiritual will restore them that offend, with the spirit of meekness; and he sharply reproveth the *Corinthians*, for that they did lightly pass over many sins, of certain persons. For sin being reprehended and punished, is now counted as no sin, neither can the church be blamed because of it; after the same sort heed must be taken, that covetousness be not named among christians, that is, that they become not infamous by the name thereof, which they shall bring to pass, if, when it chanceth that covetous men be amongst them, or one useth deceit toward another in their buiness and affairs, or some contend in judgment for those outward things, if I say, they do not wink hereat, but do reprove and correct such, that the sincerity of the doctrine of the gospel may obtain due estimation among the people, and there may be no cause openly to dispraise our ministry, *2 Cor. 6*. These things have I spoken because of them, who as soon as they see that all things do not resemble and shew forth a holiness among christians, and that some do

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Stumble and fall, do think, that there is no christian left, that the gospel is to no purpose, and that all things are taught and done in vain ; as though the life of christians were now without fight victory and due triumph over sin being obtained, when as rather it is a warfare and a continual fight ; whereas therefore they do now fight and are in the camp, it is no marvel if some fly away, if some be wounded, if some fall, yea, and be even slain outright ; war is not made without peril and hurt, if it be earnest war.

As becometh Saints. This he addeth to his exhortation, as a reason and cause shewing why it lieth upon christians, to take heed that they be not defamed by these names ; for they are saints, now it becometh such to be chaste, bountiful, and ready to give, to teach and do the same ; thou seest here, that *St. Paul* calleth christian saints, while they remain yet in this life, and are pressed with flesh and blood, from which nothing cometh but sin, which he doth undoubtedly not for their good works, but because of the sanctifying blood of Christ, as he witnesseth, *1 Cor. 6. 11. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.* Forasmuch therefore as we are saints, it is meet that we should shew the same in our works, and altho' we be as yet weak, nevertheless we must daily endeavour to live purely, and far from covetousness, to the praise and glory of God, and edifying of our neighbours, even the Heathen. *Neither filthiness.* All unchast and lewd words of bawdry, uncleanness, and lecherous matters, he calleth filthiness, of which words abundance is wont to be poured forth in inns and victualling houses, in the time of eating, drinking, and playing. These the *Grecians* used very freely and accustomably more than others, as their own poets and other writers do sufficiently witness ; but he especially reproveth here those lewd and wanton words, which are spoken openly without shame, which stir up wicked and unchast thoughts, and are cause of many offences, especially being spoken among youth, according to that saying, *Evil communications corrupt good manners.*

ners, 1 Cor. 15. 33. as the apostle writeth to the *Corinthians*; and if any christians should be so careless of their tongue, that such words should come from them, such must be chastised of the Church, and if they do not amend, they must not be suffered, lest because of them the whole Church be ill reported of, as though these things were either taught among christians, or suffered to be unpunished, as it is wont to be among the Heathens. *Nor foolish talking.* Fables and other trifling speeches and jests are called foolish talking, which the *Grecians* also were wont to use more than other nations, being very witty to invent such vain speeches. Of this sort are those tales, which our women and maidens are wont to tell, spinning at the distaff, also the terms and verses of jugglers and such like fellows, and many common songs, which are partly even filthy, and partly contain other trifling and vain things; but especially it is unseemly and inconvenient for christians to use such foolish and trifling talk, when they come together to hear the word of God, or to read and search the Scriptures, and yet notwithstanding almost even such folly happeneth among them, when many come together; for altho' they begin with serious matters, nevertheless they are marvellous easy brought unto trifles, from earnest and holy matters, to ridiculous and vain speeches, wherewith both the time is spent in vain, and better things are neglected; so have they been wont certain years hitherto, at every feast of *Easter* in the time of preaching to tell some ridiculous tale to stir up the people from sleep; they did not unlike at the feast of the nativity of Christ, using songs or carols, wherein they said, they made discourses of the birth and infancy of *Jesus*, howbeit ridiculous metre and words, moving rather laughter than devotion, as they called it: Also they sung many feigned fables of the wise men, whom they made; three kings, of the passion of the Lord, of the punishment of *Dorothea*, and many others, all which were nothing but foolish talking and vain inventions, altogether unworthy of christians. To the number of these I might well add those histories of
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saints, which they call the Legends, and that flood of lies, of miracles and pilgrimages to images, and monuments of saints, masses, and worshipping of saints, indulgences, and innumerable others, not so much foolish as ungodly inventions, which in the assemblies of the church, were wont to be chiefly extolled in the pulpit, which were so contrary to godliness, that they deserve much rather to be called the wicked inventions of satan, than foolish imaginations of men; for they did not as ridiculous lies are wont to do, corrupt good manners only, of which *St. Paul* speaketh especially here, but they did wholly overthrow faith, and put out of place the word of God, so that they did not only not be seem saints, but did plainly abolish all saints. Those former therefore were fables and tales of men, which are not believed, neither esteemed any thing of, but rather laugh at, although in the mean time, they corrupt good manners, withdraw christians from serious matters, and make them slack and slothful: but these latter are devilish fables, which are believed for a truth, and counted for serious, yea, and heavenly matters, when, as notwithstanding, they be nothing else but feigned devices of satan, whereby he with his angels deludeth and mocketh us.

Nor jesting. Hereby he understandeth all pleasant speeches, which they whom they call jesters are wont to use, to make men merry, which by pleasant discourses, and merry terms do move laughter, and stir up mens minds to mirth, and cheerfulness, which is wont to be usual in civil banquets, and when civil companions meet together. This jesting the heathens counted for a virtue, especially *Aristotle*; But *St. Paul* among christians giveth it place among vices; for christians have other speeches, whereby they may recreate and cheer themselves in Christ, which also do bring some profit with them, although it easily happeneth, that many christians do offend oftentimes herein; but they that are true christians, do never praise it, neither do suffer that any should give himself to this jesting, and study to exceed therein, but they reprove and prohibit him, especially in the church, in the time of preaching and teaching:

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ing ; for Christ hath witnessed, that we shall in the last day give an account of every idle word ; it is meet indeed, that christians be an elegant and amiable people, but therewithal grave, that there may be seen in them a severe gentleness, and a gentle severity, as the life of Christ is described unto us in the gospel.

Which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.
 This comprehendeth all idle words, which want a proper name ; now I call them idle words which make neither to the edifying of faith nor to the use of our temporal life ; for there be things enough both profitable and pleasant, which when it pleaseth us to speak, we talk of in the short time of this life, as of Christ, of love, and other things either necessary or profitable : whereof *St. Paul* admonisheth, when he saith, *But rather giving of Thanks* ; for our daily speech ought to be the praise of God, and giving of thanks to him, as well privately, as publickly in sermons, for such infinite good things, as he hath given unto us in Christ, even unspeakable ; but such is the manner of our reason and nature, that necessary and profitable things are neglected, and foolish and frivolous things are chiefly regarded. Now mark here, if *St. Paul* doth not suffer in christians speeches that be only pleasant and tending to mirth, what thinkest thou would he say of that pestilent backbiting and slandering, which reigneth now in all companies of men ! Yea, what would he say of them which openly in sermons do as it were bite and rent one another with reproachful words, and maliciously accuse and speak evil of one another ? *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God.* In these words he doth very plainly pronounce against them which are infected with such vices, that they are heathens under the name of christians, how many soever do not bring forth the fruits of faith ; this is a brief and a certain sentence : He that is a fornicator, hath denied the faith, an unclean person hath denied the faith, a covetous person hath denied the faith, all such are apostates, perjured and traiterous toward God, as *St. Paul* writeth also unto *Timothy* of him
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that neglecteth them that be of his family, *But if any* saith he, *provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,* 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. How could he more severely and terribly fray us from vices? For he saith, *For this ye know,* as if he said, *Do not so much as doubt, count it not for a play, neither let it be sport unto you, neither comfort your selves with vain hope of a christians name, and for that ye are counted christians, these things shall profit you no more than it profited the Jews, that they were the children of Abraham, and disciples of Moses,* it was spoken to all which Christ saith, *Matt.* 7. 21. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* There is need of doing, and our faith must be proved by works; whom therefore that great force of heavenly fire shall not inflame unto godliness, that is, the admonition of the incomparable love of God towards us, which he set in the first place, him let these horrible threatnings of hell fire move, to wit, whereas he witnesseth, that as many as will not follow God, and walk in love, and shew forth their faith by their works, are neither the sons of God, nor heirs of his kingdom, whereupon it followeth, that they are undoubtedly heirs with satan of hell fire. Whom therefore these two so mighty provokements shall not stir up to the fear of God and godliness, with all diligence to do the duty of a christian, he is plainly a block and a stone, having a heart harder than the anvil, as *Job* saith; he particularly reproveth a covetous person, and pronounceth him an idolater or worshipper of images, whereby surely he declareth, how greatly he is displeas'd with them that are infected with this vice, and in his third chapter of his epistle to the *Colossians*, he saith, also the same thing of him; the cause hereof I think to be this; other sinners use only that thing, wherein they offend, and make it serve their lust and desire; so the fornicator and unclean person use their body to pleasure; the proud person useth riches, learning, the favour of men, and such like, unto glory; only this miserable idolater is a slave to his money and

riches, and his sin is, that he spareth his money and goods, keepeth and hoardeth them up, dareth not apply them neither to his own use, nor to the use of others, but doth plainly serve and worship them as his god, and so much esteemeth them, that he would sooner lose and suffer to perish the kingdom of God, than he would spend his money, or give the value of a rush toward the maintaining either of a preacher, or an instructor of youth, whereby the word of God and his kingdom might be furthered. Forasmuch as all the trust and hope of such a man is reposed in money, and not in God alone, who giveth him abundantly whereby to live, money is worthily called his God, and he himself said to be an idolater, and hath no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. What can be invented more filthy and pestilent than this disease? Wo unto thee, incredulity, how abominable and hurtful an evil art thou? *Let no man deceive you with vain words.* These are the vain words of them which extenuate and make light of fornication and such like sins, as though they were not greatly evil, or did so much offend God. There were not wanting Philosophers and Poets among the heathen, which counted all use of lechery beside adultery only, lawful, as a thing natural, as is to use meat and drink; so saith *Terence*, 'It is not unbecomings, believe me, for a young man to follow harlots, &c.' But this is to be ignorant of God, and to live according to the fore of concupiscence, as the *Gentiles* were wont to do. Moreover such vain words are those, which altho' they have some likelihood of truth, yet indeed are trifling, and shall not excuse any; so covetousness doth not want a cloak and pretence for itself, for him that seeketh his own with the disadvantage of others, they call a good husband, industrious, one that looketh to his business, although in the meanwhile the poor perish with hunger, or are otherwise afflicted above their strength. Wherefore such speeches are prophane and heathenish, by which love is extinguished, and they which give ear to them and believe them, are deluded with a vain hope; *For because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

Science. This is another light which we ought to follow, leaving the obscure light of reason, which doth not greatly condemn fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, &c. This our light witnesseth, that for such things the wrath of God cometh upon unbelievers, whom he calleth the children of disobedience, and therefore cannot abide to believe the word of God, and to give themselves to the obedience of faith. This *Paul* declareth, 1 *Cor.* 10. by many examples, where he saith that a great part of the people was slain for fornication, of which deed is spoken also, *Numb.* 25. for violence also, covetousness, and uncleanness, the whole world was destroyed by the flood. Wherefore a sufficient sharp, yea, and a certain vengeance abideth them that are infected with these wickednesses; now he calleth them the children of disobedience, that is, of incredulity, which is as much as if he had said, Of them that have revolted from the faith, and have renounced Christ. Hereby we see and learn, that he that doth not approve his faith by works, is no better than a heathen, yea worse, inasmuch as he hath renounced Christ, and denied the faith once received; for this cause the vengeance and wrath of God shall come upon them that are such, as we *Germans* do now try, unto whom God sendeth abundantly the pestilence, famine and cruel war. Let men take heed they give no ear to those deceivers, which with vain words promise that those sins shall escape unpunished: Let those slack and slothful christians beware, who although they be not blind heathen, but know well that uncleanness and covetousness are sins, and think or teach no otherwise, do nevertheless live wickedly, resting upon faith, whereby they hope that they shall obtain salvation without works, forasmuch as works do not save; yea, altho' they very well know, that faith without works is a feigned faith, and that worthy fruits and good works must needs follow, where a true and sound faith is, yet notwithstanding they live securely in their sins, presuming of the grace and mercy of God, nothing fearing God and his judgments, when notwithstanding it is certain, that God doth require the mortification of the old *Adam*, and good fruit of good trees. Although

perhaps *Paul* speaketh not here properly of these, but of them which think and in vain words teach, that fornication, covetousness, and such like, are not sins, as the blind heathen did, and many do at this day under the name of christians; yet is it to be feared, seeing they live no better than the heathen do, and be themselves fornicators and covetous persons, that they shall feel the like vengeance of God with them, yea so much more grievous vengeance, as they do know more certainly that those are sins, according to that saying, *Rom. 2. 3.* *Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despitest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, &c. Eph. 5. 7.* *Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.* So *Peter* also saith, *1 Pet. 4. 3.* *The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, &c. but from henceforth should have nothing common with them, but spend the rest of our life in the service and worship of God.* When we were Gentiles, we knew not that these were sins, we were so blinded through incredulity and ignorance of God; but after that we were made light in the Lord, that is, lightened by Christ, we do not only well understand what God is, and what he requireth of us, what sin and iniquity is, but are also able now to be instead of light unto others, and to teach them those things which we have learned. Such *Paul* said the *Phillipians* were, *chap. 2. 15.* *In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.* So before we were not only dark, but darkness itself, inasmuch as we were not only ignorant and erred, but did also bring others into the same darkness, both by words and deeds. Let us be thankful therefore to him, which hath called us out of this darkness into his mar-

vellous light, walking as the children of light, which Peter also admonisheth us to do. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. Forasmuch as he hath here spoken of light, it had been more agreeable to have added, for the fruit of light, as the *Latin* editions have, than of the Spirit, as it is read in the *Greek*. Who knoweth whether the *Greek* copies were here changed upon this occasion, for that Paul in the Epistle to the *Galatians* treateth of the fruits of the Spirit: But this skilleth little, of the Spirit and of light, are all one in this place. Goodness therefore is a fruit either of the Spirit or of light, contrary to covetousness, whereby a christian man is good, that is, profitable and beneficial to others, ready to gratify and do well to his neighbours. Righteousness, being a fruit of the Spirit, is contrary to covetousness; for it maketh that no man doth take away from another that which is his, either by violence, either by craft or guile, but that he endeavour rather to give unto every man that which is his own. Truth is a fruit of the Spirit, contrary to hypocrisy and lying, which requireth that a christian be true and uncorrupt, not only in words, but also in his whole life, that he do not glory of the name of a christian, without works, that he be not called a christian, and yet live after the manner of a heathen, in fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, and other vices, &c.

S E R M O N XXV.

God's Providence and Care for his Children.

Luke 5. Verse 1. to the 11. And it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear, &c.

TO them that believe this text is most easy to be understood, which setteth forth two things unto us, namely, faith and temporal good things. First, it declareth unto them that believe in Christ, that they

shall have sufficient wherewith to sustain themselves even in this life ; which Christ sheweth by this, when he giveth so many fishes to *Peter* and his companions, as they durst not so much as desire. So that Christ is careful even how to feed the belly, if that cursed incredulity be not an hindrance thereunto ; for behold *St. Peter*, and consider his heart aright in your mind, then shall ye find, that he did not so much as think that he should take so many fishes. God therefore is present, and causes fishes to come into the net, even more than they would have wished ; by which example we are admonished that they shall have sufficient of those things that are necessary for the sustenance of this life, which do believe, but they that do not believe can never be satisfied, whereby they fall into all kind of vices. Hereunto pertaineth that which *S. Paul* saith, *1 Tim. 6. 6. Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil : which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* This place of *St. Paul* plainly declareth what followeth our unbelief, to wit, that it travelleth to get substance, and laboureth to be rich, and falleth into the temptation and snares of the devil ; but we cannot see that, forasmuch as it is spiritual. If we could as well see the hurt, which it bringeth to spiritual things, as we can see that which it bringeth to corporal and outward things, then were it an easy matter to preach unto us ; for we see plainly in outward things, how he that is given to the desire of money, scrapeth and gathereth together, doth injury to all men, that he alone may gather together, and heap up many things, whereunto he may trust and say, Well, now have I goods enough. Whereby we may gather how unkind and unmerciful a covetous man is ; for he doth good to no man, he sheweth himself gentle and kind to no man, he.

he giveth nothing to any man, but looketh unto his own lucre and advantage.

Now this is a cursed thing, that we cannot so much as trust unto the Lord, that he will feed our belly, thinking always that we shall perish with hunger, when notwithstanding we shall have things necessary; and that which is sufficient for us, as Christ saith, *Mat. 6. 25.* *I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on: Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* Ye see in this place, how God hath a care for the fowls and flowers, and doth adorn them after a most goodly sort; how much more will God give unto us those things that be necessary? and ye we cannot put our trust in him, so that the devil entangleth us in his snares. When one cometh so far, that he is not content with that he hath, neither trusteth in God, then charity must needs suddenly cease, so that he doth good to no man, but only provideth that his own heap be increased. Hereupon came the spiritual state of sacrificing priests and monks, that they might only help themselves, feed their belly, avoid labour, enter into monasteries, that thereof

thereof did arise a true proverb, *Desperation maketh a monk*, yea, not only a monk, but sacrificing priests, bishops and popes; for they trust not in God, that he is able to feed them, but they study upon this only, that they may be delivered from all misery and infirmity, which is altogether to live in incredulity: they never trusted in God, that he is able to give them nourishment and things necessary, if any of them should marry a wife and remain without that state of Antichrist. Here is an example set forth unto us, which provoketh and allureth us to confidence, and first that we commit our belly to God; for he hath a care of us, even in temporal things, which sufficiently appeareth in *Peter*, whereas he took such a great multitude of fishes, which ran by great companies into his nets, whereby it plainly signified that God will forsake no man, but that every one shall have enough, if that we shall only trust in him, as the 37th Psalm affirmeth: *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* Things necessary shall not be wanting unto us, if faith be not wanting; for before we should want, the very angels should come, and minister unto us food. Whereas men are commonly oppressed with so great misery, only unbelief is the cause thereof. And altho' God be with us, notwithstanding he requireth yet of us, work or labour, and hope, if he at any time defer somewhat to help us. He commandeth *Peter* here, that for the taking of fishes, he should cast forth his nets: *Launch out into the deep*, saith he, *and let down your net for a draught*, as if the Lord said, do thou that which belongeth to a fisher, cast thy net into the deep; and commit the success unto me, leave the care unto me. God leaveth not the care unto thee, but the work and labour; howbeit we after a clean contrary method; study to commit the care to ourselves and the labour to him. Whereby it cometh to pass, that every one for himself applieth his mind earnestly to gain, and to gather money unto himself, that he may not be enforced by any means to take pains and labour. But if thou wilt live a Christian life, leave unto thy God to care how

how the fishes shall come into the nets, and go thou and take upon thee the state wherein thou mayest labour. Howbeit for the most part, we wish such states of life, as in which there is no need of labour, which is altogether a devilish thing. And therefore have we been consecrated monks and sacrificing priests, that we might live only like gentlemen, without labour. And for the same cause parents have set their children to school, that at last they might live merry days, and to serve God, as they thought. Whereby it came to pass that they did not know, what a good life was; forasmuch as God especially commendeth that, and that indeed is acceptable unto him, which is gotten with the sweat of the brow, as he commanded *Adam*, Gen. 3. 19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.* And the deeper thou art occupied in the law in so much better case thy things are, wherefore follow thy work, labour, and trust in God, all carefulness being cast off. Now some murmur, and say, if faith be preached, that we must trust in God, and leave the care unto him, I might long enough, say they, believe or trust, before I should have wherewithal to be fed and sustained, if I should not labour. Yea it is plain enough that thou must labour, forasmuch as labour is commanded thee; howbeit suffer God to care for thee, believe thou, and labour, then shalt thou assuredly have those things that be necessary for the sustaining of thy life. And this is another thing, that we must hope notwithstanding, though God deferreth for a time, therefore he suffereth them to labour all the night, and to take nothing, and sheweth himself to be such a one, as will suffer them to perish with hunger, which might have come into the mind of *Peter*, when he had fished so long and taken nothing, so that he might have said, now God will suffer my belly to perish with pining and famine. Howbeit he doth not so, but goeth on still in his labour, he plyeth his work and hopeth that God at the last will give him fishes, altho' he deferreth a time. God therefore is present, and giveth him so many fishes in one day, as he could scarce take in the space of eight days. Wherefore these things
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are to be learned well of thee, that thou labour and hope, although God deferreth his blessing a little; for altho' he deferreth a while, and suffereth thee to labour fore, so that thou now think thy labour to be lost, yet must thou not therefore despair, but repose thy hope in him, trusting assuredly that he will at the last give thee prosperous success; for he will certainly come and give more than thou didst need as he did here unto *S. Peter*. Wherefore if God delayeth with thee a little, think with thyself, he delayed also with *S. Peter*, and yet afterward gave unto him abundantly. Commit thyself therefore to his good will and pleasure, and leave not off thy work, but hope still, and then shall not thy hope be frustrated. Thus much concerning the former part of the text, now let us hear the latter. After therefore that they had taken fishes, and tasted the fruit of faith, their faith is encreased and augmented. We therefore must go so far, that we may commit our belly to God; for he that cannot commit so much as his belly to him, will never commit his soul unto him. Howbeit that is only a childish faith. Here we learn first to go by benches and settles; here we do feed on milk as yet; but we must likewise learn by these to commit our soul also to God. The Evangelist so meaneth, when he saith, *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus knees, saying, depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken.* Let *Peter* be here a type or figure of them which believe eternal good things, and count him as one verily looking for and seeing the good things to come. A sinful conscience is of that nature, that it so behaveth itself, as *Peter* here did, whereas he flieth his Saviour, and thinketh, Lord, I am more unworthy, than that I should be saved, and sit among thy saints and angels; for that good is most exceeding high. Here straight conscience is not able to comprehend such great good things, but it thus thinketh; if I were as *Peter* and *Paul*, I could easily believe; which is altogether a foolish and vain thing. For if thou wouldest place thy self according to thine own holiness,

liness, thou shouldest build upon the sand. Thou must not do so, but behave thy self like unto *Peter*, for in that he esteemed himself vile, and judged himself unworthy of so great grace, he rightly became worthy. And therefore, whereas, thou art a sinner, thou must trust in God, and dilate and open wide thy conscience and heart, that grace may enter in. After thou hast now known God, thou must reject none of his gifts, that is, when as thou feelest the great good things, thou must not despair. It is good that we know ourselves, and the deeper we know ourselves, so much the better. But that grace is not to be refused because of thy sins, For when thou shalt find thy conscience to tremble so that it would drive away sins, then art thou most ready and most fit to receive grace, then shalt thou find comfort in thy conscience, and say with *Micah*, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?* Mic. 7. 18. Whosoever take not away sins, they are no gods but idols; whereupon he saith rightly, that none is like unto our God; for other gods will find and not bring godliness but the Almighty God doth not find it, but bring it: wherefore thou must not forthwith despair, if thy conscience trembleth and feeleth sin; for the more defiled that thou art, so much the sooner doth the Lord pour in his grace, if so be that thou be repentant and thirsteth after it. A great part go so far that they say that they merit grace, whilst they dispose themselves thereunto, which is, as they interpret, whilst they do that which lyeth in them, and also that they do satisfy for their sins. But it is not so. The scripture teacheth us, that it is God that taketh away sin, and casteth it into the bottom of the sea. We shall not put away sins by our works, neither shall we be justified of ourselves. God himself, and none but he shall do the thing, of his meer grace as *Isaiab* saith, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins,* *Isaiab* 43. 25. And so must thou believe, otherwise thou shalt never obtain a joyful conscience. Wherefore, when as *Peter* said, *I am a sinner,* he said right. It is true indeed, there were causes, why

he might be afraid of himself, and humble himself, but he ought not to refuse God, but most willingly receive him. Wherefore when thou shalt feel thy sin, like as *Peter* did, and shalt perceive that thou wouldst now fly from God, then it is need that thou do forthwith turn thyself, and come more and more unto him. For if God should go away, and would not take away sin, would not come unto thee, nor seek thee, yet the more thou perceivest thyself a sinner, the more oughtest thou to make unto him, which see thou mark well, and lay it up in a mindful memory. For as *St. Peter* doth here, so all consciences do, which are terrified of sins, and would fly from God, and seek another God, do not thou leave so, but come boldly, and join thyself nearer unto God. Otherwise if one go away to seek works, and help of another God, he is then found like the foolish virgins, which while they go to get themselves oil, are in the mean season shut out. But what doth Christ, when *Peter* so humbleth himself? and by reason of his great fear and terror, desireth the Lord to depart from him; did he leave him in such desperation of himself? no truly, but he comforteth him, saying thus, *Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men*. This is a joyful word, whereby weak hearts receive comfort. Now therefore that God hath a care for us, yea even in those things that pertain to the body, ye see by this, that he giveth *Peter* so many fishes; he maketh him also full and rich in spirit, that he ought to bestow some of his plenty upon others. He maketh him a fisher both in body and in spirit: in body, for that he taketh many fishes which he may sell; but in spirit he is a fisher of men. For he hath the gospel, whereby other men must be brought to God by him, and the kingdom of Christ be encreased. Lo, it cometh to pass, where men believe, the Lord giveth so much, as succoureth and helpeth all men. The faithful man outwardly helpeth the needy with his substance and goods: and from within he breaketh forth, teacheth other, and enricheth them also inwardly. For as such a man cannot hold his peace, but is enforced to declare and shew to others, how he is dealt with, as it is in
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the 51st Psalm, *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.* And in another Psalm also David saith, *I believed, and therefore will I speak.* Which is thus much in effect; when I believe, I know God, and taste of his goodness, then I consider the case of other men, and go and declare such knowledge and goodness of God unto them. We see therefore in this text, how careful God is for them that be his, and that he doth sustain them both in body and in spirit; but if he doth sometime defer any thing, without all doubt it is through the fault of our incredulity, or because we have now new begun to believe; for where faith is new and little, there is sometime small and slender help that we may learn to know the Lord, and to trust in him; But when we have gone so far that we trust strongly in God, then nothing can be wanting unto us, then God poureth upon us both temporal and spiritual good things, and so abundant treasures, that we may be able to help others. This indeed is to enrich the poor and fill the hungry. Thus much shall suffice concerning this text.

