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**Sermons and
Tracts by that
Worthy Martyr of
Christ, John
Bradford**

John Bradford



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Author(s): Bradford, John (1510-1555)

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Description: Because of his dedication to the Church of England, Catholic Queen “Bloody” Mary Tudor imprisoned Bradford, then burned him at the stake. In spite of his persecution, though, Bradford did not let despair triumph over him. While locked away in the Tower of London, he preached to his fellow inmates every day, often concerning topics such as repentance, eternity, affliction, salvation, and the fear of death. This collection contains some of these sermons, plus a few short explanations of more complex theological matters.

Kathleen O'Bannon

CCEL Staff

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Sermons and Tracts by that Worthy Martyr of Christ, John Bradford

To the Christian reader, John Bradford wishes the true knowledge and peace of Jesus Christ, our alone and all-sufficient Saviour.

Great and heavy is God's anger against us, as the most grievous plague of the death of our late king (Edward VI, editor), (a prince the most peerless of all that ever were since Christ's ascension into heaven, in any region,) now fallen upon us does prognosticate. For when God's judgment has begun with his child, this our dear dearling, let other men think as they can, I surely cannot be persuaded otherwise, but that a grievous and bitter cup of God's vengeance is ready to be petered out for us Englishmen to drink of. Judgment is begun at God's house. In God's mercy towards him he is taken away, that his eyes should not see the miseries which we shall feel. ([Heb. xi.](#)) He was too good to tarry with us, a generation so wicked, so froward, so perverse, so obstinate, so malicious, so hypocritical, so covetous, unclean, untrue, proud, and carnal. I will not go about to paint us out in our colours. All the world which never saw England, by hearsay sees England; God by his plagues and vengeance, I fear, will paint us out, and point us out. We have so mocked with him and his gospel, that we shall feel it is no bourding (trifling, jesting, editor) with him.

We have long covered our covetousness and carnality under the cloak of his gospel, so that all men shall see us to our shame, when he shall take his gospel away, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruits of it. Then shall we appear as we are. Let his gospel tarry with us, he cannot; for we despise it, contemn it, are gluttoned with it. We disdain his manna, it is but a vile meat as we think. We would be again in Egypt, and sit by the greasy fleshpots, to eat again our garlic, onions, and leeks. Since God's gospel came among us, we say now, we never had plenty, therefore again let us go and worship the queen of heaven. ([Jer. vii. xlv.](#)) Children begin to gather sticks, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women make the cakes, to offer to the queen of heaven and to provoke the Lord to anger. The earth now cannot abide the words and sermons of Amos; the cause of all rebellion is Amos, and his preaching. ([Amos vii.](#)) It is Paul and his fellows that make all out of order; the gospel is now the outcast and curse of the realm, and so are the preachers, therefore out of the doors with them. So that I say God cannot let his gospel tarry with us, but must needs take it away to do us some pleasure therein, for so shall we think for a time; as the Sodomites thought when Lot departed from them; as the old world thought, when Noah went into his ark; as the Jerusalemites thought, when the apostles went thence to Peltis (Pella, editor); then were they merry, then was all pastime; when Moses was absent, then went they to eating and drinking, and rose up again to play, ([Exod. xxxii.](#);) then was all peace, all was well, nothing amiss. But, alas! the flood came suddenly, and drowned them; God's wrath waxed hot against them; then was weal away (happiness departed, editor), mourning, and woe; then was crying

out, wringing of hands, rending of clothes, sobbing and sighing, for the miseries out of which they could not escape. But oh! ye mourners and criers out, ye renders of clothes, why mourn ye? What is the cause of your misery? The gospel is gone, God's word is little preached, you were not disquieted with it; Noah troubled you not, Lot is departed, the apostles are gone. What now is the cause of these your miseries? Will you at length confess it is your sins? Nay, now it is too late, God called upon you, and you would not hear him, therefore yell and cry out now, for he will not hear you. You bowed your ears from hearing of God's law, therefore your prayer is execrable.