S E R M O N XXVI.

Concerning trust in God in Penury and Distress.

Mark 8. Ver. 1. to the 9th. In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, &c.

I Hope dearly beloved, that ye do well understand the meaning of this text; for your understanding is sufficiently well grounded in these mysteries, so that ye do easily perceive what good is to be looked for in the gospel,

pel, and what is prescribed unto us therein, namely the true nature and quality of faith. And this is the cause why Christ is of all the Evangelists set forth to be so loving and gentle; for although the doings and works described of them do oftentimes vary, nevertheless the simplicity of faith remaineth always alike. Moreover this text doth so lively set forth Christ unto us in his colours, that it may be manifest and well known unto every one of us, what we ought to promise our selves concerning him, to wit, that he is merciful, bountiful, gentle, who succoureth all that fly unto him for help. And such ought to be the image of faith; for the scripture setteth before us a double image; one of fear, which representeth to our eyes the horrible wrath of God, before which no man is able to stand, but rather we are all enforced to be cast down in mind, when we see it, unless we be strengthened by faith. Howbeit, against this is set the other image, namely grace, which faith doth attentively behold, and taketh from hence principles of comfort, and conceiveth trust and confidence in the favour of God, having this hope, that man cannot promise to himself from God so many good things, but that he hath infinite more treasures in readiness for him. Ye have now oftentimes heard, that there are two sorts of good things, spiritual and temporal. The gospel by these temporal good things teacheth us the faith of children, and they are unto the weak, as a certain mean or help, whereby they may learn the goodness of God, how bountiful he is in bestowing his riches upon us, and that we ought in spiritual things also to put our hope and trust in him; for if we be now instructed by the gospel, that God will give food to our belly, we may thereupon account with our selves, that he will nourish and cloath our souls with spiritual good things. If I cannot commit my body unto him that he may feed it, much less can I commit my soul unto him that he may always preserve it; or if I cannot be brought to believe that a crown of gold shall be given unto me of him, how I pray you, shall I hope for ten crowns of gold of him? From whom I dare not promise to my self so much as a
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piece of bread, truly much less shall I be persuaded to believe, that he will give a farm unto me or his whole inheritance. Now he that is not able to attain unto this tender, and as it were as yet sucking faith, to him surely it is very hard to believe, that God will pardon his sins, or preserve his soul for ever. Forasmuch as we are persuaded, that the soul is by infinite degrees to be preferred before the belly, toward which notwithstanding he is touched with compassion as this our present text teacheth; wherefore St *Peter* hath rightly admonished, *1 Pet. 2. 2. As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*: For it is not enough that the infant being put to the breast do suck, but he must also wax greater, and gather strength, that he may accustom himself to feed on bread and stronger meat. Now to eat milk is to taste of the favour and grace of God, which is then tasted of, when a trial thereof is had in our life; for although I should preach a hundred years of the bountifulness, favour, liberality and gentleness of God toward us, it would profit me nothing unless I have a trial and taste of those commodities, neither could I learn rightly to trust in God thereby. Hereof thou mayest conjecture how rare a christian man is, there are many which say, that they commit their belly to God, but that sticketh only in the tongue and lips, when as rather it ought to pierce to the heart. Let us now consider an example teaching us the quality and nature of faith; the apostle *Heb. 11. 1.* hath written thus, *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Which is thus much in effect; faith is the foundation, whereby I look for that good thing, which is neither seen with the eyes, nor heard with the ears, but which I must only hope for; even as in our present text it plainly appeareth; wherein we read that there were about four thousand men, who together with their wives and children had now suffered hunger three days (was not this a notable kind of fasting?) yet were not famished with hunger, being far from their houses, and destitute of those necessaries, whereby the body is sustained. Now St. *Paul* saith, that faith is a thing

whereby a man hopeth for those things which appear not to the eyes ; such a faith had this multitude, which although they see no meat, nevertheless they trust in God, that he will feed them ; what doth Christ here ? he is moved with compassion, he demandeth of the disciples with what victuals, or with what thing their hunger may be taken away ; to whom his disciples answer, whence can a man satisfy such a multitude here in the wilderness ? Here you see how man's reason and faith agree together, that the wiser reason is, so much less can it submit itself to the works of God. For this cause therefore did he ask his disciples, that every one of them might try their own reason, and learn how much the capacity of man and faith do differ one from another.

Here it appeareth unto us how reason is blind, and how, when faith cometh, it ought to give place ; whereof let this be an example ; If I were a married man, having a wife and a company of children, and had nothing wherewith to nourish them, neither would any man give me any thing, yet should it be my duty to believe and hope, that God will provide for me ; But when as I see my hope to be in vain, and that I am not succoured by and by with nourishment and cloathing, then if I be faithless, I yield unto desperation, and go and purpose another thing with my self, I apply my mind to dishonest trades, that I may get somewhat thereby, as theft, deceit, and other such practices, and by all means that I am able, I pass through the storms of adversity ; see what filthy incredulity bringeth unto man ; but if I be indued with faith, I shut mine eyes and say, Most gentle Father, I am thy creature, and thy work, it cannot be denied but thou hast created me, I will put all my trust in thee, which hast greater care of my welfare than I my self. Thou wilt well nourish, feed, cloath, and help, where and when thou shalt know best. So faith is a sure foundation, whereunto I trusting, do look for those things which I see not, and that I may speak at once, it shall not want those things that be necessary ; surely the angels them-

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selves should come down from heaven, and give bread digged even out of the earth, unto such a faithful man, that he might be nourished, rather than he should be pined with hunger, yea, heaven and earth shall pass, before God will suffer a man endued with such faith to want either cloathing or any other necessary things. This singular trust and confidence in God, the comfortable and effectual word of the divine promise doth require; whereof David glorieth, *Psalme 37. 25. I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* And again, *God knoweth the days of the righteous, their inheritance shall continue for ever. They shall not be confounded in the perilous time, and in the days of dearth they shall have enough.* But if we shall ask council of reason, it will forthwith say, (as the disciples did before) this thing is impossible, for it looketh for nothing, it trusteth to nothing, when nothing is present. Of like diffidence were the disciples, who thought thus with themselves; how can it be, that such a great multitude of men should be here refreshed with meat? Truly it exceedeth our capacity; if they had seen a heap of money, store of bread, and stables full of flesh, they could then have easily relieved this present necessity, they could have put all in a good hope, and fitly have disposed all things, according to the capacities of their reason. And thus much shall suffice to be spoken concerning the faith of temporal good things. Now we will treat of spiritual good things, which shall come unto us when we shall dye; then shall we see death set before our eyes, when as notwithstanding we would willingly live, then shall hell appear unto us, when we rather desire for heaven, then shall we behold the judgment of God, notwithstanding his grace would be more acceptable unto us; in fine, whatsoever we would desire to see, shall be taken out of our sight, yea, and no creature shall help us against death, hell, and the judgment of God; But if I believe, I say thus unto my self, well, faith is a sure foundation: herewith I being stayed up, shall attain unto those things which are very far out of my sight, altho' those things be horrible which be in my sight, yet shall they

they not hurt him that believeth ; although therefore I do presently see nothing, but death, hell, and the judgment of God, yet must I consider none of these, but rather my mind is to be confirmed with an undoubted trust, that God by the virtue of his promise, not in respect of my merits or works, will give unto me life, blessedness and grace. This indeed is to cleave unto God by sincere faith, which is here very well painted forth in this gross and bodily image of four thousand men, who cleaving to God only by faith, did not doubt that they should be refreshed of him ; if they had judged according to the capacity of their reason, they would have murmured, and said after this sort ; surely we are a very great multitude, we are here in the wide wilderness, we have empty and hungry stomachs, here is nothing that is able to fill them. Howbeit, they murmured of none of these things, but conceiving a sure confidence, reasoning nothing against God after the affection of men, they commend themselves wholly to the good will of God, and commit unto him this urgent necessity of hunger, they themselves being quiet from all care ; then God before this care cometh upon them, and before they begin to ask of him, is present, being more careful for them, than they are for themselves, and saith on this sort, *I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat : And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way.* Behold how gentle and bountiful we have God toward us, who hath even a care to feed the unclean belly. Here now our hope is erected, and the words of Christ are comfortable to a man, when he saith ; They have now continued with me three days, it now behoveth me to give sufficient unto them to eat. Here we may see, that all that do stick diligently to the word of God, are fed of God himself ; wherefore let us dearly beloved, at the last begin to believe, for only diffidence and incredulity is the mother of all sins and vices, which at this day reign in all sorts of men. How cometh it to pass, that every where, whithersoever we turn us, there are so many heretics and bauds, such plenty of deluders and deceivers,

so many thieves, pilferers, usurers, robbers, simonists, as they call them, and sellers of benefices, all these diffidence toward God bringeth forth unto us: for such kind of men do judge only according to human reason, and reason looketh unto that which is present; but that which it seeth not, it is not able to comprehend; wherefore, while it doth not repose her trust by faith in God, it is enforced to despair, which desperation afterward causeth such naughty and wicked men. Behold thus it goeth out of frame with us, when we commit our selves to be ruled, not by faith, but by our own reason. Moreover, as ye have now learned faith, so must ye also learn love; for Christ is set forth unto us in a double form, in one, of faith, that we should not be over careful; in another, of love, that we may learn, that as he hath care of us, giving us meat, drink, apparel, and that of meer and bountiful love, not for his own advantage sake, or because of our merits; so also we ought to do well to our neighbour, and that freely, only love moving us thereunto, that as Christ is to us, so we may be to our neighbour. Hereupon now we may perceive, that all works of monks and nuns are vain and to be utterly disallowed, when they are not directed to that end, that they may serve their neighbour, but are ordained only unto this end, that they may merit much at God's hands by them; for the true works of christians, which they desire to be accepted of God, must be done so, that they tend to the profit of our neighbour, and not to this end, that we should think that we shall merit many things of God by them, they must be cheerfully and freely bestowed upon all, even as Christ hath done, who hath spread abroad and freely bestowed his goodness upon all. These things have I briefly spoken concerning this text, that ye may thereby learn that God requireth this especially of us, that we do firmly and constantly trust in him, and that we freely do good and be beneficial to our neighbours, according as God hath of his meer goodness and mercy bestowed infinite benefits and blessing upon us; the prophet saith, *Psalms 50. 7. Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel,*

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Israel, and I will testify against thee; I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor be goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? After the same sort he saith unto us: Behold Israel, that is, thou faithful man, I am thy God, thou art not my God, I will give unto thee, thou givest nothing to me, I will not be angry with thee, for that thou offerest not many things unto me; for whatsoever is in thy stable, in thy houses, in thy court, it was all mine before, for I have sent it thither, whereby he briefly reproveth the *Jews*, who did marvellously please themselves in their sacrifices. Now because he rejecteth these sacrifices, what will he have to supply the place of them? truly even that which followeth in the same place: Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. This is I will have thine heart, give over thy self to me, and account me for a gentle, favourable, yea, and for thy God, and it shall suffice me. Wherefore place thy faith, trust and hope in him, count him for a gentle and loving God, cleave unto him, and in extream anguish flie unto him for succour, and to none beside him; believe and look for help of him, that he will help thee, thou needest not any whit doubt; afterward do good to thy neighbour with a chearful heart and freely. These two things are set forth in this our text, as also in many other places beside.

S E R M O N XXVII.

God's Punishments against the Contemners
of his Word.

*Luke 19. ver. 41. to the 48. And when he was come near,
he beheld the city, and wept over it, &c.*

THE sum and scope of this text is this: The Lord is troubled, and lamenteth for the evils which were to come upon the contemners of the word of God. Ye have oftentimes heard, what the word of God is, what is the fruit and advantage thereof, also what disciples it hath, of which nothing is here said or done; but the punishment and misery only is shewed, which was to come upon the *Jews*, for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Which thing let us well consider of, for it pertaineth unto us also. If they be punished which know not the time of their visitation, what shall come unto them which persecute, blaspheme and reprehend the gospel and word of God? Howbeit he speaketh here only of them which know not the season of their visitation. The contemners of God are preached against after two sorts: First by threatnings, as Christ threatneth them, *Mat. 11. 21. Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida: for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, (which was his own city, wherein chiefly he wrought miracles) which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee.* These are the threatnings wherewith he terrifieth them, that they should not so neglect the word of God. The other way the Lord here sheweth when he sheddeth tears,
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and is touched with pity towards miserable and blind men, he doth not terrify or threaten them, as being indurate and obstinate, but is rather wholly moved with love, and taketh pity on his enemies, and would willingly call them back, but that he could prevail nothing with them, and the means which he used to reclaim them were in vain. Before in *Matthew*, he sharply rebuketh them, he dealeth not by love, but by rigour, but here is pure love and pity, as we shall afterwards see.

First, when he drew near to the city, some went before him, and some followed him, with great joy singing and saying, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, they spread their garments in the way, they cut down branches from the trees, and strowed them in the way, and all things were done after a goodly manner, but in the midst of this joy, Christ beginneth greatly to weep, he suffereth all to rejoice, notwithstanding his eyes gushed out with tears when he beheld the city, and said, *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.* As if the Lord should say, O, if thou knewest what belongeth unto thy peace, that thou mightest not be destroyed, but stand still, thou wouldest yet at this day consider of it and beware. Now it were time for thee to know that which should be best for thee, but thou art blind, and wilt neglect the time, then shall there be no place neither for help nor counsel. As if he said, Thou standest here adorned with sumptuous and goodly buildings, and there are in thee mighty citizens, which are both secure and merry, thinking that no danger hangeth over them, but after the space of forty years thou shalt be destroyed. Which the Lord plainly foretelleth in these words.

The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Now the Jews, as they supposed, stood unmovable and safe, resting upon the promise of God, so that they thought no otherwise but that they should

Should continue so for ever, they were secure and thought thus with themselves, God will not send such things unto us; we have the temple wherein God himself is resident, we have also plenty of excellent men, money, and other things, who can do any hurt or harm to us? moreover the emperor and people of *Rome* having taken the city, seeing it furnished with so many excellent buildings, marvelled greatly, and confessed that it was impossible that so great a city should be taken, unless it had been the special will of God. Their boasting therefore and confidence in their own false opinion deceived them; howbeit the Lord did more earnestly and deeply consider the matter, than they when he said, *O Jerusalem*, if thou knewest those things that are known to me, thou wouldest have a care of thy peace: (peace in the scriptures is, when the matters and affairs of any have good success,) thou thinkest that thou hast glad and merry days, that it is well with thee and that thy affairs are in a prosperous state: but if thou knewest how thine enemies shall by siege afflict thee, keep thee in on every side, and bring thee into such distrets, that they shall lay thee even with the ground, destroy all thy buildings, and leave not one stone upon another, thou wouldest surely conveniently receive the word, whereby thou mightest enjoy both true peace and all good things. The reading of the history of the destruction of this city doth help much to the right understanding of this text. God had plainly so ordained, that at the feast of *Easter*, at which time they came to *Jerusalem* out of all quarters, the city should be besieged, and there were then gathered together as *Josephus* reporteth, about thirty hundred thousand men, upon whom the Lord would shew his grievous indignation and wrath. All the apostles and christians were departed and gone into the country of *Herod*, not far from *Jerusalem*. The Lord took out the wheat and put the chaff together on an heap, now there was so great a multitude of people, that they might seem to exceed not only a city, but even a kingdom. And they were driven into so great calamity, that all their victuals were spent, and none at all left unto them, so that they were constrained to eat the

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strings of their bows, and old shoes, dressing them in such manner as they could, yea through the exceeding famine, they were driven to kill their own children: the Soldiers took the flesh of children roasted from the mothers, smelling the favour of the roasted flesh two streets off; Pigeons dung was unto them instead of salt, and was also very dear: finally, there was so great misery, so great slaughter, and shedding of Blood, that it would not have been marvellous for a stone to have been moved with pity. He that had seen it, would have thought that God could not have been so grievously angry, and so greatly have afflicted a people. Both houses and streets were filled with carcases dead through famine: notwithstanding the *Jews* remained still so obstinate and without understanding, that they gloried of God, and would not yield themselves until the emperor set upon them with his whole power, and took the city, which they were able to keep no longer. And when as some of them were so crafty that they devoured gold that it might not be taken from them, the *Roman* soldiers thought that they had also so done, whereupon they slew about two thousand, and having ript their bellies sought for gold. There was such a slaughter made, that it seemed a miserable thing even to the *Gentiles*, wherefore *Cesar* commanded that they should not be so slain, but led captive and sold. The *Jews* were then sold so cheap, that thirty were bought for a penny, they were then dispersed through the whole world, and were counted the most abject people of all other, as also at this day they are the most contemptible nation on the earth. For they live spread here and there without cities and countries of their own, neither can they again be gathered into one place, so that they shall never be able any more to erect their priesthood and kingdom, as they hope they shall. Thus God revenged the death of Christ, and all the prophets, thus were they recompensed for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Wherefore let us be here admonished, for it belongeth not only unto us, but even unto all *Germany*, it is no jesting matter or sport, neither is there any cause why we should persuade ourselves that it will fall out otherwise with us. The *Jews* would not believe that
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evil should come upon them until they had sufficiently tried it. And we at this day are visited by the goodness of God: he hath opened unto us a treasure, his sacred and holy Gospel, whereby we know his will, and see how much we were subject to the power of Satan: but no man will receive this gospel, yea we contemn it, and that which is more miserable, we persecute and blaspheme it. God is patient, it pleaseth him to try us a while, if we be not watchful, so that the word be again taken from us, the same wrath and indignation which was poured forth upon the *Jews*, shall also be poured forth upon us. For there is the same word, the same God, the same Christ at this day, that there was at that time, whereupon undoubtedly the punishment shall be the same, or at least as grievous both in soul and body. We make a sport and trifling matter of the gospel, for no man embraceth it from his heart, no man frameth his manners according unto it, which is a manifest argument of blindness; a thing surely most miserable; I fear lest the matter will shortly come to pass, that all *Germany* will fall together on an heap, which, alas! in part of the commonality hath already had a lamentable beginning; we have lost a great multitude of people, almost an hundred thousand men have been slain only between the feast of *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*. It is a hard work of God, and I am afraid that the war begun is not yet at an end; this is only a forewarning and threatening whereby God would terrify us, that we might diligently take heed to ourselves: it was nothing but the Fox's tail, if he come again with his whip he will scourge us more grievously: but we will behave ourselves as the *Jews* behaved themselves, until there be place for no succour or help; now we might prevent it, now is the time to know what should be best for us, and to receive the gospel with peace, for at this day grace is offered unto us, whereby we may live peaceably, but we suffer day to pass after day, year after year, applying ourselves less to the gospel than before: no man doth now pray unto God for the increase of his word, no man receiveth it in his heart; if so be that the time shall pass, no prayers shall any more help. We weigh not this matter in

our heart, we think ourselves safe, we do not thoroughly perceive the great misery already come to pass, neither do we consider in our minds how miserably God punisheth us with false prophets and sects, which he on every side sendeth unto us, which preach so securely, as if they had wholly received into their breast the spirit the comforter: those which we counted best of all do go away, and bring men into such a perplexity, that they almost know not either what is to be done or not to be done. But this is only the beginning, altho' sufficient horrible and cruel; for there cannot be greater affliction and misery, than if the Lord send amongst us sects and false prophets, which are so rash and bold, that it is greatly to be lamented; notwithstanding the time of grace is now present: Christ hath been sent down into the world, hath been born man, hath served us, died for us, is risen again from the dead, hath sent unto us the spirit the comforter, hath given unto us his word, hath opened heaven so wide, that all good things may be obtained of us, moreover hath given unto us rich promises, whereby he promiseth that he will preserve us both in this short and frail time, and in the eternal time, in this life, and in the life to come, most plentifully pouring forth his grace upon us. Wherefore the time of grace is now before our doors, but we despise and neglect it, which God neither will, neither can pardon: for when as we contemn his word he threatneth punishment, and will at the last punish us, although he should defer it even an hundred years, but he will not defer it so long. And the more purely that the word is preached, so much greater shall the punishment be. But I fear lest this punishment require the subversion of all *Germany*: God grant that in this thing I be a false prophet, but I fear exceedingly that it will come to pass, God cannot leave this wickedness unrevengeed, neither will he defer long, for the gospel is so abundantly preached, that it was not so manifest even in the Apostles time as it is at this day, thanks be to Christ therefore. Wherefore I fear much, lest that all *Germany* be spoiled, yea, and quite destroyed, unless we otherwise apply ourselves to this matter. We which have long heard the gospel, ought to pray God from
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the heart, that he would give us longer peace: The Princes go about to bring all things to pass by the sword, whereby they go too rashly and rigorously to work; wherefore it is exceeding needful that we should pray unto God, that his gospel may spread farther abroad through *Germany*, even unto them which have not yet heard it. For if punishment come suddenly upon us, our case shall be miserable, then many souls shall be in danger to be lost before the word shall come unto them; I would wish therefore, that we would not so cruelly despise the gospel, that precious treasure; not only for our own sake, but also for their sakes which are yet to hear it: a scourge is a little begun, God grant that it may so stay, that neither the princes nor the commonality be stirred up to greater rage and fury; for if that civil war should begin again, it were to be feared that it would have no end. We do, like as the *Jews* did, who took greater care of the belly than of God, having more regard how to fill the belly, than that they might be saved, wherefore they lost both, and that worthily; forasmuch as they would not receive life, God sent unto them death, so they lost both body and soul: they pretended the same cause that we do: we would willingly indeed embrace the gospel, if there were no danger of body and goods, wife and children. If we shall believe him, said the *Jews*, the *Romans* will come, and take away both our place and nation, which nevertheless came unto them: for that which the wicked man feareth falleth upon him. This was a let and hindrance to the *Jews* that they would not believe the words of God, neither have regard to the rich and large promises made unto them: so also do we, we regard not the mighty and comfortable promises which Christ hath made unto us, as where he saith, *Matth. 19. 29. He shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.* Leave thy wife and children, I will preserve them, I will restore them, so as thou goest to work boldly in my name; thinkest thou that I cannot build thee other houses? countest thou me so simple, who will give unto thee heaven? wilt thou not put thyself into danger for my sake? if thy goods be taken from thee, heaven and earth are mine, I will recompence thee

abundantly. These and such like sayings we pass over, yea and also contemn, having diligent consideration only what we have laid up in our chest, and that our purse may be full, neither do we see that even that which we have, God hath given unto us, and will as yet give us more, if we believe and trust in him, neither do we mark if that we lose God we shall lose the belly also.

Howbeit they that believe in God, do not avoid peril if it come for his sake, but commit all things to his divine power, that he may order them according to his will, and thus they think: 'The Lord hath given me both a house and the furniture thereof, wife, children, &c. I have not obtained them of myself, forasmuch then as they are God's, I will commit them unto him, he shall best preserve them; for even otherwise I must leave them, wherefore I will refuse to suffer no peril, and to leave whatsoever I have for his sake, if the case so require. If he will have me so to do, he can give me other things, for he hath promised that he will give sufficient to them that believe, both here and in the time to come. If he will not have me to live here, I owe death unto him, when he shall require me, I will be ready for his word's sake. He that shall not do thus, denieth God, and is notwithstanding compelled to lose both this frail life and eternal life. The stinking belly which we make our god, is the cause that we do not cleave to the word of God: for I will first be certain how I may feed myself, and where my goods be. The gospel saith, *Trust in God*, but I provide for my belly, and if I have one noble in gold, I think I have sufficient to sustain and nourish me for ten days, and trusting to that which I have laid up, I trust not in God, that as he hath hitherto fed me, so he will nourish me still. Is not this a detestable thing, that I trust to one piece of coin only, whereby I look to have my food and sustenance to-morrow? Fie, what a cursed thing is such care for the belly? Shall a vile piece of coin be more esteemed of me than God himself, in whose power are heaven and earth, who giveth unto us air and water, maketh grain to grow unto us, and sendeth all things necessary? It is more detestable than that it can be expressed by the

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voice of man, that God is not esteemed of us so much as a little money. Why dost thou not think, God who hath made me will nourish me, if he will have me live. If he will not, well, then shall I have no need. But saith the belly, I find no god in my chest. Thou foolish as, who can assure thee that thou shalt live till to-morrow? It is uncertain whether thou shalt keep thy belly till to-morrow, and desirest thou to know where food and sustenance is? If this did pierce our heart, we should see how devilish a thing incredulity is. Is it not a horrible thing that I do not make so great account of God, who feedeth so many mouths, as to trust in him, that he will nourish me, yea that I do make more account of one noble in gold than of God himself, who poureth forth his good things so abundantly? The world is full of the blessings and works of God, he is on every side with his good things, notwithstanding we do not yet commit ourselves to him, or receive his visitation. O cursed world, which cannot trust to God even one day, and yet trusteth to a piece of gold. Thus we see, as I think, of what sort the world is, how it despiseth God for the belly's sake, which notwithstanding it is compelled to lose. O how great contempters of salvation are we? We ought rather to detest the world, but we are deeply drowned in old *Adam*. The world is as it were a figure of hell, yea a very devilish kingdom, and an entrance to hell; wherefore Christ with weeping eyes exhorteth us to know our salvation, and to receive his visitation, lest that a plague and scourge follow, which undoubtedly shall come upon them, which thinking themselves in safety, do not believe and trust in God. God give us his grace, whereby we may know him. It followeth moreover in the text. *Ver. 45. And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought, saying unto them. It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.* This is the second part of this text, wherein is declared how the Lord going into the temple, beginneth to drive out the buyers and sellers therein. The former part was nothing else but an exhortation and inviting to faith, but here the Lord insinuateth what the

temple of God is, and bringeth a place out of the scripture hereunto appertaining, namely out of *Isaiab*, where he saith, chap. 55. 7. *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.* This is a strong saying, whereas the Prophet saith, *for all people* against the *Jeres*, who trusting unto that temple at *Jerusalem*, thought that this house made with hands, should continue for ever, supposing it to be impossible that God should either destroy this temple, or leave the city desolate, because the word of God cannot lie. Wherefore they stoned *Stephen*, for that he speak against that holy city, and affirmed that *Jesus* would destroy it, and change the ceremonies given by *Moses*; for they said, The prophets have greatly praised this house. and do you apostles preach that it shall be destroyed? Howbeit this saying is thus to be understood, that the city *Jerusalem*, the temple, and the people should continue until the time of Christ, whereunto all the prophets tend, which referred all things unto Christ, that as he should do, so it should be, and so it should continue. Wherefore the place of *Isaiab* extendeth no farther than to the coming of Christ, which all the prophets also witness, affirming that there should come a kingdom which should extend far and wide over the whole world, as it is in *Malachi* 1. 11. *From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.* Here the Prophet speaketh of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, who would build unto himself an house of prayer in the whole world. It is true that God himself did confirm and sanctify the temple at *Jerusalem*, not because it was furnished with precious stones and goodly buildings, or hallowed of the priests, which manner of trifles and dotages we use at this day, but because he had consecrated and hallowed it with his word, when he said, *This house is my house*; for his word was preached in it. Wheresoever the word of God is preached, there is his true house; where the word of God hath his course and proceeding, there undoubtedly

God dwelleth with his grace ; where his gospel is, there is the holy house of prayer, there prayers both may and ought to be made unto God. God also will hear us, as Christ saith, *John 16. 23. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name : ask, and ye shall receive.* On the contrary, where the word is not, there is Satan wholly. Now, whereas we imitating the *Jezes* have builded so many temples, it were tolerable if we had therefore so done that the word of God might be preached in them, for where God's word is preached, there is he present, and poureth forth his grace. Christ saith that the *Jezes* had made the temple at *Jerusalem* a den of thieves. They were resident in the temple which sold oxen and sheep, that they which came might buy to offer and worship God : Why therefore doth he call it a den of thieves ? Surely he giveth unto it a foul name, which came to pass upon this occasion ; for that it was not any more counted of them for the house of God, but for a house of merchandize, that is, the priests had no care how the word of God was preach'd there, and did negligently and carelessly sing, babble, and read *Moses* and the prophets. But God doth nothing esteem that mumbling of many words, which is only vain and childish. They behaved themselves like as our sacrificing priests and monks do, who of temples and monasteries making dens of thieves, preach poisonous doctrine, and therefore only they celebrate mass, that they may thereby get unto themselves money, and fill the belly, killing and destroying silly sheep with their traditions ; which is the den wherein souls are slain, which title is to be given to all temples wherein the word of God is not preached : for there they mock God, kill souls, expel the true word, and set up thievery. O how foully have we been deceived in this point ? But God at this day is highly to be praised, that his word reneweth and quickeneth us, driveth away thieves, and teacheth us to pray aright ; for a sincere christian must pray not in mouth only, but in heart also. Thus we have the second part of our text, how Christ casteth out the sellers, that is, them that served the belly, and maketh

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place for his word. It were very good if monasteries were scoured after this sort ; that either christian schools, or places wherein the word of God might be preached, might be made of them ; which if it come not to pass, they are, and do remain dens of thieves. If Christ calleth his house a den of thieves, how much more shall our temples, which God hath not consecrated, be proved to be dens of thieves ? I have oftentimes desired you, that ye would devoutly pray unto God that he turning away his indignation, would bridle the devil, who now rageth in the world ; for ye have heard of a great calamity, how many thousands have been slain, it is to be feared that they are all damned. God requireth obedience of us, and he hath pronounced the sentence, that he that taketh the sword, shall perish with the sword. They were besieged of Satan, who knoweth whether the same shall come unto us ? Let us pray God therefore that his kingdom may come unto us, that christians may be multiplied, and that he will send wise and meek preachers, whom the people may receive and obey. Let him that knoweth the gift of God, pray for others which have not yet heard the word of God ; for it is high time so to do.

SERMON XXVIII.

The Difference between the Law and the Gospel.

Luke 10. Verse 23. to the 37. And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, &c.

I Hope well that ye do now rightly understand this gospel, forasmuch as it is preached every year ; notwithstanding, because occasion is now again offered, we must again treat and preach of it. First the Evangelist saith, that Christ took his disciples aside, and said unto them secretly after this sort : *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see. For I tell you, that many pro-*

phets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. To see and hear is to be understood here simply of the outward seeing and hearing, to wit, that they saw Christ come in the flesh, heard his sermons, and were present at those miracles which he did among the *Jews*. The *Jews* saw the same according to the flesh, yea and felt them also; yet did they not truly acknowledge him for Christ, as the apostles did, and especially *Peter* in the name of all the rest did confess him, saying, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God*. We grant indeed, that there were some among the *Jews* which acknowledged him, as the apostles did, but the number of them was very small, wherefore he taketh his apostles here severally unto himself. Many prophets and kings have seen Christ, howbeit in the spirit, as the Lord himself saith to the *Jews* of *Abraham*, John 8. 56. *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad*. The *Jews* thought then that he had spoken of the bodily seeing, but he spake of the spiritual seeing, whereby all christian hearts did behold him before he was born; for if *Abraham* saw him, undoubtedly many other of the prophets, in whom the Holy Ghost was, saw him also. And although this seeing saved the holy fathers and prophets, yet did they always with most inward and hearty affection desire to see Christ in the flesh also, as is commonly shewed in the prophets. Wherefore the Lord saith here unto his disciples, which saw him both in the flesh and in the spirit, *Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see*. As if he said, Now is the acceptable year and time of grace. The matter which is now in hand is so weighty and precious, that the eyes are worthily said to be blessed, which see it; for now was the gospel preached openly and manifestly both by Christ himself, and also by his apostles, whereupon he here calleth them all blessed which see and hear such grace. Of which grace I have preached much and a long time to you, I would to God ye did keep that which I have spoken thereof, fresh in memory.

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When the Lord spake these things, a certain lawyer started up, shewing himself as though he had been something, who tempting the Lord saith, *Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?* This lawyer was endued with wisdom, and not unskilful in the scriptures, which even his answer doth declare, yet in this place he is proved a fool, yea he is brought unto shame and ignominy; for Christ taketh away all his glorying even in one word. He was of this mind, that he had observed the whole law, and that he was a certain chief one in respect of others, as undoubtedly he was, and thought himself sufficiently worthy by reason of his godliness and learning to be conversant with the Lord. But what doth the Lord in this case? The text following declareth, *Ver. 26. He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thy self. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.* Methinks that the Lord gave this good man a hard lesson; he dealeth very streightly with him, it may seem to some that he should have spared him a little, he putteth him to shame openly before all; he proveth that he had done nothing, who notwithstanding thought that he had done all things. He asked what he should do; but I think he had enough and overmuch to do, if he had been able to do more than he was. If I had time, many things might be spoken of the two commandments; for they are the chief and greatest commandments in *Moses*, on which the whole law and all the prophets do hang, as Christ himself saith in *Matthew*, chap. 22. 40. Notwithstanding we will treat somewhat of them. If we consider the commandments of *Moses*, they have respect altogether unto love; for this commandment, *Exod. 20. 3. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*, we can no otherwise declare or interpret than, *Thou shalt love God alone*; so *Moses* expoundeth it in *Deuteronomy*, where he saith thus, *Deut. 6. 4; 5. Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with*

with all thy might : From whence the lawyer took his answer. But the Jews understand this commandment so, that they think it to extend no farther than that they should not set up, nor worship idols. And if they can say and witness in mouth, that they have one God only, and do worship none but him, they think they have observed this commandment. After the same sort did this lawyer understand it, but that was an evil and a wrong understanding thereof. Howbeit we must otherwise consider and understand this precept, *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.* Thou, it saith, with all that thou art, but especially it requireth all thine heart, soul and strength. It speaketh not of the tongue, not of the hand, not of the knees, but of the whole man, whatsoever thou art, and hast. That no other God may be worshipped of me, it shall be necessary that I have the true and only God in my heart, that is, I must love him from mine heart, so that I do always depend on him, trust in him, repose my hope in him, have my pleasure, love and joy in him, and daily remember him; even as otherwise, if we take pleasure in any thing, we say, it doth me good inwardly at the heart. And if any speaketh or laugheth, and doth it not in good earnest, neither from his heart, we are wont to say, Thou laughest indeed, but it cometh not from thy heart. The love of the heart in the scriptures signifieth a vehement and special love, which we ought to bear toward God; they which serve God with mouth, hands, and knees only, are hypocrites, neither hath God any care of them; for God will not have part, but the whole. The Jews did outwardly abstain from idolatry, and served God alone in mouth, but their heart was far removed from him, being full of diffidence and unbelief. Outwardly they seemed to be very earnest in serving God, but within they were full of idolatry, whereupon the Lord said unto them, *Mat. 23. 27. Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.* These are those

those wicked ones, which glory of the outward thing, which go about to justify and make themselves good by their own works, after the manner of the lawyer. Consider how great the pride of this ass was, he cometh forth as though he could not be blamed, or rebuked of the Lord, he thought, yea it seemed unto him, that the Lord would here commend and praise his life before the people; he thought not to learn any thing of the Lord, but he sought only his own commendation, he would willingly have had Christ set forth his praise, toward whom the eyes of all were bent, and who was an admiration to all. So all hypocrites do, outwardly they pretend excellent, great and weighty works; they say that they have respect neither to glory nor praise, but within in their heart they are full of ambition, and wish that their holiness were known to the whole world, shewing a goodly sign of their religion, by the biting of their lip, if they hear any speak thereof. But our Saviour Christ sheweth here no kindness or gentleness to this lawyer, inasmuch as he putteth them to shame; that great holy man notwithstanding continueth still in the same mind, and supposeth that he shall receive great honour, and singular praise because of his precious life, thinking that he had fulfilled the commandment, whereupon also he looketh for a joyful answer, that the Lord should say, good master, your mastership hath done all things. But Christ answereth him, *Do this*, which indeed is as much to say as, thou art altogether a naughty fellow, thou hast never in all thy life fulfilled so much as one letter thereof, so shewing unto him how evil and naughty he was. Like unto this lawyer are all they which do most grievously offend against the first commandment, and think that God is to be loved, no more than the words sound for, and that thereby it is fulfilled; the commandment therefore remaineth in their mouth, and doth as it were float above the heart, and pierceth it not: but I must go much farther than so, I must love God so, that I can be content to forsake all creatures for his sake, and if it shall seem good unto him, my body and life, I must love him above all things; for he

is jealous, and cannot suffer that any thing be loved above him, but under him he permitteth us to love any thing. Even as the husband can suffer, that his wife love her maids, the house, household things, chattels and such like, howbeit he suffereth her not to love any with that love wherewith she is bound unto him, but himself, yea he will have her leave all such things for his sake. Again the wife requireth the same of her husband. After the same sort God can suffer that we love his creatures, yea therefore they are created and are good: The sun is a goodly creature, gold and silver, and whatsoever by nature is fair, procureth us to love it, which maketh it dear unto us, neither is God offended thereat. But that I should cleave unto the creature, and love it equally with him, that neither will he, neither can he suffer; yea he will have me both to deny and forsake all these things, when he requireth it of me, and will have me content, although I never see the sun, money, riches, &c. The love of creatures must be far inferior to the love which we must bear toward him. As he is the sovereign good, so will he also be chiefly loved before all other good things; if he will not suffer that I shall love any thing equally with him, much less will he suffer that I shall love any thing above him. Thou seest now I think, what it is to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all thy mind. To love God with all thy heart is, to love God above all creatures, that is, although creatures be very amiable and dear unto me, and that I take great delight in them, yet must I not love them, that I do contemn and forsake them, when my God and Lord requireth that of me. To love God with all the soul, is to bestow our whole life and body at his pleasure; if the love of creatures, or any temptation assail thee, or would overcome thee, thou mayest say, I will rather part from all these, than I will forsake my God, whether he cast me off, or kill me, or drown me, or whatsoever, through his permission, shall come unto me, I had rather leave all things than him, I will depend on my Lord, rather than upon all creatures, or upon any other thing whatsoever it be. Whatsoever I have and am, I will bestow, but him will

I not forsake, the soul in the scriptures signifieth the life of the body, and whatsoever is done by the five senses, as to eat, drink, sleep, wake, see, hear, smell, taste, and whatsoever the soul worketh by the body. To love God with all the strength, is for God's cause to renounce all the members and limbs of the body, so that one will peril whatsoever he is able in his flesh and body, before he will commit that which is against God. To love God with all the mind, is to enterprize nothing but that which may please God, whereby he understandeth the thought which is in man, that that also be referred to God, and all things that be acceptable unto him. Thou perceivest now what this commandment of God containeth in it. Thou shalt love God, thou, thou saith he, and that wholly, even every part of thee, not thy hands, not thy mouth, not thy knees alone. They which do these things, as it is said, do truly fulfil it: but no man liveth in the earth which doth so, yea we do all otherwise. Wherefore the law doth here make us all sinners, so that not so much as the least jot or point thereof is fulfilled of them that are most holy of all in the world. For no man doth so cleave with all his heart unto God, that he can leave all things for his sake. We alas are gone so far, that we cannot suffer so much as a little word, nay we will not forgoe the value of a half penny for God's cause. How can it be that we should love God, when his will is not settled in our mind? if I love God I cannot but love his will also. Now if God send sickness, poverty, shame and ignominy, it is his will, whereas what do we? we murmur, we grudge, our mind is carried hither and thither, we take most impatiently, and yet is this the least? what would we do, if we should leave our body and life for God and Christ his sake? then would we shew ourselves after another sort. But in the mean time we do like unto this Pharisee and lawyer, we lead an honest life outwardly, we worship God, we serve him, we fast, we pray and behave ourselves in outward appearance, justly and holily: But God doth not require that of us, but that we should bend ourselves to do his will with pleasure and love, cheerfully and lovingly. Whatsoever
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the Lord saith to the lawyer, he saith to us all, to wit, that we have yet done nothing, but that all things do yet remain to be done. All men therefore are guilty of death and subject to Satan. All men are lyars, vain, filthy, and whatsoever they pretend, it is nothing worth. We are wise in our own matters, that we may scrape together money and goods, and we can speak most sweetly and fairly before men, and cunningly propound or set forth our matter. What doth God care for these things? he requireth of us that we love him with our whole heart, which no man living is able to perform, whereupon of this place is inferred, that we are all sinners, but especially they, whose life hath a goodly outward shew only. This is the former part of this text, namely, the preaching of the law: now followeth the other part, which is the preaching of the gospel, which declareth how we may fulfil the law, and from whence that fulfilling is to be taken, which we shall learn of the *Samaritan*. What doth the lawyer after that the Lord had thus dealt with him? he, saith the evangelist, willing to justify himself, spake unto the Lord, and asked him as followeth, *Who is then my neighbour?* he asked not, who is my God? as if he said, I owe nothing unto God, neither do I want any thing before God, yea it seemeth unto me, that I do neither owe any thing to any man; nevertheless I would willingly know who is my neighbour. The Lord answering him, bringeth forth a most goodly similitude, whereby he declareth that we are all neighbours one to another, as well he that giveth a benefit, as he that receiveth and needeth one; although by the text it seemeth to appear, that he only is a neighbour, which bestoweth a benefit upon another. But the scripture maketh here no difference, sometime calling him our neighbour, which bestoweth a benefit, sometime him that receiveth a benefit. By this similitude the Lord inferreth in these words, *Go and do thou likewise*, so that the lawyer had offended not only against God, but also against man, and wanted not only love towards God, but also love towards his neighbour, unto whom he had not done that good which he ought. This wretched fellow is brought into such a case, that

he is found wholly evil, even from the head to the feet. How came it to pass that he being most skilful of the scripture could not beware of this? So fell it out: he led a pharisaical, hypocritical, and counterfeit life, which had not regard unto his neighbour; and to succour and help others, but sought thereby only glory and honour before men, and so looked by negligent and dissolute living to come to heaven. But ye have heard very often, that a christian life consisteth in this, that we deal with faith and the heart in things that pertain unto God, but use our life and works towards our neighbour; and that I must not look while my neighbour seeketh a benefit, and requireth something of me, but according to my duty must prevent his asking, and of mine own accord offer my liberality unto him. Now we will see what the parable containeth in it. The *Samaritan* in this place is, without all doubt, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath declared his love toward God and man: toward God, in that he descended from heaven, and was incarnate, and so fulfilled the will of his father. Toward men, for that by and by after baptism, he began to preach, to work miracles, to heal the sick, neither was there any work that he did, which did concern himself only, but all his works were directed to his neighbour, being made our minister, notwithstanding he is above all, and equal to God; but he did all these things, for that he knew that they did please God, and that it was the will of his father. When he had ascended to the height of the commandment, that he loved God with all his heart, he left and committed the life of his body, and whatsoever he had to the pleasure and will of his Father saying, Father, behold all things that I have, my life and soul are ready at thy will; I leave for thy sake the glory and honour which I have had among men, yea and all things how good soever they be, that the world may understand how greatly I love thee: my Father let for thy sake my wisdom be contemned, that the world may count me for the foolish-est of all; now make I myself most contemptible of all other, who was before praised of the whole world; now I am as a wicked thief, who before was liberal, profitable,

profitable, and beneficial to the whole world; my Father, I make no account of all these things, that I may be found obedient to thy will. This is that *Samaritan*, who being desired by no prayers, came and fulfilled the law with his whole heart, he alone hath fulfilled it, which praise none can take from him, he alone hath deserved it, to him only it appertaineth. But whereas he is touched with care of the wounded man, hath compassion on him, bindeth up his wounds, bringeth him with him into an inn, provideth for him, that pertaineth unto us. The man which lieth half dead, wounded, beaten and spoiled, is *Adam*, yea and all of us. The thieves which spoiled us, wounded us, and left us half dead, as yet a little panting, are the devils. The horse and his sifter do here fall down, we are not able to help ourselves, and if we should be left lying so, we should die through great anguish and distress, our wounds would become fettered, and our affliction miserable and exceeding great. This excellent parable is set before our eyes, lively painting forth unto us what we are, what is the strength of our reason and free will. If that wretched man had gone about to help himself, his case would have been made worse, he would have hurt himself, he would have opened his wounds with rubbing, and so would have fallen into greater calamity. Again if he had been left lying, it had been all one. So it cometh to pass when we are left to ourselves; our studies and endeavour surely are nothing, whomsoever we set upon the matter. Hitherto fundry ways and divers means have been invented, whereby we might come unto heaven, and amend our life, this man found out this, another that, whereupon have increased innumerable sorts of orders, letters of indulgences, pilgrimages to saints, which did always make the state of christianity worse. This is the world which is painted forth in this wounded man, he being wholly laden with sins, fainteth under so heavy a burthen, and is not able to help himself; but the *Samaritan* who hath fulfilled the law, and as perfectly sound and whole, cometh, and doth more, than either the priest or levite, he bindeth up his wounds, poureth in oyl and wine, setteth