But to come again to us Englishmen. I fear me, I say, that for our unthankfulness' sake, for our impiety and wickedness, as God has taken away our king, so will he take away his gospel; yea, many think so we would have it, then should all be well. Well, if he take that away, for a time perchance we shall be quiet, but at length we shall feel the want to our woe; at length he will have at us, as at Sodom, at Jerusalem, and other places. And now he begins to brew such a brewing, wherein one of us is likely to destroy another, and so to make an open gap for foreign enemies to devour us, and destroy us. (He refers to the hostilities which then appeared likely to ensue between the partisans of queen Mary and lady Jane Grey. Editor.) The father is against the son, the brother against the brother and with what conscience! Oh, Lord! be thou merciful unto us! and in thine anger remember thy mercy; suffer thyself to be entreated, be reconciled unto us, nay, reconcile us unto thee. Oh! thou God of justice! judge justly. Oh! thou Son of God! who comes to destroy the works of Satan, destroy his furies now smoking, and almost set on fire, in this realm. We have sinned, we have sinned, and therefore thou art angry. Oh! be not angry for ever. Give us peace, peace, peace in the Lord; set us to war against sin, against Satan, against our carnal desires, and give us the victory this way. This victory we obtain by faith; this faith is not without repentance, as her gentleman-usher before her. Before her, I say, in discerning true faith from false faith; lip faith, English-men's faith; for else it springs out of true faith.

This usher then, Repentance, if me truly possessed, we should be certain of true Faith, and so be assured of the victory over death, hell, and Satan. His works then, which he has stirred up, would quail. God would restore us political peace, right should be right, and have right; God's gospel should tarry with us, religion should be cherished, superstition suppressed, and so we should yet be something happy, notwithstanding the great loss of our most gracious liege sovereign lord. All this would come to pass, if the gentleman-usher I speak of, I mean, Repentance, were present with us. As if he be absent, we may be certain that lady Faith is absent. Wherefore we cannot but be vanquished by the world, the flesh, and the devil, and so will Satan's works prosper, though not in all things to blear our eyes, yet in that thing which he most of all desires. Therefore let us to repentance for ourselves privately, and for the realm and church publicly; every one should labour to stir up both themselves and others. This to the end that for my part I might help, I have now put forth a Sermon of Repentance,

which has lain by me half a year at the least, as to the most part of it. For, the last summer, as I was abroad preaching in the country, my chance was to make a Sermon of Repentance, which was earnestly by divers desired of me, that I should give it them written, or else put it forth in print. The which as I could not grant, for I had not written it, I told them so, who had so earnestly desired it. But when no way would serve, but I must promise them to write it as I could, I consented to their request that they should have it at my leisure. This leisure I prolonged so long that as, I think, I offended them, so I pleased myself, and, one more glad to read other men's writings, than to publish my own for other men to read; not that I would others should not profit by me, but that I, knowing how slender my store is, would be loath that the enemies should have just occasion for evil speaking, and wresting that which is simply spoken. But when I considered this present time, to occasion men now to look upon all things in such sort as might move them to godliness, rather than to any curious questioning, I, for the satisfying of my promise, and profiting of the simple, ignorant, and rude, have now caused this sermon to be printed; which I beseech God, for his Christ's sake, to use as a mean, whereby of his mercy it may please him to work in me and many others true hearty repentance for our sins, to the glory of his name.

Thus fare thou well in the Lord. This 12th of July 1553.

(Thomas Sampson, in his preface to this Sermon on Repentance, remarks, "Our Bradford had his daily exercises and practices of repentance. His manner was to make for himself a catalogue of all the grossest and most enormous sins which he had committed in his life of ignorance and to lay the same before his eyes when he went to private prayer, that by the sight and remembrance of them he might be stirred up to offer to God the sacrifice of a contrite heart, seek assurance of salvation in Christ by faith, thank God for his calling from the ways of wickedness, and pray for increase of it, grace, to be conducted in holy life, acceptable and pleasing to God. Such a continual exercise or conscience he had in private prayer, that he did not count himself to have prayed to his contention, unless in it he had felt inwardly some smiting of heart for sin, and some healing of that wound by faith, feeling the saving health of Christ, with some change of mind into the detestation of sin, and love of obeying the good will of God, which things require that inward entering into the secret parlour of our hearts of which Christ speaks, and is that smiting of the breast which is noted in the publican." ([Luke xviii.](#)))