him upon his own beast, bringeth him with him unto an inn, maketh provision for him, and when he should depart, diligently commendeth him to the host, and leaveth with him sufficient for expences, none of which either the priest or levite did. By the priest the holy fathers are signified, which flourished before *Moses*, the levite is a representation of the priesthood of the old testament. Now all these could do nothing by their works, but passed by like unto this priest and levite; wherefore though I had all the good works of *Noah*, *Abraham*, yea, and all the faithful fathers, they would profit me nothing; the priest and levite saw that miserable man lie wounded, but they could not help him any thing; they saw him lie half dead, but what was that to the purpose? They could not give him any remedy; the holy fathers saw men drowned and plunged in sins, even up to the ears, they also felt the sting and anguish of sin, but what could they do hereunto; they could make the case worse and not better; and those were the preachers of the law, which shew what the world is, namely, that it is full of sin, and lieth half dead, and cannot even any whit help it self with its strength, reason, and free will; But Christ is that true *Samaritan*, who is touched with as great care of that miserable man, as of himself; neither doth the *Samaritan* call him unto him, for he hath no merit, but enjoyeth the meer grace and mercy of Christ, who bindeth up his wounds, and having great care of him, poureth in oyl and wine, that is, the whole gospel; he poureth in oyl when grace is preached, when it is said, behold, O miserable man this is thy incredulity, this is thy condemnation, thus art thou wounded and sick; but stay, I will shew thee a remedy for all this; Behold joyn thy self unto this *Samaritan* Christ the Saviour, he will best help and succour thee, and beside him nothing. The nature of oil, as ye know, is to make soft and mollify, so the sweet and gentle preaching of the gospel maketh my heart soft and tender toward God and my neighbour, so that I dare bestow my body and life, for Christ and the gospel, if God and need so require; sharp wine signifieth the holy Cross of affliction, which forthwith followeth;

followeth ; neither is there any cause that a christian should look far about and seek the Cross, for it sooner hangeth over his head, than he is aware of, as *St. Paul* witnesseth, *2 Tim. 3. 12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.* This is the cognifance and badge of this King ; he that is ashamed of this cognifance, pertaineth not unto him, moreover, that *Samaritan* putteth this wounded man upon his own beast ; this is our Lord Jesus Christ, who beareth us, we lie upon his shoulders, upon his neck and body ; there is scarce a more amiable and comfortable history in the whole gospel, than where Christ compareth himself to a shepherd, which carrieth again the lost sheep upon his shoulders unto the flock ; the inn is the state of christi- anity in this world, wherein we must abide for a little time ; the host is the ministers and preachers of the word of God, and of the gospel, whose charge is to have care of us ; this therefore is the sum ; the king- dom of Christ is a kingdom of mercy and grace, where is nothing else but always to be borne and to bear ; Christ beareth our defects and infirmity, he taketh our sins upon himself, and beareth our fall willingly, we daily lie upon his neck, neither is he wearied with that bearing of us. It is the duty of the preachers of this kingdom, to comfort consciences, to handle them gently, to feed them with the gospel, to bear the weak, to heal the sick ; moreover they ought fitly to apply the word ac- cording to the need of every one ; this indeed is the duty of a true bishop and preacher, not to proceed by violence and injury, as it is the custom of our bishops at this day, which vex, torment, and cry out, go to, go to, he that will not willingly, shall be compelled to do it against his will ; we must in no wise do so ; but a bishop or preacher ought to behave himself as a healer of the sick, who dealeth very tenderly with them, ut- tereth very loving words unto them, talketh very gently with them, and bestoweth all his endeavours about them, the same must a bishop, or minister of any particular pa- rish do, and think no otherwise, but that his bishoprick or parish is as an hospital, wherein are such as are cum- bred with divers and sundry kinds of diseases. If Christ

be thus preached, then faith and love come together, which fulfil the commandment of love. Now as the knowledge of the law, and the gospel, and of the difference between them is very necessary, I will treat of them somewhat more at large.

Of the law and gospel. I have very often admonished your brotherly charity, that the whole scripture divideth it self into two parts; into the law, and the gospel. The law is that which teacheth what we must do, what the will of God requireth of us. The gospel teacheth where that is to be received, which the law commandeth. Even as if I seek to take phyfic, it is one art to tell what the disease is, and another to minister that which is good and wholsome to remedy it; so standeth the case here; the law revealeth the disease, the gospel ministereth the medicine; which is manifest even by the text whereof we have already treated; the lawyer cometh, and being very desirous of eternal life, asketh what he must do; the law declareth it unto him, saying, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thy self.* He that readeth these words after a bare and slender fort only, as this lawyer did, understandeth them not; we must pierce into the law, and every one behold his face and heart therein; God must be loved of me from the bottom of my heart: Again, I must love him with all my soul, that is, from the depth of my soul, so that I thoroughly feel in my self that I love him; for to love with the soul signifieth in the scripture such love as a young man beareth toward a maid, which he feeleth thoroughly in his mind; moreover, with all my strength, that is, with all my members, also with all my mind, that is, all my senses, cogitations, and thoughts must be directed unto God: Now I find in my self that I do none of these; for if I must love God with all my heart, soul, strength and mind, it is requisite, that mine eyes shew no angry twinckling or motion, that my tongue speak no angry word, that my feet, hands, ears, &c. shew no sign of wrath, that my whole body, even from the crown of the head, to the
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soles of the feet, and all things belonging thereunto, do walk in charity, be as it were ravished with love and pleasure toward God, and always serve and worship him; wherefore, who is he which by the pleasure and love of virtue is chaste and righteous? there cannot be one such found in the earth; for we always find ourselves readier to wrath, hatred, envy, worldly pleasures, &c. than to meekness and other virtues, I find in me not only a spark, but even a fiery furnace of wicked lust; for there is no love in my heart, no not in all my members; wherefore herein the law, as it were in a glass, I see whatsoever is in me, to be damnable and cursed; for not one jot of the law must perish but all must be fulfilled, as Christ saith: *For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled,* Matt. 5. 18. Now thou findest not this in thee, that thou doest with all thy soul and heart, with cheerfulness and pleasure, whatsoever the law exacteth and requireth of thee: hereupon thou art damned and under the dominion of Satan.

The law therefore serveth us thus far, to teach us, that we are condemned; for by it we find all wicked desires in us, and yet not so much as a spark of them ought to be in us. Howbeit, our school-men notwithstanding this, have taught, that if one do according to his ability, God doth give his grace unto him. They are blind guides; they grant themselves, that a man is carried with no pleasure or cheerfulness to that which is good, and yet do they also teach, if one worketh, although it be with grief, difficulty, and slothfulness, that it is well with him before God; but Christ hath taught otherwise in this place, that we should work that which is good with pleasure and love, readiness and facility; whom therefore shall we rather believe, Christ, or the school-men? But I leave that to your judgment. Of such corrupt and evil understanding of the law, monasteries afterwards came, whereby entred into this opinion, that it was thought to be sufficient to salvation to live in a monastery, and to follow the orders thereof, although that were done even with grief of mind; so they

they taught ; but Christ will have us to work with pleasure and cheerfulness, so that if any thing be done with burthen or grief of conscience, it is sin, remove thy self therefore quickly from such a work ; wherefore thus it might be said unto them ; behold, O man, thou miserable creature oughtest to be carried with a certain delight to the doing of the law of God, but thou comest with no pleasure or cheerfulness hereunto, now see that thou shew thy pleasure and love herein, otherwise thou shalt be the enemy of God, and the friend of satan ; thus men leaving their own rashness, might come to the knowledge of themselves, and might then say ; therefore, O God, am I condemned, and that not unjustly. Hereupon it followeth, that we are all under satan, as long as we feel in us this difficulty and hardness to do that which is good ; wherefore if I should speak the truth, I should say thus ; I find indeed, something that is good in the law of God, but it is my death, and if it could be, I would wish that it were not ; so are all men affected in their heart, as *St. Paul* plainly teacheth, *Romans 7*. If we should remain in such condemnation, we must needs perish for ever.

There is therefore another part, that is, the gospel, which sheweth comfort and salvation, declaring where that is to be had, whereby the law is fulfilled ; when therefore I know by the law, that I am a condemned man, then lie I half dead among thieves, satan hath spoiled my soul, and hath moreover in *Adam* taken away all faith, all righteousness, and hath left nothing but bodily life, which is also quickly extinguished. Then come levites and priests, which teach this and that, but can help nothing, and so pass by ; but when the *Samaritan* cometh, he helpeth, that is, when Christ cometh, he sheweth his mercy unto us, saying after this sort ; behold thou oughtest indeed to love God with all thine heart, but thou doest it not, now believe only in me, and thou shalt enjoy my obedience as thine own, this only helpeth me ; then he putteth me on his own beast, that is, on himself, and carrieth me into the inn, that is, into the church of the faithful, then he by and
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by poureth his grace into me, that is oil; that I may feel my self to be laid upon his shoulder, that at the last maketh me to be of good cheer, and quiet and well affected in conscience; afterward he poureth in wine also, which with its sharpness may abate and tame the force of old *Adam*; and yet am I not so wholly restored unto health, health is indeed poured in and begun, but not yet wholly finished; then Christ hath care of me, and by his grace poured into me, doth purify me, that from day to day I may become more chaste, meek, gentle, faithful, &c. until I wholly dye, for then I shall be altogether made perfect; so when we shall come to God the Father, and be asked of him, whether we believed in God, whether we love him, &c. the *Samaritan* Christ our Lord, who hath laid us on his own back, will come forth and say, Lo Father, although they have not wholly fulfilled thy law, yet have I fulfilled it, suffer thou that to turn to the profit of them that believe in me; so it is needful that all the saints altho' very holy, be layed upon the back of Christ. If so be that the holiest of all, as the priests and levites could not satisfy the law, how shall we go about with our feigned works, as with shaving, habit, &c. to fulfil the same? O wretched and miserable calamity. These things shall now suffice to have been spoken concerning this text; let us pray unto God, that he will give us his grace.

S E R M O N XXIX.

Concerning the exercise and encrease of Faith.

John 4. ver. 46. to 54. And there was a certain noble man whose son was sick at Capernaum, &c.

AN excellent example of faith is set forth in this text, of what sort it is, of what nature and quality,

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lity, namely, that it is not a resting or idle thing, but lively and void of idleness, which goeth not back, but proceedeth on, and still more and more increaseth, which if it be not done, it is no faith, but only a dead opinion of God in the heart; for a true and sincere faith, which the holy Ghost poureth into the heart, cannot be idle, which I say for this cause, that no man be therefore secure, altho' he hath obtained faith, neither that he stay there. It is nothing to begin unless we increase by continual going forward, and come to greater knowledge of God; for on the contrary side, it is the nature and quality of our adversary Satan, not to be idle, as St. Peter saith, Satan sleepeth not, but goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; if so be that the devil is neither idle, neither sleep cometh upon him, neither shall it be meet for a christian to be idle or put his hands in his bosom, forasmuch, as he hath the devil his enemy, who is stronger than himself; for he is called the prince of the world, *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darknesss of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,* Eph. 6. 12. This prince governeth the world, furiously and fiercely rage, and cannot suffer the prosperous success of a christian, neither is it for his profit to be suffered of him, for an entry being made hereby, his kingdom is burst in two, and his net torn in pieces, out of which as much as he is able, he suffereth no christian to escape, moreover when the fire of faith is kindled, and the flame fostered, and Satan trieth and marketh that, by and by he perceiveth deceit against it, for he knoweth how much hindrance his kingdom shall take thereby, wherefore he earnestly as he can, even with all his power, he defendeth his kingdom, and laboureth to keep all in obedience to him. Wherefore it is most certain, that when a christian hath begun to believe, by and by temptation and persecution will assail him; which if it come not to pass, it is a sign that his faith is not yet sound, and that he hath not as yet truly received the gospel; for wicked Satan hath a very sharp sight, he by and by spieth

spieth out where is a true christian, wherefore he applieth himself wholly unto this, that he may inforce him to fall, may besiege him, and assail him on every side: for he cannot suffer that any should revolt from his kingdom. It is perilous therefore for a man to believe, for the devil is ready that he may set upon him, and overthrow him, which sometimes chanceth even to very holy men, which understand the word of God well, when they stand upright, and think themselves safe, that privy wicked fiend cometh upon them by little and little, and wrestleth with them so long, till he overthrow them, and cast them to the earth; set before thine eyes *Moses* and *Aaron*, who were guides of the *Israelites*, they had an excellent faith, when they brought the people out of *Egypt*, and all the people in faith passed through the red sea, death, the wide wilderness, and many other marvellous things, whereby they shewed their faith, but at the last they fell grievously, they fear that they shall perish with hunger. Is it not a thing most miserable, that by so great signs they shew their faith, they go into death and through death, wrestle with it, and overcome it, and yet while they think themselves surest, they fall, and suffer themselves to be overcome of the belly, murmur against God, and are so grievously tempted, that they fall altogether; wherefore it is not certain and sure, if one begin to believe, and doth not always more and more increase in faith. Yea, that godly man *Moses*, who had so great and strong a faith, did fall also, when as he should bring water out of the rock with a staff, he doubted, and talked thus to the people; Come let us see whether we can bring water out of the rock. That good *Moses* which had shewed so many and so great signs, falleth into reason and carnal understanding, fearing lest the incredulity of the people would hinder so great a miracle and sign; but it had behoved him to cleave fast to the word of God, and to think it higher, greater, stronger, and mightier, than the unbelief of the people: that great man was tempted, he stumbled, and was overthrown. We have like examples in the new testament, *St. Peter* was hardy, and firm in faith, when he beheld Christ upon the water, he said

unto him with a strong faith, Lord suffer me to come unto thee, committing himself to the water even as to the ship, he thought assuredly, that the water would bear him; then was there an excellent faith in St. Peter, and great courage, which durst commit himself wholly unto death in the midst of the sea, reposing his hope freely and boldly in Christ; but when he thought himself most safe, a storm and tempest ariseth, he forgetting the word, suffereth his faith to fail, and he himself also falleth, suffering satan to pluck faith out of his heart; faith truly is a subtle and delicate thing, a small thing maketh to stumble and fall; satan is always watchful, and circumspect, and doth by and by obtain his purpose, if we do not diligently watch. How earnestly did the common people follow Christ? they thought that he was a prophet, and did so cleave unto him, and so defend him, that the princes of the people were made astonished, neither durst they so much as lay hand on him; but when they apprehend him, proceed against him, fasten him to the cross, the people all forsake him, and come no more to him; A prophet is present, and no man any more assisteth him, but they rather cry out against him, crucify him, crucify him; and that which is most detestible of all, his own disciples revolt from him; what is become now both of their faith and holiness? So is it at this day in our time; at the first when the gospel began to shine, the preaching thereof was acceptable and pleasant, then many seemed willing to embrace it, but when monks and sacrificing priests, nuns, &c. began to be spoken against, and the mass to be confuted, all (a marvellous thing to be spoken) fell away as leaves off trees. Again, when princes also were touched, the gospel suffered greater persecution, and did by little and little daily decrease. Moreover satan is not idle, whereupon he stirreth up heresies and schisms, for how many sects have we hitherto suffered? he sleepeth not, he will stir up greater mischiefs also, he never resteth, but looketh about, and trieth every way, that he may bring the matter to that pass, and prevail so far, that no sound doctrine may remain

main in the church, but that if all *Germany* be diligently viewed, a sermon may no where be found, wherein the word of God is truly preached, as it was before; he goeth about to extinguish and abolish all the doctrine of Christ now increasing, for he cannot bear it, it is not an easy thing to avoid so great an enemy, he lyeth in wait, and vieweth all places, and so diligently bestirreth himself that even the learned fall, and the elect stumble, as *Moses*, *St. Peter*, with the rest of the apostles. We think ourselves safe, and live securely, no man considereth, no man hath a care of the word, we should pray and beseech God, that he would vouchsafe to preserve the gospel, and make his holy name to be spread and published more abroad; but no man is touched with care hereof, no man prayeth that it may have good success; wherefore it is to be feared, that at the last it will come to pass, that God will suffer Satan and us to run together into one, then shall we be in a desperate case, for he will easily throw us to the ground, when we are come into so great misery by our own slothfulness and default; Satan moreover can so set forth the matter by seditious spirits, that men shall think it to be just; as the *Arians* were persuaded, that their opinion was found; but the christian humbleth himself, taketh nothing rashly upon himself, but with an humble heart saith thus unto God; most gracious God, altho' I know that the cause which I favour is just, yet without thy help I am not able to maintain it, thou therefore help me, otherwise I shall be cast and overthrown; he is indeed certain of his cause, even as *St. Peter* was on the water, who could not be surer, when the water did bear him; for he knew no let or hindrance, but when the wind was great, and the water troubled, he perceived what was wanting in him; which is thoroughly to be received into our mind, and considered of us; for altho' the certainty of our cause be confirmed, strengthened, and ratified with plain sentences of the scripture, yet is it by the might, council, and power of God, that we are defended, and Satan our chief adversary and enemy repressed; which is therefore done, that God may stir us up to watch, and keep us in awe,

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that we may always be watchful, and cry unto him; Lord help us, and increase our faith, for without thee we are able to do nothing. Our heart must be always so disposed, as though we began to day to believe, and always so affected, that we desire and labour to go more and more forward; for that is the nature, force, and quality of faith, that it always increaseth and waxeth stronger; Satan, as it is a little before mentioned, neither is idle nor resteth, if he be once overthrown, he riseth again, if he cannot enter in by the door, he endeavoureth to steal in on the backside, and if this be not permitted him, he breaketh in through the roof, or entreth in through a hollow place digged under the threshold, for he doth so earnestly follow his work, until he come in, he useth many deceits and practices, if he prevaileth not by one, he taketh in hand another, and doth that so long, until he hath obtained his purpose. Man is a weak and a miserable thing, as *St. Paul* saith, *2 Cor. 4. 7. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, &c.* I am more frail than a pot compared to the potter, and a pot is a very weak thing, inasmuch as it is easily broken, and whatsoever is in it, is spilt. Now Satan when he marketh how great a treasure faith is, kept in a frail pot (that I may so speak) he is in a great rage and fury, and saith thus unto us; I will touch thee, I will break thy pot, thou hast a great treasure, which I will spill; so God setteth the silly pot in the midst of enemies, which should utterly perish, even in a moment, if he did not defend it, for it may quickly be shaken and broken in pieces, yea if it be but bitten of a viper, it perisheth. And it is not hard for Satan even in one moment to waste and destroy a whole country. Wherefore that vexeth him, that God dealeth with him so simply, setting a silly pot against him, when he notwithstanding is so great a prince, and the most mighty ruler of this world. Now it would grieve me, if I being strong and valiant, any man should set upon me with a reed, surely I being moved with anger would break the reed in pieces; for I had rather that he would set upon me with a spear, sword, and armed on all parts.

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It grieved stout *Goliath*, that *David* durst come unto him unarmed only with a staff; so it grieveth the devil, that God will suppress him by flesh and blood; if some stout spirit should resist him, it would not grieve him so much, for that troubleth him above measure, that a silly worm, a frail pot should come to despise him, an earthen vessel against a most mighty prince, God hath laid up this treasure, saith *Paul*, in a miserable and weak vessel; for man is a weak creature, by and by moved to wrath, to covetousness, to pride, &c. so that Satan may easily shake and break the vessel; for if God would permit him, he would forthwith break it all to pieces. Now all this is done, saith *Paul*, that we may know that, not by our own power, but by the power of God we are preserved from all evils, and especially from the force and fury of Satan, who goeth about like a roaring lion, desiring to bruise and break the weak vessels and frail pots; and that we may hereby also be stirred up to be watchful, and to lift up our eyes toward heaven, and pray unto God that he will vouchsafe to increase and defend our faith, and preserve the vessel by this strength. Thus have we an entrance unto our text, it remaineth that we now consider the same in order. The Evangelist saith thus: *There was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.* It saileth out with many other men also, that they have their children sick; but that which he saith afterward is to be marked: *When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.* Here faith beginneth and trusteth in Christ. Now that he had faith the gospel declareth; for he heard of Christ how he healed the sick, thereupon his heart was set upon him, and he resorteth unto him, thinking thus; If he helpeth all men he will also help me, and will heal my son. He counteth Christ for such a man as is able to help men, and hopeth and promiseth to himself all goodness from him; and that indeed is a true christian heart, which cleaveth fast unto God. If that this ruler had stood in a place or way having two paths, doubting with himself, he had not gone unto Christ, but his heart would

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have been thus affected : He helpeth others indeed, but who can tell whether he will help me also ? Howbeit he doth not thus doubt of Christ, but riseth and maketh haste unto him. This is the beginning of faith ; now ye shall see how Christ meeteth him on the other side, and answereth otherwise than he thought for, that his faith might be tried, and thus he saith unto him : *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.* Christ said also to St. Peter, Mat. 14. 31. *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ?* Peter undoubtedly had faith, and did believe in Christ, whereupon he committed himself to the water, but when he saw the wind he was afraid, and began to be drowned ; so in this place, that good man heareth a good report of Christ, that he helpeth every man, which he believeth, and therefore resorteth unto him. But when he heareth that Christ denieth to come, he stumbleth, and his faith faileth, fearing that Christ would not come unto him. This is as it were an assault and fore blow, here his new begun faith beginneth to be tempted. It was a hard saying, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe* ; which saying doth so tempt him, and bring him into doubt, that he almost falleth. Satan standing at his back, saith unto him, *Get thee home and look to thy business, for he will not help thee ; notwithstanding the ruler did not by and by leave off, but prayed the Lord, Sir, come down ere my child die.* Here his faith began to be in danger and to fail, but God doth not forsake him, but lifteth him up again, and saith unto him, *Go thy way ; thy son liveth.* If the ruler had not had faith, he would not have requested Christ to come to his son ; What therefore doth he want ? Even this ; he believed if Christ came to his house, he could then help his son, if he did not come, he could not help him. Neither did his faith extend so far, as to believe that Christ even being absent could heal the sick ; but it behoveth that he should have a higher faith. Wherefore Christ lifteth him up, and setteth him in a higher state, and saith unto him, *Go thy way ; thy son liveth.* Here he first ascendeth from his former faith, whereby he believeth that Christ could heal being present, and cometh to a higher faith, so that

now he believeth the word ; for if he had not believed the word, he would not have left Christ, neither would have departed from him, until he had come with him to his house. But having laid hold on the word, he cleaveth unto it by faith, for his son is at home, and Christ is with his father ; wherefore the father receiveth this word in his heart, and thinketh with himself after this sort : My son is sick, but I shall find him whole ; which faith was contrary both to reason and experience. Reason would have thought thus : When I came from my son he was sick, as I did leave him, so shall I find him. But faith faith otherwise, it resteth only in the word, and trusteth wholly unto it, neither doubteth it that any thing will fall out otherwise than the word speaketh, *Go thy way ; thy son liveth.* This is a right and strong faith, when a man leaveth sense, wisdom, reason, and trusteth wholly to the word of God ; Christ faith, *Thy son liveth* ; and he faith with himself, without doubt it is true I shall so find it. So faith remaineth not idle, nor resteth, but increaseth and goeth forward. Thus Christ dealeth with us also, he suffereth us to be tempted, that we may increase in faith ; if in the end of our life when we must die, we shall have but a spark of such faith, we shall be in a good case, as Christ faith unto his disciples, *Mat. 17. 20. If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.* A grain of mustard-seed is but a small thing, but he that hath faith agreeable to the smallness of this grain, shall be saved. Neither must we so much consider this, that our faith is little, but we must look unto this, we must have regard unto this, that the grain of mustard-seed do remain, and be not eaten up of the birds ; that Satan pluck not faith out of our hearts. We must not look how little the faith is, but we must regard and take heed that faith be not taken away. *Peter* had faith upon the sea, and therefore was he carried by the water, that he should not be drowned ; if he had so persevered in faith, he might well have walked an hundred miles upon the sea, but when he failed in faith, he began to be drowned. So *Moses* had a strong faith, but

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he fell from it. It consisteth not in the strength or slenderness of faith, that we do stand, but in persevering and remaining faithful. It may be that he shall persevere in faith, which hath but a slender faith, and he that hath a strong faith shall fall and doubt. *Moses* and *Peter* had an excellent faith, so that *Moses* by faith did lead the people through the midst of the sea and death, and *Peter* without doubting went down out of the ship into the sea, but they fell from their faith, howbeit God raiseth them up quickly again. But the thief on the cross having once laid hold of faith, continued constant. Now God therefore suffereth it to be thus, that he may bring down rash arrogancy, that we do not gloriously extol ourselves, but always remain in fear and awe; for when temptation cometh upon us, we do forthwith fall into error, if God do not assist and strengthen us, of which thing we may see a very goodly similitude in a tree, which in the spring-time buddeth and openeth itself, so that it doth as it were become white by reason of the blossoms. A shower falling upon it, many of the blossoms are shaken off, and the frost also doth much more consume them; afterward when the fruit beginneth to spring forth, some great wind blowing, much of it being newly come forth, falleth down, and when it waxeth ripe, the caterpillar cometh, which with other worms gnaweth and spoileth it so much, that scarce the twentieth part, yea scarce the hundredth part many times remaineth. The same cometh to pass with the hearers of the gospel, in the beginning thereof every one coveteth to be a true christian, every one liketh of it very well, and the first fruits thereof are very pleasant; but when wind, a shower, or temptation cometh, all fall away from it by companies; afterwards sects and seditions arise, which like unto worms and cankers gnaw and infect the fruits of the gospel, and so many false opinions spring up, that very few do persevere in the true profession of the gospel; we have here, thanks be given to almighty God, the word of God plentifully taught, we are delivered out of deep and great darkness, but we forgetting the word are made weak, we live having no care of the word, for it is not savoury unto

unto us ; but when hereafter false prophets shall break in with their corrupt opinions, and Satan also shall violently assail us, finding us idle, and the house swept and garnished, he will bring with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and the end shall be worse than the beginning ; which things if they so fall out, let us not therefore be quite discouraged, but let us rather instruct one another, that we may learn to cleave unto God, and pray unto him, and say, merciful God, thou hast given unto me to become a christian, give unto me also that I may persevere, and become daily richer in faith. Altho' the whole world did resist, and every one conspired to destroy the gospel, yet will I be nothing moved. But by thy divine help will depend on the gospel ; but to return again to the ruler, ye have heard that his faith was very notable and excellent, he heareth the word, *Thy son liveth*, he believeth it, and goeth away giving honour to God, he receiveth the only word, he trusteth wholly unto it : hereupon, God dealeth so graciously with him, that he restoreth health unto his son, raiseth him up, and strengtheneth him in faith, neither suffereth him to flick in doubt or infirmity, but establisheth him, and maketh him strong, and causeth him to go forward and increase ; neither doth God delay until he cometh home, but declareth unto him, being yet in his journey, the health of his son, sending his servants to meet him, that they might bring him good news, and say, thy son liveth ; for God cannot defer or delay, where there is a sincere heart, which trusteth in him alone, all other things being left, looking only unto the word of God, there God cannot hide himself, but revealeth himself, and cometh unto such a heart, and make his abode there, as the Lord saith, *John 14*. Now what can be more joyful, than for a man to give credit to the word of God, and to be plucked from it by no affliction or temptation, but to shut his eyes against every assault of satan, to lay aside human sense, understanding, reason, and wisdom, and to say daily in his heart ; God hath spoken it, he cannot lie. I say nothing is more joyful than such a faith ; for whatsoever we ask of God with such a faith, we receive it more abundantly of him, than

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than ever we desired it, and God is sooner present with us, than we had thought; hereupon the evangelist useth so many words, even unprofitable, as it appeareth unto us, as these. *And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: and they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth;* All which tend unto this end, that we should know, that if we believe in the Lord he will give us abundantly, whatsoever we shall pray unto him for. The conclusion the evangelist maketh as followeth, *and himself believed, and his whole house.* He is increased in faith, that he did not only ascend from a low state to an higher, but he brought others also unto faith; he had surely an effectual faith, which did not rest idle and slothful in the heart, but did break forth, so that whosoever were in his house were brought unto faith; for this is plainly the nature of faith, this the quality of it, to draw others into it, and burst forth, and apply it self even unto the work of love, as *St. Paul* witnesseth, *Gala. 5.* That faith which worketh by love, is effectual, for it cannot keep silence or be idle, as *David* saith, *Psal. 116.* which place *St. Paul* applieth to the faithful, *2 Cor. 4. 13.* *I believed, and therefore have I spoken;* Faith can do no other, for it is enforced to speak, neither can it keep silence, inasmuch as he that is endued with it, endeavoureth to profit his neighbour; this ruler had faith for himself, but it doth not remain in him alone, but breaketh forth. For without all doubt he declared to his family, how he came unto Christ, and received comfort of him, which they also believed; so we also, when we believe, must open our mouth and confess the grace which God hath shewed unto us; which is the chief and most excellent work of faith, that one instruct another in the word; for *Paul* saith, *Rom. 10. 10.* *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* If we be ashamed of this word, it is a certain

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certain argument of a very light and uncertain faith. We see therefore that there is no difference with Christ between the strong and the weak in faith, for a little faith is faith also. He therefore came into the world that he might receive to himself, bear and sustain the weak. If he was so impatient as we are, he would by and by say unto us, get thee from me, I will none of thee, because thou believest not in me: but this is greatly to be commended, when one can handle the weak gently, and do not deal rigorously with them, and repel them by impatience; for although they be weak to day, the hour may come, when they shall receive the word more abundantly than we; thus we ought to instruct and teach one another, that we may depend on the word of God; for if we continue in sticking to the word, we shall be strong enough for the devil; for we glory of the word, altho' we are but weak. Unto Satan, who is able even in one hour to overthrow us all, all men should be even as a feather, which he would be able to remove away how and when he will, yea even with his breath, but if we believe, that feather is made more heavy unto him, than the hill *Olympus*; for a christian beareth Christ in himself, and Christ is heavier than heaven and earth. Thus much may suffice concerning this text.

S E R M O N XXX.

Of Mercy to some and Judgment to others.

Matth. 18. ver. 23 to the 35th. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, &c.

CHRIST brought forth this parable unto that answer which he had made to St. *Peter*, unto whom he had before committed the keys of binding and loosing; for when St. *Peter* asked him how oft he should forgive his brother his offence, whether it were enough to forgive him seven times, and he answered, not seven times, but seventy times seven, he then added this similitude, by which he inferreth, that his heavenly Father will do likewise unto us, if we do not forgive our neighbour, even as the king did here unto the servant, which would not forgive his fellow servant a small debt, when as his
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lord had forgiven him so much. We have oftentimes taught that the kingdom of God wherein he reigneth by the Gospel, is nothing else but such a state or government, wherein is meer forgiveness of sins, so that where such a government is not, wherein sin is pardoned, neither is there the gospel nor kingdom; wherefore those two kingdoms are to be separated, one, wherein sins are punished, and another wherein they are forgiven, or wherein the law is exacted, and wherein that which is due by the law, is remitted. In the kingdom of God, where he reigneth by the Gospel, there is no exacting of the law, neither any dealing by the law, but only remission and forgiveness, neither wrath or punishing, but brotherly service and well doing one to another; notwithstanding the civil law or magistrate is not taken away, for this parable speaketh not any thing of worldly government, but of the kingdom of God only: wherefore he that is yet governed only by the regimen of the world is yet far off from the kingdom of heaven, for worldly government pertaineth wholly to inferior things; As if a prince govern his people so, that he suffer injury to be done to none, punishing offenders he doth well, and is therefore commended; for in that government this sentence flourisheth: Pay that thou owest; which if thou do not, thou shalt be cast into prison; such government we must have, howbeit we come not to heaven by it, neither is the world therefore saved, but this government is therefore necessary, that the world do not become worse, for it is only a defence and fortification against wickedness, which if it were not, one would devour another, neither could any man keep in safety his own life, wife, goods, children, &c. That therefore all things should not fall, come to ruin and perish, God hath appointed the sword of the magistrate, whereby wickedness may be partly repressed, peace and quietness among men maintained, and one may not do another injury, wherefore this is in any wise to be kept; but as I said, it is not ordained for them that are in the kingdom of grace, but therefore only, that men be not more deeply plunged in wickedness, and become worse. Wherefore no man that is only under the regimen of the world, ought to glory that he doth therefore well before God, before whom

whom all is yet unrighteous ; for thou must come so far that thou do resign that which is just before the world, and yield of thine own right. This the gospel doth here require, which on either side setteth forth unto us only forgiveness. First the lord forgiveth the servant all the debt, then he requireth of him, that he forgive his fellow servant his, and remit his offence: these things God requireth, and so must his kingdom be ordered, that no man be so wicked, neither suffereth himself so to be moved, that he cannot forgive his neighbour. And as it is a little before this text taught of the Gospel, if he should provoke thee to anger even seventy times seven, that is as often as he can offend against thee, thou must yield of thine own right, and cheerfully forgive him all things : why so ? because Christ did the same ; for he set up and erected such a kingdom, as wherein is only grace, which must at no time cease, so that if thou repent all things will be wholly forgiven thee, as often as thou shalt offend, forasmuch as he hath ordained the gospel, that it might preach no punishment, but only grace and forgiveness of sins. This kingdom standing, thou mayest always rise again, how deeply soever thou fallest, and so often as thou fallest, so as thou repent ; for altho' thou fallest, yet this gospel and mercy seat always continueth. As soon therefore as thou hast risen again and returned, thou hast grace restored ; howbeit he requireth this of thee, that thou also forgive thy neighbour all things, which he hath committed against thee, otherwise thou shalt not be in this kingdom of grace, neither shalt become partaker of that which the gospel preacheth, that thy sins may be forgiven thee ; this briefly is the sum and meaning of this text.

Moreover we must not here omit to declare who they are that receive the gospel, and unto whom it is acceptable ; for surely that kingdom and government wherein God reigneth and ruleth by the gospel, is most excellent and gentle, forasmuch as in it meer forgiveness of sins is preached, howbeit it pierceth not into the heart of every one, neither is it considered or esteemed of all ; for thou mayest find many light and inconstant men who abuse the gospel and lead their life dissolutely and

loosly, doing what they list, who think that they should be rebuked of none, seeing that the gospel teacheth nothing but forgiveness of sins. The gospel is not preached to these who do so vilely esteem a precious treasure and deal lightly with it: wherefore neither do they pertain to this kingdom but to worldly government, that they may be stopped from doing whatsoever they like and list; to whom then is it preached? to them which thoroughly feel such misery, as this servant did here. Wherefore consider what happeneth unto him, the lord taketh pity of his misery and forgiveth him more than he durst desire; but before this is done, the text saith, the lord first took account of his servants, and when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents, and because he had nothing to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, his wife and children and all that he had, and the debt to be payed: which truly were no pleasant words, but even exceeding severity and terrible judgment; then is he brought into so great perplexity and distress, that he falleth down on the ground and asketh mercy, and promiseth more than he hath or is able to pay, saying, lord refrain thine anger toward me, and I will pay thee all.

Here is set forth unto us, who they are unto whom the gospel is acceptable; for so cometh it to pass between God and us: when God will take an account of us, he sendeth forth the preaching of his law, whereby we learn to know what we ought to do: as when God saith to the conscience, thou shalt worship no other God, but shalt acknowledge me alone for God, shalt love me with all thine heart, and repose thy trust in me only; this is the book of accounts wherein is written what we owe, which he taking into his hands, readeth before us, and saith, lo, this thou oughtest to have done, thou oughtest to fear, love and worship me alone, thou oughtest to trust in me alone, and from me to promise to thyself all good things: howbeit thou dost otherwise, thou art my adversary, thou believest not in me, but reposest thy trust in other things, and in fine thou seest here, that thou dost not observe so much as the
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least point of the law. When the conscience hath heard these things, and the law hath touched one well, he seeth then what he ought to do, and what he hath not done, and findeth that he hath not kept so much as a letter of the law and is compelled to confess, that he hath not performed that obedience and duty which God justly requireth of him; what doth the Lord now? when the conscience is thus touched, and feeleth itself condemned, and is distressed with exceeding great misery, he saith, sell him and whatsoever he hath, and let him pay the debt. This is the judgment which forthwith followeth, when the law hath revealed sin and said, This thou must do, that thou oughtest to have done, thou hast done nothing thereof; for to sin is required punishment, that man may be compelled to pay; for God hath not so made his law, that he doth not punish them that transgress it. It is not sweet and pleasant, but bringeth bitter and horrible pain with it, it delivereth us to Satan, it casteth us down to hell, and leaveth us rapped in temptation until we have payed the utmost farthing: this *St. Paul* hath notably well declared, *Rom. 4. 15. The law worketh wrath*: that is, when it revealeth unto us, that we have done unjustly, it setteth nothing before us but wrath and indignation; for when the conscience seeth that it hath committed evil, it feeleth that it hath deserved eternal death, after which followeth punishment, whereupon it is compelled to despair.

This is that that the lord commanded this servant together with all his substance to be sold, forasmuch as he is not able to pay; but what doth the servant say? the foolish fellow thinketh yet, that he shall pay the debt, he falleth down and prayeth that he will have patience with him. This is the wound and cross of all consciences, that when sin biteth them so, that they feel in how evil case they are before God, there is no rest in them, they but run hither and thither, seeking about, that they may be delivered from sins, and rashly take upon them as yet to do so great things, as wherewith they shall pay God, as we have hitherto been instructed, whereupon came so many pilgrimages, collegiate houses, monasteries, masses and other trifles; we pined ourselves with fasting, we scourged ourselves with whips, we were

made monks and nuns, for that we went about to lead such a life, and to do such and so many works, as whereunto God might have respect, and thereby be pacified, thinking so to appease and make quiet our consciences, so we committed the same things that this foolish fellow did. Such a heart as is touched with the law, and throughly feeleth its own misery and calamity is humbled truly and indeed, whereupon it falleth down before the Lord and craveth mercy, howbeit it is yet defiled with this vice, that it striveth to help itself, which thing cannot be taken away from nature, when as the conscience feeleth such misery, it dareth presume to promise more than all the angels in heaven are able to perform : then it is an easy matter to perswade it to apply itself to do whatsoever can be required of it ; for it findeth itself always in such a case, that it hopeth that it is able by works to satisfy for sins ; consider those things which have been hitherto of long time done in the world, then shalt thou find these things to be so : For thus was it preached, give somewhat to the building of a church, get thee to be admitted into an holy monastery, institute masses, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee. And when consciences were urged in confession, they would not stick to say, whatsoever was enjoined us, we have omitted nothing of it, yea, we have given more than we were commanded : miserable men rejoiced that by this means they might provide for themselves, and therefore they pined and afflicted themselves, that they might be unburthened of their sins, yet did it prevail them nothing ; for the conscience remained in a doubt as before, that it knew not how it stood before God : but if it were secure and quiet, it fell into that which is worse, to think that God hath respect unto works, neither can reason do any other but depend on works ; the Lord therefore is touched with affection and mercy toward that misery wherewith the servant so entangled and snared with sins, is holden, and taking pity upon him, doth forgive and dismiss him. Here is now set forth unto us, what is the special office and quality of the gospel, and how God dealeth with us ; when thou art so drowned in sins, and weariest thyself, that thou
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mayst deliver thyself from them, the gospel cometh to thee, and faith, do not so, dear brother, it prevaieth nothing, although thou afflict and torment thyself even till thou be mad, thy works do not profit, but the mercy of God shall deliver thee, who is touched with thy misery; for he seeth thee wrapped in calamity, wearying thyself, that thou mayest deliver thyself out of the mire, and yet art not able, he, I say, hath regard unto this, that thou art not able to pay, whereupon he forgiveth thee all, and that of his meer mercy; for he doth not forgive thee the debt, either for thy works or merits, but for that he taketh pity upon thy cry, complaint and mourning, and thy falling down before his knees, that is, God hath respect to an humbled heart, as the prophet saith, *Psalm. 51. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise.* Such a heart, he saith, as is broken and humbled, which is not able to help itself, but craveth the help of God, and rejoiceth in it, such a heart is an acceptable sacrifice to God, and he that hath it, is in the right way to heaven. Now God having shewed his mercy unto him, and taken pity on his misery, ceaseth to follow his right, and abrogate it, and saith no more, Sell whatsoever thou hast and pay the debt, although he might go forward and say, thou must pay for this, my law requireth, which I will not have abrogated for thy sake, yet will he not deal with him by the law, but changeth the law into grace and favour, taketh pity on him, and dismisseth him, with his wife, children and all his substance, and doth also forgive him the debt. This is that which God suffereth to be preached by the gospel, unto him that believeth, is remitted not only the fault, but also the punishment, and that of meer mercy, not for any works sake; for he that preacheth, that by works, the fault and the punishment may be put away, hath even then denied the gospel, forasmuch as these two cannot agree together, that God hath mercy on thee, and yet that thou dost merit something; for if it be grace, it is no merit, but if it be merit, then shall it not be grace, but debt; for if thou pay the debt, he sheweth thee no mercy, but if he sheweth thee mercy, thou dost not make payment; wherefore we must needs

acknowledge his mercy towards us, we must receive of him, and believe in him, which the gospel here requireth. After that this servant is thus humbled with the knowledge of his sin, the word is exceeding comfortable unto him, wherein the Lord pronounceth him free, and forgiveth him both the fault and the punishment; whereby is also declared, that it toucheth not sluggish hearts, that feel no sin, neither those that are carried with rashness, but only such afflicted consciences, as are pressed with the heavy burthen of their sins, which do greatly desire to be delivered from them, on them God hath mercy and forgiveth them all; wherefore it behoved this servant to receive the word, for unless he had received it, forgiveness had profited nothing, nay there had been no forgiveness at all. It is not therefore enough, that God suffereth remission of sins, and a golden year full of grace to be preached unto us, but it is necessary that we receive and believe it in heart; if thou believe thou art free from sins: this is the first part of a christian life, which both this place and divers others in the gospel do teach us, which consisteth properly in faith, which alone hath to do before God; whereby also is shewed that the gospel cannot be received but of a troubled and miserable conscience. Hereupon now may be inferred that they are plain delusions, whatsoever things are any otherwise taught concerning our works and free-will, to wit, that they put away sins, and obtain grace; for the divine majesty alone, beholding our misery, hath pity upon us; for the text sheweth manifestly, that God pardoneth and forgiveth them, that have nothing, and concludeth that we have nothing left, wherewith we may pay God; howsoever therefore thou hast free-will in temporal matters, yet thou hearest here that it is nothing before God; wherefore if thou desirest to be delivered from thy sins, thou must cease to trust in any of thy works, must plainly despair concerning them, fly unto Christ, pray unto God for grace, and finally, receive the gospel by faith. Now followeth the other part, wherein the fellow-servant also is dealt with: this servant now hath enough, he saveth his body, goods, wife, children, &c. and hath his lord favourable unto him, where-

wherefore he should surely be very foolish, if he should now depart, and do what he is able for the reconciliation of his Lord, for his Lord might worthily say that he is mocked of him. He hath need therefore of no work, but that he receive such grace and favour as is offered him, so may be of good cheer, giving thanks to his Lord, and dealing so with others as his Lord hath dealt with him. After the same sort it is with us, for when we believe, we have God favourable and merciful unto us, neither do we need any thing more, but now it were time that we should forthwith die; notwithstanding if we must as yet live still in the earth, our life ought to be ordered so, that we seek not to obtain the favour of God by works. For he that doth this, doth mock and dishonour God, as it hath been hitherto taught, that God is to be solicited by good works, prayers, fastings, and such like, until we obtain his grace and favour. We have obtained grace not by works, but by mercy, now if thou must live, thou must have what to do, and wherewith to occupy thy self, and it is meet that all this be referred to thy neighbour. The servant went out, as Christ saith, and found his fellow servant, whom he taketh by the throat and dealeth rigorously with him, and will be wholly paid of him, shewing him no mercy or favour at all: I have said elsewhere, that Christians must burst forth by works, and by their deeds before men witness that they have a sincere faith. God needeth no works, but faith sufficeth him, howbeit he therefore requireth them to be done of thee, that by them thou mayest shew thy faith, both before thy self and also before the whole world, for he knoweth thy faith very well, but thou thy self and men do not yet thoroughly see it. Thou therefore must direct such works so, that they may profit thy neighbour. Now whereas this servant should thus have done, what doth he? even the same that we do, who seem unto ourselves to believe, and partly have faith, and are glad that we have heard the gospel, whereof we can dispute and talk many things, but no man goeth about to express it in his life. We have brought the matter so far, that the doctrine and trifles
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of Satan are somewhat abated and laid aside, that we do now see and know, what is just and what unjust: that we must have to do with God only by faith, and by works with our neighbour. But we cannot bring it to this pass, that love may begin, and do that to another which God hath done unto us, as we ourselves complain, that many of us are become worse than they were before. As therefore this servant refused to remit his neighbour the debt, and dealt extremely with him; so also we, saying, it is not meet that I should give that that is mine to another, neglecting mine own right. If this man hath provoked me to anger, it is his duty to pacify me, and to labour by intreaty to put away mine anger. Truly thus the world teacheth and doth, for it affirmeth it to be just and right. Neither will any Prince or magistrate enforce thee to give that which is thine unto another, but will suffer thee to do what pleaseth thee with thine own goods. The magistrate indeed restraineth thee from doing what thou list with the good of another, but he constraineth thee not to give thine own substance to another, for that is against the law of nations, which even reason pronouncing it, giveth to every one that which is his own; wherefore he doth not unequally or unjustly which useth his own things at his will, and taketh not away wrongfully the goods of another. But what doth the gospel say? if God also had held his own right and said, I do well in that I punish offenders, and take that which is mine own, who shall let me? What I pray you should become of us all? We should be thrust down to Satan. Wherefore he hath left his right toward thee, he will have thee do the same toward other, and therefore thou abrogating thine own right, think thus with thy self: If God hath forgiven me ten thousand talents, why should not I forgive my neighbour an hundred pence? God might have exacted his own right, nevertheless he doth not so, but becometh a favourable Lord unto thee, taketh pity upon thee, and forgiveth thee: why therefore shouldst not thou do likewise to thy neighbour? Wherefore if thou wilt have to do in his kingdom, thou must do as he doth; but if thou hadst rather remain in the king-
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dom of the world, thou shalt never enter into his kingdom. Hereunto pertaineth that sentence, which Christ in the last day shall pronounce upon the unbelievers: *I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink,* Mat. 25. 42. But if thou contend here, and say, that God will not have respect unto works, neither will save any because of them, I say he will have them done frankly and freely, not that we may merit any thing thereby, but that we may do them to the profit of our neighbours, and witness our sincere faith by them: for what hast thou that thou mayest give him, and where-by thou mayest deserve that he should pardon whatsoever thou hast committed against him? or what doth he get thereby? nothing truly, but that thou givest unto him praise and thanks. And this is the other part of a Christian life, the name whereof is Love. They therefore that shew not their faith by the works of love are such servants, as will have themselves forgiven, when as they notwithstanding do not forgive their neighbour, neither yield of their own right, with whom it shall likewise fall out as it did with this servant. For when the other servants (that is, the ministers and preachers of the gospel) shall see it, that God hath forgiven them all, and yet they will not forgive any, they are troubled, that they are compelled to see such things, and it grieveth them very sore, that men do so indiscreetly apply themselves to the gospel, and not rightly receive it. What do they then? they can do no other, but come to their Lord, and complain unto him of such things, and say, Lord, thus it is: thou forgavest them both the fault and the punishment, yea pardonest them all things, and yet we cannot bring them so far, as to deal so with others as thou hast dealt with them. This is the complaint: the Lord therefore will cause them to come before him in the last judgment, and will lay those things against them saying, when thou wast afflicted with hunger, thirst, misery, &c. I did help thee; when thou didst lie drowned in sins, I having mercy upon thee, did forgive thee. Hast thou done the same to thy neighbour? then he shall pronounce this sentence