A fruitful Sermon of Repentance, made by that Constant Martyr of Christ, John Bradford, 1553

The life we have at this present is the gift of God, in whom we live, move, and are, and therefore he is called Jehovah. For this life we should be thankful, and we may not in any wise use it after our own fancy, but only to the end for which it is given and lent us; that is, to the setting forth of God's praise and glory, by repentance, conversion, and obedience to his good will and holy laws whereunto his longsuffering, as it were, even draws us if our hearts were not hardened by impenitence. And therefore our life in the scripture is called a walking; for as the body daily draws more and more near its end, that is, the earth, even so our soul draws daily more and more near unto death, that is, to salvation or damnation, to heaven or hell!

Since we are most careless of this, and very fools, (for we, alas! are the same today we were yesterday, and not better or nearer to God, but rather nearer to hell, Satan, and perdition; being covetous, idle, carnal, secure, negligent, proud, &c.) I think my labour cannot be better bestowed, than with the Baptist, Christ Jesus, and his apostles, to harp on this string, which of all other is most necessary, and most especially in these days. What string is that? says one. Truly, brother, it is the string of repentance, which Christ our Saviour used first in his ministry; and as his minister at this present time, I will use it to you all, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [Matt. iv.](#)

This sentence, thus pronounced and preached by Our Saviour Jesus Christ, as it commands us to repent, so to the doing of the same, it shows us a sufficient cause to stir us up thereunto, namely, because the kingdom of heaven, which is a kingdom of all joy, peace, riches, power and pleasure, is at hand, to all such as do repent. So that the meaning hereof is, as though our Saviour should thus speak at present: "Sirs, since I see you all walking the wrong way, even to Satan and unto hell-fire, by following the kingdom of Satan, which now is coloured under the vain pleasures of this life, and foolishness of the flesh most subtle, to your utter undoing and destruction behold and mark well what I say unto you, The kingdom of heaven, that is, another manner of joy and felicity, honour and riches, power and pleasure, than you now perceive or enjoy, is even at hand, and at your backs; as, if you will turn again, that is, repent you, you shall most truly and pleasantly feel, see, and inherit. Turn again therefore, I say, that is, repent; for this joy I speak of, even the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Here we may note, first, the corruption of our nature since to this commandment, Repent you, he adds a clause, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; for by reason of the corruption and sturdiness of our nature, God unto all his commandments commonly either adds some promise to provoke us to obedience, or else some sufficient cause which cannot but excite as to hearty labouring for doing the same; as here, to the commandment of doing penance, he add this cause, saying, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Again, since he joins the cause to the commandment, saying, "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand," we may learn, that of the kingdom of heaven, none, to whom the ministry of preaching does appertain, can be a partaker, but such as repent, and do penance. Therefore, dearly beloved, if you regard the kingdom of heaven, as you cannot enter therein, except you repent, I beseech you all; of every estate, as you desire your own weal, to repent and do penance: the which that you may do, I will do my best how to help you by God's grace.

But first, because we cannot well tell what repentance is, through ignorance and for lack of knowledge and false teaching, I will show you what repentance is. Repentance, or penance, is no English word, but we borrow it of the Latinists, to whom penance is 'forethinking' in English; in Greek, it means 'being wise afterwards;' in Hebrew, 'conversion or turning;' which conversion or turnings, cannot be true and hearty, unto God especially, without some good hope or trust of pardon for that which is already done and past. I may well in this sort define it, namely; that penance is a sorrowing or thinking upon our sins past, an earnest purpose to amend, or turning to God, with a trust of pardon.

This definition may be divided into three parts; first, a sorrowing for our sins, secondly, a trust of pardon, which otherwise may be called a persuasion of God's mercy by the merits of Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, and thirdly, a purpose to amend, or conversion to a new life; which third or last part cannot properly be called a part; for it is but an effect of penance, as towards the end you shall see by God's grace. But lest such as seek for occasion to speak evil should have any occasion, though they tarry not out the end of this sermon, I therefore divide penance into the three aforesaid parts: I. Of sorrowing for our sins: II. Of good hope or trust of pardon: and III Of a new life. Thus you now see what penance is, a sorrowing for sin, a purpose to amend, with a good hope or trust of pardon.

I. This penance not only differs from that which men commonly have taken to be penance, as saying and doing our enjoined lady psalters, seven psalms, fastings, pilgrimages, alms-deeds, and such like things, but also from that which the more learned have declared to consist of three parts, namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction.

Contrition they call a just and a full sorrow for their sin. For this word just and full, is one of the differences between contrition and attrition.

Confession they call a numbering of all their sins in the ear of their ghostly father; for as, say they, a judge cannot absolve without knowledge of the cause or matter, so the priest or ghostly father cannot absolve from other sins, than those which he hears.

Satisfaction they call amends-making unto God for their sins, by their undue works, or *opera indebita*, works more than they need to do, as they term them. This is their penance which they preach, write, and allow. But how true this their plan is, how it agrees with God's word, how it is to be allowed, taught, preached, and written, let us a little consider. Dearly beloved, if a man repent not until he have a just and full sorrowing for his sins, when shall he repent? For inasmuch as hell-fire, and the punishment of the devils, is a just punishment

for sin, inasmuch as in all sin there is a contempt of God, who is all goodness, and therefore there is a deserving of all illness (suffering, editor), alas! who can bear or feel this just sorrow, this full sorrow for our sins, this their contrition, which they do so discern (distinguish, editor) from their attrition? Shall not man by this doctrine rather despair than come by repentance? If a man repent not until he has made confession of all his sins in the ear of his ghostly father, if a man cannot have absolution of his sins until his sins are told by tale and number in the priest's ear, since, as David says, none can understand, much less, then, utter all his sins; who can understand his sins? Since David complains of himself elsewhere, how his sins have flowed over his head, and as a heavy burden do depress him, alas! shall not man by this doctrine be utterly driven from repentance? Though they have gone about something to make plaster for their sores, of confession or attrition to assuage their pain, bidding a man to hope well of his contrition, though it be not so full as is required, and of his confession, though he have not numbered all his sins, if so be that he do so much as in him lies. Dearly beloved, since there is none but that herein he is guilty; for who does as much as he may? trow ye (do you suppose, editor), that this plaster is not like salt for sore eyes? Yes, undoubtedly, when they have done all they can for the appeasing of consciences in these points, this is the sum, that we yet should hope well, but yet so hope that we must stand in a mammering (hesitating, editor) and doubting whether our sins are forgiven. For to be certain of forgiveness of sins, as our creed teaches us, they count it a presumption. Oh! abomination, and that not only herein, but in all their penance as they paint it.

As concerning satisfaction by their opera indebita, undue works, that is, by such works as they need not to do, but of their own voluntariness and wilfulness, (wilfulness indeed,) who sees not here monstrous abomination, blasphemy, and even open fighting against God? For if satisfaction can be done by man, then Christ died in vain for him that so satisfies; and so he reigns in vain, so is he a bishop and a priest in vein. God's law require love to God with all our heart, soul, power, might, and strength, ([Deut. vi.](#) [Matt. xxii.](#) [Mark xii.](#) [Luke x.](#)) so that there is nothing can be done toward God which is not contained in this commandment, nothing can be done over and above this. Again, Christ requires of men, "that we should love one another as he loved us." ([1 John iv.](#)) And trow we that we can do any good thing toward our neighbour which is not herein comprised?

Yea, let them tell me when they do anything in the love of God and their neighbour, so that they had not need to cry, "Forgive us our sins?" ([Matt. vi.](#)) So far are we off from satisfying, does not Christ say, "When you have done all things that I have commanded you, say that you are but unprofitable servants." ([Luke xvii.](#)) "Put nothing to my word," says God. ([Deut. iv.](#)) Yes, works of supererogation, (yea, super-abomination,) say they. "Whatsoever things are true, (says the apostle Paul,) whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things pertain to love, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, have you them in your mind,

and do them, and the God of peace shall be with you." I mean, this well looked on will pull us from popish satisfactory works, which do deface Christ's treasure and satisfaction.

In heaven and in earth was there none found that could satisfy God's anger for our sins, or get heaven for man, but only the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who by his blood has wrought the work of satisfaction, and alone is worthy all honour, glory, and praise, for he has opened the book with the seven seals.