sentence on him : thou wicked one, I was touched with mercy toward thee, yea I yielded of mine own right, but thou wouldest not take pity on others, nor forgive them their offence, wherefore thou shalt now pay the debt. Here is no grace and mercy, but most grievous wrath and eternal condemnation, then no prayers help, wherefore he is compelled to hold his peace, and is thrown headlong into pain, until he pay the uttermost farthing. This is that which *St. Peter* hath spoken of them, *2 Pet. 2. 21.* which after they have heard the gospel, notwithstanding go back, it had been better for them, if they had never acknowledged the way of righteousness, than after they have acknowledged it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them. Why had it been better? because while they go back, it becometh worse with them than it was before they heard the gospel, as *Christ* saith of the unclean spirit, *Mat. 12.* which taketh unto himself seven other spirits worse than himself, with which he cometh, and dwelleth in that man, out of whom he before had gone, and so the end of that man is worse than the beginning. After the same manner cometh it to pass with us, and shall hereafter also be usual : so also hath it fallen out with *Rome*. In the time of the martyrs she was in her best flower, but afterward she fell, and abomination was there erected, that *Antichrist* might reign there, yea she became such a one, that worse she cannot be. The grace of God, which is revealed and preached by the gospel was hidden, that men might not attain unto it : wherefore it could not be but a great and grievous scourge and plague should follow. So we shall also have that great vengeance to come upon us, for that we do not believe nor obey the gospel, which we have and know. For as often as God would send an horrible scourge and plague, he hath first set up a great light ; as when he would send the *Jews* out of their own country into captivity in *Babylon*, he first raised up the godly King *Josiah*, who should again restore the law, that the people might amend their life, but when they did again revolt, God punished them according

according to their desert. So when he minded to destroy the Egyptians, he made a light to be set up, and preached unto them by *Moses* and *Aaron*. Moreover when he would drown all the world by the flood, he sent the Patriarch *Noah*; but when men did not mend, but became worse and worse, such a sore and grievous plague did follow. Likewise the five cities *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, together with the rest were destroyed, for that they would not hear *Lot*, who feared God; wherefore as sharp vengeance shall light upon them also, which hear the gospel, but do not receive it; even as the servant here in the gospel, is delivered to the tormentors till he should pay all the debt; which is as much in effect as that he is compelled to suffer punishment for his fault, and is never saved; for unto sin is required death, and when he dieth, he dieth always, neither is there any help or deliverance remaining; wherefore let us receive these things for our own admonition: as for them that will not hear, being hardened and indurate, let them beware of the evil that hangeth over them. This is a very comfortable text, and sweet to troubled consciences, inasmuch, as it containeth in it meer forgiveness of sins. Again, it setteth forth terrible judgment to the unmerciful and hard hearted, especially seeing that this servant is not an heathen, but had heard the gospel, in that he had faith; inasmuch as the Lord took pity on him, and forgave him his offences, without doubt, he was a christian; wherefore this is not the punishment of Gentiles, nor of the common sort that hear not the gospel, but of them that with their ears hear the gospel, and with their tongue talk of it, but will not express it in their life: we have here the sum of this text. Whereas the schoolmen dispute here, whether sin cometh again, which was before remitted, I let it pass, for they are ignorant what remission of sins is; they think it is a thing that cleaveth to the heart, and lieth quietly, when as notwithstanding it is plainly the kingdom of Christ, which endureth for ever without ceasing; for as the sun nevertheless shineth, although I shut mine eyes; so this mercy-seat or forgiveness of sin standeth always, altho' I fall.

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And as I again behold the sun when I open mine eyes, so I again have forgiveness of sins, if I rise again, and return unto Christ; wherefore, let no man bring forgiveness into such a strait, as these mad men dream of.

S E R M O N XXXI.

Teaching, that we must cleave wholly to Christ, and look to obtain all good Things from him.

Matth. 9. ver. 18. to 26. While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, &c.

Dearly beloved, ye know that the gospel is nothing else, but a treatise of the only person, whose name is Christ. And altho' there be extant many books and sundry treatises concerning divers men, as well of the gentiles as christians, yea, and of the mother of God, St. Peter, the angels, and of many other saints beside, yet be they not gospels, but that only is the sincere gospel, which setteth forth Christ unto us, and what good we must hope for from him; sometime in the gospel there is mention made of St. John the Baptist, Mary, and the apostles, howbeit, this is not properly the gospel, but therefore it is written of them, that it might be more perfectly declared, from whence Christ should come, and what is his office; so Luke describeth the history of John the Baptist, even from the beginning, what was done both in his conception and in his nativity, he writeth also of the virgin Mary; all which things were committed to writing, not because of their persons, but because of Christ's person only; in the epistle of St. Paul, there is nothing committed to memory of the saints, but all things found plainly of Christ; for God hath so ordained, that all must depend on that one man Christ, must hope in him, must repose their trust in him, if they desire to be saved, for he alone is set forth of God

to be a reconciliation for us, as *Paul* saith, *Rom. 3*. Hitherto one hath cleaved to this saint, another to that, one chose to himself *St. Mary*, another *St. Barbary*, and divers sects and sorts of religion did flourish ; but *Christ* was in no price, for his name only remained : we had many intercessors, all which being neglected, we ought to have cleaved only to *Christ*. Hereupon *S. Paul* saith, that the gospel was promised of *God* by the prophets concerning his son ; he reduceth and bringeth it into such a streight, that in the gospel nothing is of any importance which concerneth not *Jesus Christ* ; he that knoweth this, let him give thanks to *God*, that he knoweth where he may seek for consolation and help, and in whom he may repose his trust ; *Christ* in this day's gospel is set forth unto us, that he is conversant in the midst of the people, and draweth all the world unto himself with his gentleness and sweet doctrine, that they may cleave unto him in their heart, that they may commit themselves to his goodness, and hope that they shall obtain of him both spiritual and temporal good things. Neither doth he receive any thing of them, upon whom he bestoweth benefits, nay, he obtaineth nothing of them but ignominy and scorning, as is declared in this text. A benefit proceedeth from him, for which he receiveth a mock and reproach ; now the gospel is preached and offered to the whole world, that we may learn to know this man well, and how we must be made christians, and not how we must be made good ; other treatises beside the gospel teach those things, whereby men may be made good, as the writings of the philosophers and the rulers of the civil law ; the lives also of the saints have especial respect unto this, that men may imitate them ; it belongeth not to the gospel to make good men, but to make christian men ; for it is far more excellent to be a christian, than an honest and good man. A christian can say nothing of his own goodness or righteousness, for he findeth in himself nothing either good or righteous, but he must fly to the righteousness which is in another, and which cometh unto him from another. Hereupon *Christ* is set forth unto us as a continual fountain, which always overfloweth with meer goodness and

grace, for which he receiveth nothing of us, but that the godly do acknowledge so great goodness and grace, do give him thanks for the same, do praise and love him; others in the mean time mocking him, such reward he receiveth of them: wherefore one is not therefore called a christian, for that he worketh much, for there is another thing, which is cause thereof, namely, that he receiveth and draweth from Christ; if one receiveth nothing from Christ, he is no more a christian, so that the name of a christian cometh only by receiving, and not by giving or doing; if thou think that because of thy works and deeds thou art a christian, thou hast even then lost the name of Christ. Good works indeed are to be done, counsel thereunto is to be given and received, but no man is therefore called a christian, neither is any therefore a christian; wherefore if any will more inwardly weigh this name, in this respect only a christian is to be acknowledged, inasmuch as he receiveth of Christ alone, even as one is called white of the whiteness that is in him, black of the blackness, great of his stature; so a christian is called of Christ, whom he hath in himself, and of whom he receiveth that which is good. Now if one be named a christian of Christ, he taketh not that name of his own works, whereupon it plainly also followeth, that no man is made a christian by works; which if it be true, as it is true and certain, it shall follow that orders and sects do nothing pertain to the name of Christ, neither do make a christian; wherefore they which preach or teach in the church, and ordain precepts, works, and decrees, are deceivers, who altho' they pretend a christian name, yet profit they nothing, for under the colour of that name they endeavour to burthen and oppress us with commandments and works; of works, giving thy self to fasting and prayers, thou mayst be called abstemious and temperate, but by no means a christian; for although thou didst lay all thy works together, yea, and joinedst the works of all others to thine, yet neither so hast thou Christ, neither art thou therefore called a christian; Christ is a more excellent thing, than either the law or mans tradition; he is the son of God, who is ready to give only, not to receive; when I am

such a one that I do receive of him, I have him also, whom if I have, I am by good right called a christian; moreover, the gospel preacheth Christ also to be the greatest and most highly exalted person in the world, not that he doth terrify men, but that he poureth forth all earthly and heavenly good things, so that all men must trust in him, must have their hope reposed in him, and always receive only of him; if any sin terrify me in my conscience, and the preachers of the law endeavour to help me with their works, they shall prevail nothing with me; for then Christ alone can help and none beside him, yea, others make the case worse, whether it be *St. Peter* or *Paul*, or the blessed virgin *Mary* her self the mother of God; for Christ only performeth all things, who in his word declareth, that if I believe, my sin is forgiven me freely, without either work or merit, by pure grace through faith in Christ: which word when I shall receive, I receive also comfort, that my sins are forgiven me as well before God as before men, and I therefore give thanks to God through Christ, which giveth the holy Ghost and his grace unto me, that sin may not hurt me, neither here, nor in the last judgment; if I fear death, and would not die willingly, in this Christ I shall find comfort and remedy, that I shall not greatly fear death; if because of the wrath of God I am afraid, he is my mediator; and to be brief, he that hath not this Christ, the wrath of God always remaineth over him, and in that state he standeth; wherefore, he that desireth to have a glad conscience, which is not afraid of sin, death, hell, and the wrath of God, must take heed, that he repose his trust in this mediator Christ; for he is a fountain abounding with grace, which giveth both temporal and eternal life; endeavour thou to think and feel him even in thy heart to be such a one, then shalt thou obtain all things, for he aboundeth and overfloweth, neither can he but give, flow, and abound, if that thou canst believe; then also shalt thou be a right christian, howbeit by receiving only of Christ, and not by giving; it is a very rich and precious word, which *St. Paul* praiseth so greatly, neither can he ever praise it sufficiently, whereby God so gently offereth

his son, that he may pour forth his grace upon all, which do not refuse to receive it. Hereupon it moreover followeth; if so be that a christian doth good works, whereby he sheweth love to his neighbour, he is not therefore made a christian or righteous, but he must needs be a christian and righteous before; he doth good works indeed, but they do not make him a christian; the tree bringeth forth and giveth fruit, and not the fruit the tree; so none is made a christian by works, but by Christ. Hereof now ye may understand, what kind of people christians are, namely, that they are a company which cleave unto Christ, and are of one spirit and gift with him. Hereupon, it is that all christians are alike, neither hath one more of Christ than another; *St. Peter* is not better than the thief on the cross; *Mary* the mother of God doth not excel *Mary Magdalene* the sinful woman; there is indeed a difference in outward things and doings, so the work of the holy virgin *Mary* was greater, than the work of *Mary Magdalene*; *St. Peter* had a greater work than the thief, if thou consider the works, but we are not therefore christians; the holy virgin *Mary* is not a christian, because of her great work, for that she did bear Christ, so unspeakable a treasure in her womb, as Christ himself said to the woman, which cried unto him from among the people, *Luke 11. 27. Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.* In which place thou seest, that he preferreth the faithful even above his mother; for christians do therefore bear their name, because they believe in Christ; a virgin and a mother are two notable names, howbeit they are nothing, being compared to the true name of the faithful; wherefore we are all alike in Christ through faith, altho' *St. Peter* have a stronger faith than I, yet mine is as well faith in Christ as his; for the same Christ is offered of God the Father unto all companies and people, whom he that hath obtained, hath him whole, whether he be strong or weak. The woman mentioned in our text, which was troubled

troubled so many years with her disease, doth receive and apprehend Christ as well as the virgin *Mary* his mother; wherefore there is one christian spirit, one excelleth with another in the nobleness of birth, *St. Peter* is enforced to call me his brother, and I again dare be bold to call him my brother, Yea Christ himself is touched with care of us, and counteth us for his brethren, as he said after his resurrection to *Mary Magdalene*, *John 20. 17. I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* And *St. Paul* calleth Christ the first born among many brethren; whereof also he writeth excellently in the first epistle to the *Corinthians*, 8. 9. where treating of false brethren, he speaketh thus, *But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idols temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldned to eat those things which are offered to idols: And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.* Here thou seest, if a christian be offended, or evil be done unto him, the same is done unto Christ. This therefore is the sum of the whole gospel, that we may learn so to know Christ, that the name only do not remain, but that we may know that all that we have, we have it from him; if we be christians, we have all things; then God is our father, and we are Lords of all, both heavenly and earthly things, which is gotten of us by no work, be it never so great. Thou seest now how far they are from the name of Christ, which are under the kingdom of the pope. They that will preach the gospel must preach nothing else, beside the only person, which is Christ, not *Mary*; so far must they be from preaching the Pope, or any work although precious, they must preach and offer Christ only unto us, and none beside him; when now he is preached unto thee as a judge (as he shall come in the last day) and how that good works are to be done of thee, for which thou mayest be rewarded of him, and thou shalt so

receive it, surely without all doubt he shall be unto thee a judge and not a favour. And if he be set forth unto thee as he was wont to be painted, that his mother sheweth him her paps, that is, properly to preach Satan and not Christ, who giveth only, and receiveth not. This is certain, when thou shalt have received of him, then good works do flow forth of their own accord, being not compelled, as is set forth in this day's gospel; wherein moreover is declared that Christ preached the gospel to the people; now it is not a common work to preach. For it is a great benefit unto us that he is become our master and instructor, that he teacheth us by what means we may come to the knowledge of him, this is a part of his great goodness and grace; for as long as he was here in the earth, he ceased not to teach, that we might altogether receive him for the Messias and Saviour; and by his works also did help and relieve every one, when the case so required. Thou findest no man in the gospel to whom help was denied, or which at any time asked any thing of the Lord, which was not given him; for how many soever went unto him that were blind, deaf, lame, sick of the palsy, had the dropsy, he received all, and helped them all, according to their desire, and healed them of all kinds of diseases, as *Luke* saith, chap. 6. 19. *And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.* So doth he also to this woman. The woman heareth him preaching, and perceiveth him to be a bountiful and gracious man, which sheweth himself gentle to the whole world, whereupon she hath an affection both to love him, and to cleave unto him; for she maketh account, forasmuch as he putteth away none from him, that he would not deny her his goodness, wherefore leaving all the apostles, she casteth both her heart and confidence upon Christ alone, and thinketh thus with herself; If I may touch but the hem of his garment, I shall be whole. She thought no other in her heart, but certainly he will help me, if so be that I shall touch his garment with mine hand, yet hath she not so good a courage, that she dare come before his face, she judged herself more unworthy than that she might either

talk with him, or look upon him, for she knew that she had deserved nothing, and that she had bestowed no good thing upon the Lord; hereupon it is that she so behaveth herself, she cometh behind his back, she falleth down at his feet, and toucheth only the hem of his garment. In fine, here is nothing but meer bashfulness and want of merit; here is no preparation, here is no work, and yet the miserable woman promiseth herself much goodness from the Lord, namely, that he would heal her. She had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve whole years, what could she merit thereby? how could she therefore be worthy of any thing? Nevertheless being unworthy, and having merited nothing, she notwithstanding looketh for help of Christ, feeling herself to have great need thereof. And this is a true preparation, both to the grace and goodness of Christ, when I feel myself to stand in need thereof, and then doth it very well fall out, when these two come together, the rich and the poor, Christ and the sinner. But it is no small matter for men to be perswaded, that they are poor, and stand in need of grace; for that cometh to pass very hardly, Satan also doth not suffer it, but always draweth men back to works, that they may not come so far as to think that they have need either of the grace or mercy of Christ. The text affirmeth that the woman was diseased with an issue of blood twelve whole years, and had spent all her substance upon physicians, and that the more medicines she took, the worse always she was. *Luke* and *Mark* do not a little amplify it, whereby they both signify that the more works are preached, so much the worse it is with us, and that there cometh nothing unto us thereby, but a continual multiplying of our evil. Our conscience cannot be quieted with works, for altho' some sin be driven out of the conscience, forthwith there is another, yea the remedy and work oftentimes do make sin in us, where there is no sin, until such time as we come to Christ, even as it was with this woman, which had been sick so long, neither had she ever been helped, if she had not come to Christ, of whom she obtaineth health without any works, giving him nothing, but receiveth only of him, and suffereth

suffereth to be given unto her. Now here is also declared, how the word of God is daily to be handled, and without ceasing to be urged, for there are as yet always found such men as have very troubled and afflicted consciences ; for this woman is a type and figure of all men, which are diseased with an issue, that is, which feel their sin, the issue whereof doth always run, neither can it be stayed, for flesh and blood doth no otherwise, it is carried away with its own lust and desire. Now if that feeling of sin be great, those wretches come forth and endeavour to help themselves, then one taketh this work in hand, and another that, and yet prevail they nothing ; from hence so many orders, so many monasteries have sprung, hereupon so many and so great works have been invented, that they are almost without number. What was the cause of all these ? Surely even the sinful conscience ; for we have thought to save our souls by these, and to be delivered wholly from all sins. But Christ was not there present, for we would give and not receive. Wherefore our case became always worse, as it fell out also with this woman, who had tried the help of all physicians, and could not find whereby she might be helped ; so we also believed all physicians, for whatsoever every one brought, that we by and by received. And was it any marvel ? for we desired to be healed and to have a glad conscience. The physicians are the preachers of the law : Now if any desired to be delivered from sins, what did they unto him ? They gave him, whereby he became only weaker and feebler, which surely we have seen and felt to our great evil, namely, how they would have men to be justified by works, and by them to be delivered from sins. But it profiteth nothing, for we were always made more weak against sin and death, so that there is never found in the earth a more desperate sort of people, than sacrificing priests, monks and vestal virgins, and they whatsoever they be that trust in works ; if there did but a little bile rise upon them, by and by they must run to the apothecary, then is such trying of medicines, such running and halte, as though they had now breathed
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their last. Neither is any so afraid of the last judgment as this people, which then they very well shew, when they deal so with works, that they rest only upon them, neither do persevere constant in any work, and the more works they do, so much worse is their case, so much more are they cast down in mind, and become more desperate, so that it falleth out with them, as with this woman. It is a very goodly similitude, which may most fitly be applied to us; for we do not only bestow temporal good things, but our body also by fasting, chastising, and bearing other hard and intolerable burdens, so that some have thereby become mad, and destitute of all strength, yea and at the last lost their life. And I myself have been such a one, and have, without doubt, more resorted to medicines than many others, I could not attain so far as to leave the Pope's law. It seemed a hard and sore matter to me to eat flesh on *Friday*. O good God, how hard a thing was it to me, before I durst attempt to do that? Wherefore if any will be delivered from such things, and contemn the traditions of the Pope, truly he must have a strong foundation of faith, which if he shall not have, let him look about him again and again before he attempt it; for if faith be wanting, it will fall out with us, as with this woman, who had spent all her substance upon physicians, mending nothing, but rather waxing worse and worse: In like manner all our works, labours and endeavours shall be lost, all our obedience, with all orders or religions, and whatsoever we have bestowed therein, shall be in vain. Howbeit if we have faith, we shall at the last see the decrees of the Pope and *Popish* bishops to be nothing, because of which, we have trembled and were troubled, all which did help us so much, as the physicians did that good woman, which had bestowed all her substance and riches, yea and her body also, that she might be healed. How many kinds of medicines and syrups thinkest thou did that woman use? how weak, feeble, and sick was she oftentimes made with them? yea, if she might have been healed, it may seem she would have taken any medicine, howbeit it profited her nothing, she was afflicted with her disease the space of
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twelves years. How therefore is this miserable woman at the last helped? When she did light upon a man whose name is Christ, and put her hope and trust in him, she was healed. But who led her to that man? without doubt, not the physicians; for if our preachers should preach Christ, the merchandize of the Pope, together with his decrees, would be nothing set by; but rather she heard it of some that was also restored to health, who told her without doubt, that there was a certain man, whom his parents had named *Jesus*, which is a gentle and good man, which helpeth every one, and sendeth away none from him whom he helpeth not, and therefore is without doubt sent of God, that he may help all; which the woman having heard, she leaveth the physicians, and maketh haste unto Christ. So also at this day it falleth out; not Christ, but works only are preached, do this or that, nevertheless it is spread among the people what Christ is, what we must look for from him, and that he alone must do all things without our works or merits. This report being heard, we follow him, and lay up these words in the depth of our heart, we leave the physicians, nothing regarding the preachers of the law and works, or their commandments and traditions, but run with all desire of heart to this man, which is Christ, saying to the Pope, If I must receive only of Christ, how unwisely have I dealt, that I have turned so much unto thee; farewell therefore, O Pope, farewell ye beloved bishops, I need no more your medicine, works and merits, precepts and laws, ye have grieved me long enough with them, I have gotten one, which bestoweth upon me freely, whatsoever I paid full dear for unto you before; he giveth that unto me without works and merits, for which I was feign before to bestow my body, strength and health, and yet could not obtain it. Fare ye well, I mind to come no more to you hereafter. Christians therefore are made, not by the decrees of the Pope, not by works, not by the ordinances of men, but by the grace and goodness of Christ. Wherefore if thou hast a disquieted and troubled mind and conscience, so that thou art afraid of sin, dreadest death, or hast some defect otherwise, get thee to that man,