Dearly beloved, therefore abhor this abomination, even to think that there is any other satisfaction toward God for sin, than Christ's blood only. Blasphemy it is, and that horrible, to think otherwise. "The blood of Christ purifies (says St. John) from all sin," and therefore he is called the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, because there never was sin forgiven of God, nor shall be from the beginning unto the end of the world, but only through Christ's death, though the pope and his prelates prate as please them, about their pardons, purgations, placeboes, trentals, dirges, works of supererogation, super-abomination, &c.

"I am he (says the Lord) which puts away thine offences, and that for mine own sake, and will no more remember thine iniquities. Put me in remembrance, (for we will reason together,) and tell me what thou hast for thee, to make thee righteous. Thy first father offended sore, &c." (*Isa. xliii.*) And thus writes St. John: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation, or satisfaction, for our sins." As in chapter iv. he says, that God has sent his Son to be a propitiation or mean for the taking away of our sins, according to that which Paul writes, where he calls Christ a merciful and faithful priest, to purge the people's sins, (*Heb. ii.*;) so that blind buzzards and perverse papists are they, which yet will prate of our merits or works to satisfy for our sins, in part or in whole, before baptism or after. For to omit the testimonies I brought out of John and Paul, which the blind cannot but see, I pray you remember the text out of Isaiah, which even now I rehearsed, being spoken to such as were then the people of God, and had been a long time, but yet were fallen into grievous sins after their adoption into the number of God's children. "It is for mine own sake (says God) that I put away thy sins." Where is your parting of the stake now? If it is for God's own sake, if Christ is the propitiation; then recant, except you will become idolaters, making your works God and Christ. Say as David teaches us, "Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory."

And it is to be noted, that God casts in their teeth, eyed the sin of their first father, lest they should think thin perchance for the righteousness and goodness of their good fathers, their sins might be the sooner pardoned, and so God accept their works.

If they had made satisfaction for that which is done to the congregation, publicly, by some notable punishment, in the primitive church was used to open offenders, sparkles whereof and some traces yet remain, when such as have sinned in adultery go about the church in their shirts with a taper. Or if they had made satisfaction for restitution toward man of such goods as wrongfully are gotten, which true penance cannot be without; or if

by satisfaction they had meant a new life to make amends to the congregation thereby, as by their evil life they offended the congregation, in which sense the apostle seems to take that which he writes in [2 Cor. vii.](#), where the old interpreter calls apologium, satisfaction, which rather signifies a defence or answering again; if, I say, they had taken satisfaction any of these ways, then they had done well, so that the satisfaction to God had been left alone to Christ.

Again, if they had made confession either that which is to God privately, or that which is to the congregation publicly, either that which is a free consultation with some one learned in God's book, and appointed thereto, as first it was used, and I wish were now used amongst us; or that which is a reconciliation of one to another, it had been something. Yea, if they had made it for faith, because it is a true demonstration of faith, as in Paul we may see, when he calls Christ the captain of our confession, that is, of our faith, so confessors were called in the primitive church such as manfully did witness their faith with the peril of their lives; if, I say, they had taken it thus, then had they done right well.

And so contrition, if they had left out their subtle distinction between it and attrition, by this word just or full, making it a hearty sorrow for their sins, then we would never have cried out against them therefore. For we say penance has three parts; contrition, if you understand it for a hearty sorrowing for sin; confession, if you understand it for faith of free pardon in God's mercy by Jesus Christ; and satisfaction, if you understand it not to be towards God, (for that must be left alone, only to Christ,) but toward man in restitution of goods wrongfully or fraudulently gotten, of name hindered by our slanders, and in newness of life; although, as I said before, and presently will show more plainly, by God's grace, that this last is no part of penance indeed, but a plain effect or fruit of true penance.

I might here bring in examples of their penance, how perilous it is to be embraced; but let the example of their grandsire Judas serve, in whom we see all the parts of their penance, as they describe it, and yet notwithstanding he was damned. He was sorry enough, as the effect showed; he had their contrition fully, out of the which he confessed his fault, saying, "I have betrayed innocent blood;" and thereunto he made satisfaction, restoring the money he had received. But yet all was but lost, he hanged up himself, his bowels burst out, and he remains a child of perdition for ever. I would wish that this example of Judas, in whom we see the parts of their penance, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, would move them to penance, and to describe it a little better, making hope or trust of God's free mercy a piece thereof, or else with Judas they will mar all.