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man, and confesse what thou wantest, call upon him, then surely he will help thee ; *Pour out your heart before him*, as the 62d *Psal.* saith, and say thus unto him, Behold here is an empty vessel, which greatly needeth to be filled ; I beseech thee, O my Lord, vouchsafe to fill it, I am weak in faith, I pray thee to strengthen me, I am cold in charity, do thou make me hot, and fervent, that my love may extend unto my neighbour, I have no firm faith, neither can I sometime trust in God, O Lord help me, and encrease my faith and confidence ; in thee have I reposed the treasure of all good things, I am poor, thou art rich, and therefore didst thou come, that thou mightest have mercy on the poor : I am a sinner, thou art righteous, yea I have abundance of sins, but in thee is all fulness and grace. When thou shalt once have learned this, the Pope's ordinances shall not snare thee, by which thou gettest nothing, but consumest all that thou hast, like as this woman did. Then wilt thou say, I will chuse to myself him, of whom I may receive, unto whom I need not give any thing ? The other Evangelists write concerning this woman, that after she was healed, Christ perceived virtue to have gone out of him, and turned him about in the press, and asked who had touched him, and that his disciples made answer, that the multitude did throng and thrust him, but the Lord would not be content with that answer, but said, some one hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me, I know that some one hath received something from me : All which the Lord therefore did, that the faith of the woman might be thankful unto him, which he would therefore have made manifest before all the people, for that nothing is more acceptable unto him, than that we believe and trust in him, and also that the Lord might by this miracle confirm the faith of the ruler. Wherefore *Mark* saith, that when the woman understood that the Lord knew of her, she feared and trembled, and came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth, how it fell out with her : whereupon the Lord doth deliver her and saith, *Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.*

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Were not these loving words? What great joy did the woman take here, when as Christ had dealt so bountifully with her? This joy and peace all they obtain, which repose their whole hope and trust in Christ Jesus. Where this joy shall be, forthwith works must needs follow, which may shew forth this joy: as also the faith of this woman must needs come to light. For as soon as she had received of the Lord, she confessed before all the people, neither was she ashamed to declare, that she had received something of him, for which notwithstanding she had given nothing. Now, God requireth of us these works, and this giving of thanks, to wit, that we confess and declare before all men such good things, grace and benefits, that others also may be brought unto him, and suffer a benefit to be bestowed upon them, as it was here done. Wherefore a christian life enforceth me to do good unto others also, even as God through Christ hath done good unto me, but thereby am I not made a christian, as the woman here is not healed by her confession, for she was healed before any work and confession, but after she had recovered her health, she confesseth Christ, and praiseth him even to the advantage and converting of others. We also, as we are christians, do so live, that one helpeth and pleasureth another in what thing soever he is at any time able. And as this woman was healed before all works, so we must be made christians before we do any work. As the gospel is set before our eyes in this woman; so is it also set forth in the daughter of this ruler. This chief ruler of the synagogue, whom *Mark* calleth *Jairus*, had a strong faith and confidence, that Christ would raise up his daughter; for unless he had been of that mind concerning Christ, he had not come unto him, neither had desired such a thing of him which exceeded the power and strength of nature. Wherefore by this prayer he shewed his faith, which faith being perceived, the Lord could not but grant his desire, wherefore rising forthwith, he went with him, and in his going this history of the woman came to pass, which had been diseased of an issue of blood twelve years, as we have now heard. When therefore the Lord was entred into
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the ruler's house, he saw the minstrels and the multitude making noise, which were there according to the law of *Moses*, and did sound the trumpet and pipes, as in our country they ring the bells to gather the people together. But he commanded the multitude to go forth, saying, *The child is not dead, but sleepeth.* And they laughed him to scorn and mocked him. Which giveth us to understand, that when it is preached, that Christ is he which saveth, that our works prevail nothing, then the world cannot contain itself, but that it scorneth and mocketh, for it cannot be persuaded, that Christ doth help and succour, even as this people without all doubt said after this sort: Behold what an excellent master and a goodly physician he is, what could he have holpen, which knoweth not yet, what it is to sleep, and what to be dead? This title must needs remain to the gospel in the world, that the preaching thereof is counted foolish and contemptible; for Satan cannot abide, that honour should be given to this gospel before the world, for it bringeth but small advantage to his kingdom, which forasmuch as he perceiveth full well, he practiseth all crafts and wiles, that he may either altogether hinder it, or at the least make it to prevail little with them that are his, whose hearts he hath wholly blinded and possessed, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should not shine unto them, as *S. Paul* saith, *2 Cor. 4.* Neither yet can it be, that this preaching of Christ should not be fruitful, forasmuch as it is not uttered in vain: for altho' if he received but of a few, that doth not greatly skill. When therefore Satan perceiveth any thing to be taken from him, and that that preaching is ordained plainly against his kingdom, he doth without delay pursue it, contemn it, and assail it on every side, that even now he is fierce and rageth in the whole world. For the gospel of Christ overthroweth whatsoever the world and Satan delight in, and whatsoever to the world seemeth most holy and goodly. For the world imagineth to it self such a God, as hath regard to our good works, and will be pleased with the erecting of masses and vigils for them that are departed, with rosaries, as they call them, habit, sha-

ving, and whatsoever other trifles are used in the papacy. Now if there come any which bringeth the gospel, and envieth against these vain toys of the pope, and saith that they are nothing worth, but are meer delusions, inasmuch as they are repugnant to Christ and the scripture, he is counted a most wicked fellow, and therefore must be punished, he is reproached as an heretic and a seducer of the people: so that they burst forth into great words and say, wilt thou govern all the whole world? dost thou think thy self the wisest man that is? and were our forefathers foolish and without all understanding? many holy men have done these works, and have preached of them, and wilt thou come and turn them all to nothing? thou shalt not do it. Then rage and fury beginneth, yea persecution, slaying and murdering, and the devil will seem to have a just cause, howsoever the matter goeth. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning this text. Now ye must take especial heed, that out of the gospels ye learn thoroughly, how all things consist in the only person, whose name is Christ, and lay up this in the depth of your heart, that a christian hath his name of Christ. For I know how much it availeth both in temptation and in aduersity to hold that fast. Let us now by prayer call for the grace of God, that at the last we may with most earnest zeal and hearty affection embrace true christianity. Amen.

SERMON XXXII.

Of the Works which Christ hath wrought for us.

John 20. ver. 24. to the 29th. But Thomas one of the Twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came, &c.

I Know nothing more certain concerning St. Thomas, than that which this gospel mentioneth of him. Other things which are written of him in the book of legends, are

are most impudent lies. And altho' they were partly true, yet have they no authority, neither make us any thing the better. Wherefore we will leave them untouched, and speak something of this gospel, which will be more profitable and necessary for us than all those legends. The former part of this gospel fell out about the even-tide of the passover, when two had returned from *Emmaus*, and shewed unto the other disciples, that the Lord was risen again. The latter part fell out the eighth day after the passover. It is marvellous how comfortable this gospel is, shewing unto you, the fruits of faith, namely peace and joy, as *S. Paul* saith, *Rom. 5. 1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* But now we will treat in few words, what this is that the Lord sheweth to his disciples, his hands and his feet, whereby is declared unto us, what advantage we have by Christ, whereunto he profiteth us, and what we must look for of him. It is ingrafted in the hearts of all men as it were by nature, to have a certain will to be honest and godly, and every one thinketh how he may come to salvation, whereby it hath come to pass, that one hath invented this thing, another that, being verily persuaded, that thereby he should make God favourable unto him, and obtain heaven, but none such at any time hath stood in the right way, forasmuch as all have had this drift, that they might procure God's favour by deeds and good works. Notable doctors also and holy fathers have written and taught many things, how we might attain unto godliness. About this they have miserably troubled themselves, but as we see, and to our notable loss have felt, they have done little. Wherefore it is exceeding necessary, that some sound knowledge be had hereof, whereby we must endeavour to true godliness, forasmuch as it is a thing of no small importance. For he that is deceived here, loseth the sum and chief point of all christianity; hereof therefore we must now speak somewhat. True and sound righteousness consisteth not in our own works, but in the works of another. Take an example hereof: One buildeth temples, another for religion sake goeth to St.

James, to Aquisgrane, to Rome, to the holy sepulchre, the third pineth himself with fastings, prayeth, weareth a cowle, goeth bare-foot, or worketh some other such work whatsoever it be, these are our own works, God hath not commanded them, but men and hypocrites, justifiers of themselves have invented them, and have thought that they are precious good works, and greatly esteemed of God, sweetly persuading themselves, that they are by them delivered from sins, and that God is pacified towards them. But these works chosen of their own proper will, are nothing worth at all, neither can stand, forasmuch as they proceed not of faith, yea they are sins, as *S. Paul* saith, *Rom. 14. 23. For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.* These our works therefore are defiled and unclean in the sight of God, yea he doth abhor and loath them. Wherefore if we will have to do with God, we must not trust to our own works, but to the works of another. But which are those works of another, that are allowed of God? Truly the works of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent down from heaven, that by his death and passion he might satisfy for our sins. This satisfaction fell out upon this occasion: We were subject to great danger, grievous tyrants had power over us, which day and night without ceasing did vex us. The law which God gave unto man, did urge us, and required many things of us, which we were not able to perform, and therefore it condemned us. Sin also did lie upon us as a heavy burden which the law did oftentimes make greater and greater. Death went about to devour us, inasmuch as it is the wages of sin, Satan also endeavoured to throw us down headlong to hell, inasmuch as he would punish us for our sins committed; all things are full of trembling and anguish. God taking pity upon this so great calamity, sent his only begotten Son, and that of his meer grace and goodness, without our desert, that he might deliver us out of so great tyranny, which he mightily did after this sort: He satisfied the law, and fulfilled it perfectly. For he loved God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, he loved his neighbour also as himself, in these
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the whole law and the prophets do consist. Now whatsoever Christ did, it consisted in these two; he loved God, inasmuch as he obeyed his will, he took upon him the nature of man, and performed in all obedience those things that were enjoined him of the Father, as St. Paul saith, *Phil. 2. 8. He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* Secondly, he loved his neighbour; for all the works which he did in the earth, tended unto this end, that he might thereby profit his neighbour, and therefore he so loved his neighbour, that he even died for him, as he saith himself to his disciples, *John 15. 13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* St. Paul doth more set forth this, saying, for his enemies, when he writeth thus, *Rom. 5. 8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Forasmuch then as Christ hath so fulfilled the law, it could not accuse him, neither was sin of any force with him: he set upon it, and did prevail over it, and swallowed it up, it was inforced to be extinguished of him, no otherwise than a spark of fire in the most wide sea; for in him was nothing but meer righteousness. Death also came, and went about to devour him, it devoured him indeed, but it could not digest him, it was enforced to yield him up again, yea, and this devouring was an utter disadvantage to death, for the case being quite altered, Christ devoured death it self; for it had set upon him, against whom it had no right, forasmuch, as not a whit of sin did appear in him; where sin is not, there death hath nothing to do, as St. Paul saith, *1 Cor. 15. The sting of death is sin, with this it killeth, otherwise it should be dull, and have no strength.* Satan also made a trial of his strength in him, but in vain, and to his own grief, for he laid hands on him, with whom he had nothing to do; the wretch was overcome in this conflict, and went away with shame, as Christ saith, *John 14. 30. The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.* Hell also did open his mouth, and would have devoured Christ, but on the contrary it was devoured of him; and so in this conflict the law, sin, death, satan, and hell were vanquished, over all which

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he triumphed and gloried with great pomp, as *St. Paul* saith, *Col. 2.*

All these things were not only done for our advantage, but also if we believe in Christ, they are given unto us ; for whatsoever he hath, it serveth for us, yea, he himself is ours, as *St. Paul* saith, *Rom. 8. 32.* *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?* So that I may boldly glory of all victory, which he obtaineth over the law, sin, death, the devil, and may challenge to my self all his works, even as if they were my own, and I my self had done them, so that I believe in Christ ; otherwise his works shall profit nothing at all, if they were not given unto me : these are the works of another which do commend us before God and save us, our own works shall do nothing. we are weaker than that we can even resist the least sin ; of so great consequence is it, that we are able to encounter with death, satan and hell ; wherefore when the law shall come, and accuse thee, that thou doest not observe it, send it unto Christ, and say, There is that man which hath fulfilled the law, to him I cleave, he hath fulfilled it for me, and hath given his fulfilling unto me, when it heareth these things, it will be quiet ; If sin come, and would have thee by the throat, send it unto Christ, and say, As much as thou mayst do against him, so much right shalt thou have against me ; for I am in him, and he is in me ; if death creep upon thee, and attempt to devour thee, say unto it, Good mistress death, dost thou know this man ? come and bite out his tooth, hast thou forgotten how little thy biting prevailed with him once ? go to if it be a pleasure unto thee, encounter with him again ; thou hadst persuaded thy self, that thou shouldst have prevailed somewhat against him, when he did hang between two thieves, and died an ignominious death, which was counted cursed both before God and the world ; but what didst thou gain thereby ? Thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worst to thy self ; I pertain to this man, I am his, and he is mine, and where he abideth, there also will I abide. Thou couldst hurt him nothing, wherefore
also

also let me alone. After the same sort, if the devil, if hell, come violently upon thee, and trouble thee send them unto Christ, and thou shalt easily make them to cease.

And thus you see what Christ is unto us, namely, such a man as is given unto us of God, that he might extinguish sins, vanquish death, destroy hell, overcome the devil, and all these for our advantage. If he had not done this, nor given unto us these things, we had been for ever under the curse of the law, under sin, under death, under the devil, and under hell, God delivered us from these by Christ. Wherefore St. Paul saith out of the prophet *Hosea*, *1 Cor.* 15. 54. *Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Hereof we may easily understand what kind of works those be, which do make us entire and righteous before God; surely they are the works of another, and not our own works chosen of our selves, wherefore the whole papacy falleth here, with all the most precious and holy works thereof, which hath this drift only, that miserable, wretched, and blinded men may be persuaded, that they obtain heaven by their merits, and their own works. Hereupon have sprung so many orders, that they cannot almost be numbered, of which one striveth to be holier than another, according as they exercised harder, greater, and weightier works; but this their miserable labour, anguish, prayer, fastings, chastising of the body, and such like, were vain works, and of no value at all, neither had they so much power, that they were able to take away so much as even the least sin, which they call venial; they were altogether unmindful of this saying, *Esay* 29. which the Lord repeateth, *Mat.* 15. 8. *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their hearts is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* Hereupon now thou mayest gather with thy self, that

that all holy men although they be exceeding holy, yet do obtain salvation, not by their own holiness, merits, or works; and not so much as *Mary* her self the mother of God, was made righteous and holy in respect of her virginity, or in that she was the mother of God, but salvation hath come unto all by Jesus Christ, as by the works of another; wherefore this is diligently to be noted, that our felicity doth not consist in our own works, but in the works of another, namely, of Christ Jesus our Saviour, which we obtain through faith only in him. This also the history of the gospel seemeth to signify, when as the Lord sheweth to his disciples, but especially, to *Thomas*, his hands and feet; by which deed he declareth, that it was necessary that those hands and feet should do these things, and that no other works, that is, their own, and not the works of another, do pertain unto salvation; for in the scripture, by hands and feet, works and conversation are signified; these hands and feet Christ doth as yet oftentimes shew unto us, and say, behold, I am that only man, whose works and conversation are of force with God, thou shalt labour in vain with thine own works, thine own righteousness maketh nothing hereunto, it hath another end. If thou be righteous, it is profitable to thee among men, here in earth thou hast the glory and praise thereof, as *St. Paul* saith, *Rom. 4.* But before God this thy righteousness is of no estimation, thou must set in place thereof another, namely, mine, this God my Father doth allow; for I have delivered thee from sins, death, the devil, hell, and from all evil, thou shouldst never have escaped out of these by thine own power, but hadst lain as yet most deeply drowned in them; I have appeased the wrath of God, and of an angry judge, have made him a gentle, merciful, and gracious Father: believe this and it goeth well with thee, thou art then safe, intire, and righteous; beware that thou presume not to deal before God with thine own works, but if thou wilt do any thing with him, creep into me, put on me, and thou shalt obtain of my Father, whatsoever thou desirest and askest, as he himself saith unto his disciples,

John

John 16. 23. Verily verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Wherefore as from the beginning sin, which was another, hath been derived unto us from Adam, for neither I, nor thou, have eat of the apple ; so also by the righteousness of another we must be restored unto righteousness and integrity. This other is Christ Jesus, by whose righteousness and works we are all saved, as I have now sufficiently declared. This St. Paul hath very well comprehended even in one sentence, where 1 Cor. 1. 30. he saith thus, Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. And Rom. 4. 25. he saith, Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. In these two little sentences are briefly comprised, and joined together, whatsoever things we must look for from Christ. Howbeit, all these things are enjoined by faith, for he that is without faith, to him they are impossible to be comprehended, yea, they are counted foolishness to reason and to the world, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. 1. 23. We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks, foolishness, that is, when Christ is preached, that he is our righteousness, that salvation cometh unto us by him, and that by him we are made the children of everlasting life, without our own works and righteousness, then those holy men, and justifiers of themselves are offended, no otherwise than the Jews. Moreover to the prudent and wise men of this world, it seemeth foolishness, and a certain ridiculous thing, that a man being fastned to the cross and put to death, doth perform these things. Whatsoever therefore is counted righteous, holy, wise and prudent in the eyes of the world, it is offended and stumbleth at Christ ; but St. Paul saith moreover ; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. He saith also, Rom. 1. 16. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also

also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, *The just shall live by faith.* Wherefore the Lord saith, very well to the disciples of *John, Blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.* So thou seest now plainly, that this faith which we have in Christ, cometh by the preaching of the gospel, as *Paul* affirmeth, *Rom. 10. 17. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.* Here, here I say doth all the force consist, by the word of God, not by the word of man. The word of God doth these things, not when we publish indulgences, or preach of works, as hitherto, alas, it hath been done, to our exceeding loss, as well in the good things of the body, as of the soul: We made no account of goods which we bestowed plentifully, unless we had afflicted our body with fastings, chastisement, pilgrimages, and such like trifles. Indeed these things might have been borne with, if they had not with a false confidence in such doing, so miserably and lamentably led us away, and seduced us from a true faith and confidence in God through Christ; but praise be unto God, that we have for the most part perceived such delusions; for the world was so full of this misery and preaching, that it did almost overflow, which surely came by the vengeance and wrath of God, for that we contemned his word, and followed mens fables, yea, our own wits and opinions, Then we were in so great blindness, that we did almost without difference believe every man, what kind of work soever he brought and gloriously set forth. From these deceitful follies our consciences are now delivered and set free, but no man doth so much as once give thanks to God therefore. If we shall be contemptuously negligent, a more grievous misery shall light upon us than this was; neither should that come unto us undeservedly, forasmuch as we do greatly procure these evils against our selves by our unthankfulness. When as before we gave with so great abundance and plenty, that by our liberality they were made almost Lords of the world, now hardly six or seven poor men are maintained in a city, yea, now the minister of a parish church hath
not

not sufficient wherewith to live. Howbeit do not impute this perverse kind of living to the gospel, as our adversaries now impudently do. It is not meet, that thou suffer thy poor neighbour by thee to want : Yea, rather the whole gospel doth especially urge this, that thou have a care of thy neighbour, and that thou be serviceable toward him, that thou help him both with thy council and substance, even as God hath holpen and instructed thee.

Such a one, without doubt, he that is indued with true faith sheweth himself, for he bursteth forth, and be-
haveth himself so toward others, as he hath tried God towards himself, and as he desireth to be done to himself, if he were pressed with poverty, anguish, and necessity ; God needeth not our good works ; our prayers, fastings, and building of temples, founding of masses, do displease him, he requireth not our sacrifices, but rather as *Isoiah* saith, hateth and abhorreth them. He is content with this one thing, that we acknowledge him before our God, trust in him, give him thanks, as he saith, *Psal. 50. 7. Hear, O my people, and I will speak : O Israel, and I will testifie against thee : I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains ; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats ? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. And call upon me in the day of trouble ; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* But God sendeth us downward with our works to our neighbours, to the miserable, afflicted, and them that be void of comfort. It is our parts to help them, to comfort them, to teach and instruct them ; and whatsoever benefit we shall bestow upon them, that we shall bestow upon God, and his Christ, as he shall say in the last day, *Whatsoever ye have*

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have done unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done unto me. Thus ye now have heard, that we are justified and made righteous by the works of another, namely, by the works of Christ, which we enjoy only by faith: the same faith charity doth naturally accompany, whereby we do so to our neighbour, as we do acknowledge that God hath done unto us: Hereof ye have elsewhere heard more; we will now make an end and call for the grace of God.

S E R M O N X X X I I I .

Reason not capable of the Gospel.

Matth. ii. Verse 25. to the 30. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, &c.