Perchance these words contrition, confession, and satisfaction, were used at the first as I have expounded them. But as we see so much danger and hurt by using them without expositions, either let us always join to them open expositions, or else let us not use them at all, but say as I write, that penance is a hearty sorrow for our sins, a good hope or trust of pardon through Christ, which is not without an earnest purpose to amend, or a new life.

This penance is the thing whereto all the scripture calls us. This penance I now call you all onto; must be continually in us, and not for a Lent season, as we have thought; this must increase daily more and more in us; without this, we cannot be saved.

Search therefore your hearts, all ye swearers, blasphemers, liars, flatterers, filthy or idle talkers, jesters, bribers, covetous persons, drunkards, gluttons, whore-mongers, thieves, murderers, slanderers, idle livers, negligent in their vocation, &c. All such and all other as lament not their sins, as hope not in God's mercy for pardon, as purpose not heartily to amend, to leave their swearing, drunkenness, fornication, covetousness, idleness, &c.; all such, I say, shall not and cannot enter into God's kingdom, but hell-fire is prepared for them, weeping and gnashing of teeth, whereunto, alas! I fear, very man, will needs go, since very many will be as they have been, let us even, to the wearying of our tongue to the stumps, preach and pray ever so much to the contrary; and that even in the bowels of Jesus Christ, as now I beseech you all, and every one, to repent and lament your sins, to trust in God's mercy, and to amend your lives.

Now methinks you are somewhat astonished, whereby I gather that at present you desire this repentance, that is, this sorrow, good hope, and newness of life; to the which that you may the rather attain, and get to your comforts. As I have gone about to be a mean to stir up in you, by God's grace, this desire of repentance, so through the same grace of God will I now go about to show you, how you may have your desire in this behalf.

And first, concerning this part, namely, sorrow for your sins and hearty lamenting of the same; for this if you desire the having of it, you must beware that you think not that of yourselves, or of your own free will, you can by any means get it. You may easily deceive yourselves, and mock yourselves, thinking more of yourselves than is seemly. All good things, and not pieces of good things, but all good things, says St. James, come from God, the Father of light. If therefore penance is good, as it is good, then the parts of it are good: from God therefore do they come, and not of our free will. It is the Lord that mortifies, that brings down, that humbles, says the scripture in sundry places. "After thou had stricken my thigh (says [Jeremiah xxxi.](#)) I was ashamed. Lo!" he says, "After thou had stricken me", and therefore prays he; even in the last words almost he writes, "Turn us, Lord, and we shall be turned," which David uses very often. Wherefore, first of all, if thou wouldst have this part of penance, as the whole is God's gift, so for this part go thou unto God, and make some little prayer, as thou canst, unto his mercy for the same, in this or the like sort:

"Merciful Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, because I have sinned, and done wickedly, and through thy goodness have received a desire of repentance, whereto this thy long-sufferance does draw my hard heart, I beseech thee, for thy mercy's sake in Christ, to work the same repentance in me, and by thy Spirit, power, and grace, so to humble, mortify, and fear my conscience for my sins, to salvation, that in thy good time thou may comfort and quicken me again, through Jesus Christ, thy dearly beloved Son. Amen."

After this sort, I say, or otherwise, as thou thinks good, if thou wilt have this first part, contrition or sorrow for thy sins, do thou beg it of God through Christ. And when thou hast asked it, as I have laboured to drive thee from trusting in thyself, so now I go about to move thee from flattering of thyself; from sluggishness and negligence, to be diligent to use these means following.

First unto prayer, which I would thou should use as thou can; secondly, get God's law as a glass to look in, for in it and by it comes the true knowledge of sin, without which knowledge there can be no sorrow. For how can a man sorrow for his sins, who knows not his sins? As when a man is sick, the first step to health is to know his sickness; even so to salvation, the first step is to know that thy damnation is due for thy sins.