THis text toucheth as it were, the very pith and marrow of the gospel, other places of scripture wherein the miracles and doings of Christ are rehearsed, have not so much comfort as those in which those sermons of Christ to the people are contained, wherein he doth so lovingly teach us, and allure us to himself. I am not so certain of the favour which I see shewed to others in working miracles, as I have the plain words before mine eyes: it is a far greater comfort also unto me, to hear such loving admonitions and allurements, than the preaching of miracles, altho' they also confirm my faith, and are examples, that as he hath holpen them, so also he will help me. This gospel treateth of the knowledge of God the Father, and of Christ his Son, shewing also whereof such knowledge doth consist. Now that the meaning thereof may be well known, it is requisite to understand aright these two words, wise men, children or babes; but lest when we hear it, we say this pertaineth nothing to us, it is spoken to others, as the *Jews* said to the prophets which referred all things to the *Gentiles*, the words going before do sufficiently shew, unto whom or of whom these words are spoken; for before he speaketh of them that contemn the gospel, not vouchsafing to embrace it,

it, whose duty notwithstanding especially was to embrace it, inasmuch as they would seem alone to be them that were occupied in the word of God, and were to be counted for the people of God: of such he saith thus, *Wherunto shall I liken this generation? it is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented,* which the Lord applieth to himself, and unto *John the Baptist*, as if he would say, we have preached unto you the gospel, *John* with a certain severity and austerity, but I with very great clemency and gentleness, and yet ye will not receive it, ye shall at the last feel, without doubt, to your great evil, what it is to despise the word of God. It is very true, howsoever thou preacheest to the people, whether thou be fair spoken or severe, gentle or ungentle, they will always seem to have some cause or other to complain of thee. These the Lord calleth here wise, and men of understanding, to these the gospel is hid; he meaneth not here those wise men which are truly wise in-divine matters, for it is a great commendation if one be worthy to be called wise and prudent; true wisdom is nothing else but the knowledge of God, to wit, when I know what we must think of God, and do understand his will: but prudence signifieth ability and knowledge to judge of worldly things, what is right or wrong, which *St. Paul* often joineth together, especially in his epistle to the *Ephe,ians*, chap. 1. and in his epistle to the *Colof,ians*, chap. 1. Of such wisdom Christ speaketh not here, but of worldly wisdom, which puffeth up men, and excludeth the true wisdom of God. We are all of this disposition by nature, often to rise against the wisdom of God. That is called good, by the instinct of human wisdom, which bringeth pleasure, honour and profit, but those things that are contrary to these, as affliction, dishonour, loss, these are called evil: for man's nature can seek nothing else at all, but those things that are his own, that which pleaseth and profiteth him, that he doth, but that which displeaseth him, he counteth the worst of all things, although it be the best; wherefore as I have said, the Lord speaketh here of those wise and prudent

prudent men, with which their own wisdom strive against the wisdom of God; worldly wisdom seemeth to itself to be so great, that it is not content to rule only these worldly and temporal things, but taketh also upon itself to have the oversight of heavenly things, it always searcheth out and imagineth some new things, even in spiritual and divine matters: So man's own wisdom hath invented shaven crowns and cowles, and almost all that wherein the papacy consisteth, every one hath chosen his proper work to himself, this man hath invented this, another hath invented that, and if this be not abolished, and doth not greatly please, by and by they find out some other thing, as alas! we have seen, and do as yet see, neither is there any measure in these trifles, whereupon it cometh, that we can hardly away with the word of God and the truth, but are always delighted to invent some new thing; for truly this is certain, as often as we ordain a new worship of God contrary to the word of God, we are by and by blinded, and fall from error to error, than which calamity none greater can come unto us, wherefore St. Paul saith, *2 Thes. 2. 11. For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* Yea and at the last they become so blind, that they understand nothing at all of God, as it is in the 14. Psal. *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God:* For it cannot be that the natural man, which consisteth of flesh and blood, and is not instructed by the spirit of God, should judge and understand those things which are of God, as St. Paul, *1 Cor. 2. 14. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* He which will read more hereof, let him peruse the first chapter of the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, there shall he plainly enough perceive what blindness is, and what punishment doth ensue, if the word of God being neglected, we follow our own inventions and councils, all which we see in our spiritual monks, nuns, and sacrificing priests, and do too truly try it, God grant they may

at the last repent, and give unto God his glory. St. Paul saith of the *Gentiles*, that they turned the glory of the incorruptible God to the similitude of the image, not only of a corruptible man, but also of birds and four-footed beasts, and of creeping things; so do our *Papists* also, yea and much more foolishly and madly than the *Gentiles*, for they make unto themselves a god which is delighted with a shaven crown, with cowles, with eating of flesh and fish, &c. Wherefore God hath given them up through their hearts lusts unto uncleanness, as he did the *Gentiles*, and that so filthily, that it is better to conceal it, than to rehearse it; for if such filthy and wicked things were committed among the *Gentiles*, which had many wives and many concubines, what would not the spiritual men commit, which have forbidden the use of women and matrimony? briefly, so is it wont to come to pass, where Satan beareth the sway, and the word of God is wrested to serve men's affections, which every man may assuredly perswade himself to be so, yea these things are so known and undoubtedly true, that children in the streets speak and sing of them. Now this is not to be understood of spiritual men only, but even the vulgar sort and common multitude do live so, when the word of God is not admitted: as we see citizens to utter counterfeit wares, merchants to deceive in selling merchandize, and so many crafty practices, so many deceits in subtile dealing, so much regard of usury and private profit, that it cannot be rehearsed. As yet they endeavour again to bring in the mass, to set up their tapers, &c. being perswaded that God is pacified with such trifles, revolting this only in their minds, that their fame may remain untouched and unhurt in the world, howsoever they agree with God. Of such wise and prudent men Christ speaketh here in the gospel, which hear the gospel indeed, and see miracles, but it profiteth them nothing, forasmuch as their heart is not touched. Now Christ saith thus, *Ver. 25. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* *Ver. 26. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*

fight. Christ speaketh not here of very children ; there may be some notable doctor, whom he calleth a child in this place. On the contrary, there may be a rustical fellow, whom he calleth here wise and prudent ; in the 8th *Psal.* David also calleth these infants and children, when he saith, *Out of the mouth of babes and suckings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies.* They surely by whom God ordaineth strength against his enemies, which should extol his glory through the whole world, were not babes or children in very deed. Those therefore the Lord calleth children here, which count their own works for nothing, attribute nothing to their own wisdom, make nothing of themselves, but think God only to be wise and of understanding. Wherefore they are humble and lowly, and how great soever they are, do submit themselves to God, of whom only they suffer themselves to be taught. Now others are over-wise, and will learn nothing of God, yea they presumptuously take to themselves judgment and censure over the doctrine and works of God, whereof thou mayest read in the first and second chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. Wherefore Christ saith, *Luke 16. 8. The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.* But the foolish children of light are of greater estimation before God, than the wise children of this world ; of these children the Lord speaketh, *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* For the wise and prudent know not these things, but the children and fools know them. How cometh it to pass that the wise know them not ? because thou hast hidden them from them. How do the children know them ? because thou hast revealed them. What he meaneth hereby, we may gather of those things that were spoken before, to wit, that he had preached the gospel of the kingdom of God in many cities of *Judea*, as in *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and in his own city *Capernaum*, which cities, their own wisdom being a hindrance and let unto them, did not receive the foolish preaching of the gospel. The gospel is a good and joyful message, which teacheth me to know the glory of God, by which knowledge I obtain pardon of
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my sins, and life eternal; as Christ saith to his Father in the gospel of *John*, chap. 17. 3. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* He saith also in this gospel, *No man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Here he speaketh of the knowledge both of the Father and of the Son. To whom this is revealed, he knoweth, and obtaineth eternal life; but the Father hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, that they may not know neither the Father nor the Son, and hath revealed them to children, they have the knowledge both of the Father and the Son, and so do obtain everlasting life. Moreover, if these things be thus, as they are indeed, what shall become of free will? Seeing thou seest such heinous and wicked things to be committed in the body, as it is written, *Rom. 1.* go thy ways now, and glory in free will. But this is a goodly free will, to live in such a filthy life, which is altogether unworthy of a man, which is unknown even among beasts that are without reason. Howbeit it is wont so to come to pass, when God forsaketh us, as soon as we are forsaken of God, by and by Satan cometh, and erecteth his kingdom in us, wherein nothing else but such wickednesses are committed, which notwithstanding are so craftily coloured, and commended with such a pretence of honesty, that it seemeth to be a most holy, yea and an angelick life. What I pray you can man's strength do here? Whereby some go about to bring to pass many things, sweetly perswading themselves that they shall ascend up into heaven thereby. But thou hearest here that Christ affirmeth, that the Father doth reveal these things; also that it is the good pleasure of the Father that it should be so. Whereby truly he taketh away all the merits of man, here no satisfactions profit, here is no respect of works, it is done by the will and good pleasure of the Father; for he respecteth not the person, as it appeareth before the world. He doth not contemn and reject the sinner, altho' he come laden with sins. After the same sort Christ saith to his disciples, *Luke 12. 32.* *Fear not, little flock; for*

it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. This the hypocrites and justiciaries cannot abide, yea they are driven unto fury, senselessness, and madness, when they see simple receivers of custom and very publicans to go before them into the kingdom of heaven, they themselves with their holiness, and goodly and plausible works to the world, being excluded: Whom would not this drive unto madness? who would not take it grievously, that he himself and his things should be in such a case, and nothing at all counted of? But what shouldst thou do, for what shouldst thou murmur? The good pleasure of God is such, to whom he vouchsafeth to open, to him they shall be opened; and from whom he hideth, from him they are hidden, which is undoubtedly true; and mark well that Christ saith here, It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such, thy good pleasure I say, before the world was made, as *S. Paul* saith, *Ephes. 1. 4.* God hath chosen us in him, (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he had made us accepted in the beloved. Here all merit is excluded, wherefore let it not come into thy mind, that thou shalt obtain any thing here by thy deserts, neither let thy works, wisdom, and merits puff thee up. Here all rejoicing is taken away, that *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*, as *Paul* saith, *1 Cor. 1. 31.* It followeth moreover in the gospel, *Ver. 27.* All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Here thou seest the safety which is in the kingdom of Christ, by whom we have knowledge and light; if therefore Christ holdeth all things in his hand, and hath power over all things as the Father hath, no man can pluck any thing out of his hands, which he himself also witnesseth in *John 10. 28.* I give unto them (my sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them

me,

me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand: I and my Father are one. Wherefore every christian, when he hath received the gospel, may worthily rejoyce that he is now under the tuition of Christ, and is not anything troubled because of his sins. If he hath embraced the gospel, Christ under whom he fighteth will guide the matter excellently well. Satan indeed will tempt him with this and that vice, as with adultery, whoredom, theft, slaughter, envy, hatred, wrath, and other like sins; but let him not therefore be discouraged, he hath a King that is strong and mighty enough, by whom he shall be easily defended; notwithstanding it will be very hard to stand strongly, and nothing to yield, wherefore prayer in this case is very needful, others also may by their prayers intreat for thee, that a stout courage and manly heart may be given unto thee, to withstand Satan. But it is certain, that thou shalt not be destitute, Christ will easily preserve thee, be not disquieted in mind, let it only be thy care that thou fallest not from his kingdom. Moreover in this Gospel thou seest that Christ is both God and Man; Man, inasmuch as he praiseth God, and giveth him thanks; God, inasmuch as all things are given unto him by the Father; which ought to be great comfort unto us in all things that trouble and afflict us. Whereas he saith, *No man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* He in these words overthroweth free will, which will know God and Christ when and how it pleaseth it. Here thou hast plainly from whence the knowledge of God and of Christ is: the Father, saith he, knoweth the Son, and the Son the Father, but how do we know, by this or by that preacher? no truly, these are only certain middle instruments, but he only knoweth to whom the Son will reveal. A little before he said that the Father doth reveal or open, here he attributeth the same to the Son. Surely both the Father and the Son do reveal, and as the Father revealeth, so also doth the Son; and Christ also sayeth in *John 14. 26. The holy Ghost shall teach you all things. Wherefore as the Father teacheth, so teacheth the Son,*
likewise

likewise also teacheth the Holy Ghost. And where God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost do not teach, there all things remain void of knowledge. It followeth moreover in the gospel, ver. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* v. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* v. 30. *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* Hitherto we have heard how the Lord dealeth with the wise and prudent, namely that he blindeth them, and hideth the Gospel from them. Likewise how he is delighted in children and simple ones, to wit, that he endueth them with right knowledge of himself, and openeth the gospel unto them. But some man may here say and complain; if the matter be so, surely my conscience shall be in great danger, before I hear and know that the gospel doth pertain unto me. I am a wretched sinner and perhaps the gospel pertaineth not unto me, what if I be unworthy? Christ, that he may comfort these weak, dismayed, and troubled consciences, saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Here are we called unto comfort. Here forget all thy merit and worthiness, for that he plainly saith, *ye that labour, and are heavy laden,* to wit, with the burden of the law, the anguish and affliction of sin, and wherewithal soever the conscience may be troubled. Therefore he doth not express it by name; for he saith not, ye that are troubled with this or that calamity, but simply, ye that are weary and laden. Neither will he have any here excluded, forasmuch as he saith, *all,* which is a singular and special comfort, if any thing trouble us, what kind of temptation soever it be. Whosoever therefore is stricken with the feeling of his sin, and knoweth his own weakness to fulfil the law of God, let him come hither with a cheerful and bold courage, and he shall certainly receive comfort. I will refresh you, saith Christ, as those that are pressed and burdened with fore labour and grief. Let this only be thy care, that thou believe such a loving bidding and promise. After this manner Christ cried in the temple at *Hierusalem* at a certain feast:

feast: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive,* John 7. 37, 38, 39. Which so cometh to pass: he calleth the gospel to be preached unto us, which he that believeth, is endued with the Holy Ghost, and obtaineth pardon of all his sins. This is truly to refresh him, whose conscience is troubled, to wit, when he feeleth that his sins are forgiven, and that he is become heir of the kingdom of God. Neither doth he refresh us only in the anguish and temptation of sin, but he will also be present with us in other calamities and miseries, in famine, war, dearth of victuals, and whatsoever such like can come, in all these he will not leave us destitute of his help, as he cared for the Patriarch *Joseph*, even in a strange country, with whom he was continually present, as well in prosperity as in adversity. Now sin is a grievous burden, whereof no man is eased, but he whom Christ the Son of God delivereth, and that by the Holy Ghost, whom he hath merited for us of the Father, which maketh our hearts chearful, and ready to do all things which God requireth of us. But what is this that he saith? *Take my yoke upon you.* Is this to refresh, if I take one burden from one, and lay upon him another? this is that, whereof we have oftentimes spoken, the gospel doth first make astonished and discourage, and is grievous to the flesh, for it telleth us that all our own things are nothing, that our own holiness and righteousness are of no importance, that all things which are in us are damned, that we are the children of wrath and indignation. This is very hard, and an intolerable burthen to the flesh, and therefore he calleth it a burden or yoke. But lest he should terrify or make afraid any, for that he is of great authority, high and mighty, and therefore cannot suffer sinful and wretched men, to think him tyrannical and ungentle, he cuts off this suspicion, and saith, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* Christ will here lovingly allure us to his doctrine, for he had spoken before of the knowledge of the Father, as if he would

say,

say, Flesh and fearful nature counteth me for an austere, severe and rigorous man, but I am not of such a nature, yea I am humble and meek in heart. I do not terrify men as *Moses* doth; I do not preach, Do this or that, but I preach forgiveness of sins; neither do I preach that they should give any thing, but rather that they may receive. There is not in me ambition and loftiness, as is in the Pharisees, which desire to be magnified, but I am altogether gentle, and lowly in heart, ready to receive sinners. If so be that they fall again into sins, notwithstanding, I do not yet cast them from me, if they fly unto me for succour, and do with a sure confidence look for comfort and help of me. I do not curse men as the Pharisees do, which curse them even for their own ordinances, and for men's devices, and will sooner suffer all the commandments of God to be neglected, than one of their decrees and ordinances not to be observed. As we see in the Papacy, where it is counted a greater offence to eat flesh on *Friday*, or for a sacrificing Priest to marry, than to commit twenty adulteries, or ten homicides. But here thou seest, that even God doth abrogate even his own law, that he may so much the sooner procure sinners unto him. Christ in a singular signification saith here, that *he is meek*, as if he said, I know how sinners are to be handled, I have tried what a fearful and an afflicted conscience is, as the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, chap. 4. 15. witnesseth, That *he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*. Wherefore let no man be afraid of me, I will handle all easily and gently, I will say nothing with a fower countenance, I make no man afraid so as they come boldly unto me, they shall find rest to their souls with me. To their souls he saith, as if he would say, outwardly in the body there may be affliction, and trouble, and calamities may overwhelm you, but you ought to bear all these things lightly, as he also saith to his disciples, *John* 16. 33. *In me you might have peace, in the world ye shall have tribulation*. Wherefore altho' outwardly, all things fall out against us, as though they would suppress and devour us, yet are they nothing to be esteemed of: For we have the feeling of peace inwardly in our conscience. And this is the first fruit of faith, as

Paul saith, *Rom. chap. 5. 1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Now when our conscience is quieted, and we have peace with God, nothing is able to move us, no nothing shall hurt us, altho' it be evil and against us. Let no man think thus and say, this is not to amend one's state or case, if I take one burthen from his neck, and lay on another, as it is before said. For Christ saith, *My yoke is easy, and my burthen is light,* as if he would say, the yoke of the law, under which ye lived before, was grievous to be borne. but my burthen is not so grievous, it is light and tolerable, ye may easily bear it. Our wise men say now, that the yoke of Christ is more grievous than the yoke of the law was; and they alledge the 5th Chapter of *Matthew*: But Christ doth there interpret the law, how it ought to be understood; he doth not make laws, but saith that murders and adulteries proceed from an evil and unclean heart. And so he doth only expound the law of *Moses*, and prescribeth not any laws there. But the yoke of Christ is therefore easy, and his burthen light, because he taketh away not only ceremonial and man's laws, but even the whole law, the curse, sin, death, and whatsoever may come unto us from the law, all this Christ taketh away from me, and endueth me with his Spirit, by the motion and instinct whereof I do gladly, willingly, and with pleasure perform all the duties of the law. It is therefore also called easy, sweet, and light, for that he himself helpeth us, and taketh part of the burthen, if we be not of strength sufficient. It appeareth indeed grievous and intolerable to the world, but it is otherwise when there is one ready to ease the burthen. It is a common saying, it is good to sing with a fit companion; you two will easily bear the burthen, although one alone were not of strength sufficient to bear it. Thus much shall suffice for the Exposition of this Gospel.

S E R M O N XXXIV.

Christ the Way to eternal Life.

Job. 14, ver. 1. to 14. Let not your heart be troubled, &c.

IN the beginning of this gospel Christ declareth wherefore he came, and what office he executeth, which is properly the preaching of the gospel; to wit, that it is he which prepareth dwelling places with the Father, and will, when he cometh again, receive us unto himself. Moreover he saith, that he is the way, the truth, and the life, which he afterwards more plainly expresseth when he saith, *No man cometh unto the Father but by me*; also when he saith, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also*. Hereunto moreover pertaineth that which he saith unto Philip, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*. This is the chief and the greatest thing in this gospel, unto which all are to be referred. Hereof we ought to learn, that we are not justified by our own strength, neither saved by our own merits, but are sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, and saved by grace, and that Christ is the way leading to salvation. We will discuss and examine this gospel throughout, as God shall give us grace. These words the Lord spake unto his disciples after his Supper, when he was now about to depart from them. Forasmuch as he had said many things unto them of his departure and passion, they were after a sort troubled and terrified, wherefore the Lord beginneth lovingly to comfort them, saying, *Let not your heart be troubled*, as if he would say, I perceive that my departure doth grieve you, and that ye are therefore troubled; but seeing it cannot be otherwise, be not discomfited; there is no cause why ye should therefore be troubled, I will come again unto you: Notwithstanding ye shall see many things in me before, whereat ye will be offended, they shall crucify me, and unworthily handle me: But be not ye troubled because of these things, be not afraid. it will be better shortly after, the will of the Father is such. Howbeit flesh cannot do otherwise but be offended, if it seeth Christ to be crucified, it by and by revolteth

revolteth from him, it believeth him not, neither counteth him for a Saviour. Which also it doth, when it seeth holy men suffer persecution, to be afflicted and tormented, for then it thinketh that God hath no care of them. Against this offence Christ aforehand confirmeth his disciples, and saith, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.* That is, ye believe that God loveth you, and will glorify you, believe that he will do it after that sort that ye see me glorified, and believe that this my death is life, to the glorifying both of me and of my whole body, that is, of all christians, and that this death satisfieth for the sins of the world, as the apostles afterwards witnessed of him in their writings. Thus John saith, *1 John 2. 2. he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* Wherefore thou seeist that Christ here will have hearts confirmed by faith, and by no other outward thing. He saith moreover, *In my Fathers house are many mansions.* These dwelling places have been prepared from everlasting, neither is there any need that they should be prepared of him. Why therefore doth he say, *I go to prepare a place for you?* This is nothing else but that he goeth and is made Lord of all, whereby he may prepare us unto such dwelling places. For as long as we are not prepared, neither are the dwelling places prepared for us, altho' they be ready by themselves. Wherefore Christ meaneth thus much: There are dwelling places, but not yet prepared rightly and as they must be. Howbeit then shall they be rightly prepared and appointed, when I have taken away the kingdom of death by my death, and am gone to reign, and that by the Holy Ghost: which by faith shall prepare and wholly make ready you also unto such dwelling places. So that this is the simple and plain meaning of these words: There are dwelling places, to wit, where the Father glorifieth, but those dwelling places are not yet prepared, for that the kingdom of death is not yet taken away. This Christ signifieth when he saith, *If it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.* In these words

words the Lord declareth how these dwelling places are prepared, namely, by the death of Christ as it is said, by which he came unto glory, and ruleth over all things, which are in heaven and earth. By which death he hath obtained the Holy Ghost for us, which as is before said, may prepare us unto these dwelling places. For through his operation and working in us, he maketh us believe the gospel, by which believing or faith we are prepared; which could not be done if Christ should not depart and die, and so possess a kingdom over all. This therefore is the sum of this text: they are foreseen, whom the Father will glorify, but they cannot be glorified but by Christ, who unless he take away death and sin, all shall be in vain. Here thou seest that all tend unto this, that Christ is he which prepareth the dwelling places, and that we cannot be glorified but by Christ, so that the whole drift of this text is, that we are not justified by man's strength, nor by our own merits, but by Christ, which the whole epistle to the *Romans* effectually declareth, as also that which is written to the *Galatians*, and almost all that *Paul* doth in his epistles, tendeth to the same end. It followeth moreover: *And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.* For ye believe in me, and have shewed signs in my name, whereby ye ought now to be certain who I am, and what I do, and wherefore I am come. Ye have also seen and heard the testimony of the Father of me. Wherefore ye may now know that the Father will glorify me, and believe that I and the Father are one, it should be therefore superfluous to speak more of these things. But the disciples altho' they were well instructed of the Lord himself, and had seen his miracles, yea and they themselves also had preached the gospel and wrought miracles, were notwithstanding as yet somewhat gross in understanding, neither did they perceive whereof he here spake, and what was that way, and whither the Lord did prepare to depart. Wherefore *Thomas* bursteth forth into open words and confesseth freely, that he is ignorant hereof, and saith thus unto the Lord: *Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* Here ye hear and see, that altho' there was faith in the

disciples,

disciples, notwithstanding they were not as yet persuaded that Christ should be crucified, and by his death should enter into his kingdom, and that the same kingdom should be spiritual, which they did not understand even after the resurrection of the Lord: *Lord, say they, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* Acts 1. 6. Those good men were as yet persuaded, that it should be a carnal and worldly kingdom. Such gross things may here and there be found in the gospels, by means whereof the disciples did sometimes stumble and err. All which were committed to writing, for our comfort and confirmation, that we should not be by and by discouraged, when we have sometimes stumbled in faith, and cannot at the first apply ourselves to the works and word of the Lord. If this happened to these great men, which afterwards should become pillars of christianity, there is no cause truly that any should marvel, if we also sometimes faint in faith, yea, and let no man be afraid, altho' it falleth out that sometimes through infirmity he so do. It is the work and matter of the Lord, he will amend these things when it seemeth good unto him.

Now of the words we mind to treat somewhat at large. Not much before, when Christ would confirm his disciples in faith, he promised them that they should be glorified. Here he addeth and declareth how and by what means they must be glorified, affirming that that must be by his departure, that is, by his death, and that by that means he must obtain his kingdom. This he hath often repeated unto them, so that now it did become them to know and understand it. Therefore he saith, *Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know,* but they did not yet thoroughly understand it, as the words of *Thomas* do declare. Now, it is certain that there was faith in the disciples, which the words of *Peter* prove, who answered Christ instead of the rest, when he asked them, whether they also would go away? *Peter* said, *Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God,* John 6. 68, 69. This appeareth also by the words of the Lord, which he

had said to them a little before at his supper, *Ye are clean*, which he would not have said, if they had not believed; they knew Christ therefore that he is the way to the Father; so they knew the Father also, for that they had seen the miracles whereby he gave testimony of the Son, and had heard the voice of the Father from heaven; *Matt. xvii. 5. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* All these things did greatly increase faith in the Disciples hearts, notwithstanding they did not yet understand, what they should do, and what end concerning the matters of Christ was to be hoped for. Set before you an example hereof in *Abraham*, altho' in faith a Son was conceived unto him, nevertheless he was yet ignorant, that he must be offered; neither did faith manifestly shew itself, when a Son was given unto him; so was it also with the Disciples; altho' they had faith, notwithstanding they wanted as yet trial of their faith; now nothing trieth faith better than the cross and persecution; if *Abraham* had not been commanded to offer his Son, he had had no trial of his faith; when as the Apostles did suffer persecution, they then had a taste and trial of their faith; as long as we may live without temptation, we think that we are indued with a strong faith, but if any adversity cometh to us on any side, we by and by try what faith we rested upon; wherefore *St. Paul* saith *Rom. 5. 3. We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.* After the same sort *Solomon* also saith in the *Proverbs. xvii. 3. The refining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts.* Such a trial is made by the cross and persecution, when we are as it were, crucified according to our old *Adam*, by which crucifying our faith is tried, and according to this trial of faith, our flesh mortified, the spirit encreasing in the knowledge of Christ; and then is our flesh truly mortified, when we suffer the will of God to bear rule in us, which is then done when we submit ourselves to his will, howsoever he dealeth with us, renouncing our own will. This *St. Paul* will have us to do, when he saith this, *Rom. 12. 1, 2. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by*