The law of God therefore must be gotten and well looked in, that is, we must look in it spiritually, and not corporally or carnally, as the outward word or letter declares and utters; and so our Saviour teaches us in Matthew, expounding the sixth and seventh commandment, not only after the outward deed, but also after the heart; making there the anger of the heart a kind of murder, and lusting after another man's wife, a kind of adultery.

And this is one of the differences between God's law and men's law; that of this, man's law I mean, I am not condemnable, so long as I outwardly observe the same. But God's law goes to the root, and to the heart, condemning me for the inward motion, although outwardly I live most holily. As for example: if I kill no man, though in my heart I hate, man's law condemns me not, but God's law does otherwise. And why? for it sees the fountain whence the evil does spring. If hatred were taken out of the heart, then loftiness in looks, detraction in tongue, and murder by hand, could never ensue. If lusting were out of the heart, curiosity in countenance, wantonness in words, indecent boldness in body, would not appear.

Since therefore this outward evil springs out of the inward corruption, seeing God's law also is a law of liberty, as says St. James, (chap. i.) and spiritual, as says St. Paul, ([Rom. vii.](#)) it is to be understood perfectly and spiritually, if we will truly come to the knowledge of our sins. For of this inward corruption, reason knows but little or nothing. "I had not known," says Paul, ([Rom. vii.](#)) "that lusting," (which to reason, and to them which are guided only by reason, is thought but a trifle), "I had not known," says he, "this lusting to have been sin, if the law had not said, Thou shalt not lust."

To the knowledge therefore of our sins, without which we cannot repent, or be sorry for our sin, let us secondly get us God's law as a glass to look in, and that not only literally, outwardly, or partly, but also spiritually, inwardly, and thoroughly. Let us consider the heart, and so shall we see the foul spots we are stained withal, at least inwardly; whereby we may the rather be moved to hearty sorrow and sighing. For, as St. Austin says, it is a glass which fears (affrights, editor) nobody; but even look, as thou art, so it paints thee out.

In the law we see it is a foul spot, not to love the Lord our God with all, all, I say, our heart, soul, power, might and strength; and that continually.

In the law it is a foul spot, not only to make to ourselves any graven image or similitude, to bow thereto, &c., but also not to frame ourselves wholly after the image (of God, [Gen. 1:26](#), editor) whereto we are made, not to bow to it, to worship it.

In the law we see that it is a foul spot, not only to take God's name in vain, but also not earnestly, heartily, and even continually to call upon his name only; to give thanks unto him, to believe, to publish, and live according to his holy word.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be an open profaner of the Sabbath-day, but also not to rest from our own words and works, that the Lord might both speak and work in us and by us. Also not to hear his holy word, not to communicate his sacraments, not to give occasion to others to holiness by our example in godly works, and reverent esteeming of the ministry of his word.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be an open disobeyer of our parents and magistrates, masters, and such as are in any authority over us, but also not to honour such even in our hearts, not to give thanks to God for them, not to pray for them, to aid, to help, or relieve them, to bear with their infirmities, &c.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot in our souls, not only to be a man-killer in hatred, malice, proud looks, brags, backbiting, railing, or bodily slaughter, but also not to love our neighbours, yea, our enemies, even in our hearts, and to declare the same in all our gestures, words, and works.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be a whoremonger in lusting in our hearts, in wanton looking, in unclean and wanton talking, in actual doing dishonestly with our neighbour's wife, daughter, servant, &c.; but also not to be chaste, sober, temperate in heart, looks, tongue, apparel, deeds, and to help others thereunto accordingly, &c.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to covet in heart, to flatter in look or word, lie, colour, &c. in deed, and to take away anything which pertains to another, but also in heart, countenance, word, and deed, not to keep, save, and defend that which pertains to thy neighbour, as thou wouldst thine own.

In God's law we may see it is a foul spot, not only to lie or bear false witness against any man, but also not to have as great care over thy neighbour's name, as over thine own.

Sin in God's law we may see it is, and a foul spot, nor only to consent to evil, lust, or carnal desires, but even the very natural or carnal lusts and desires themselves, (for so I may call them, nature itself being now so corrupted,) are sin; as self-love, and many such. By reason whereof I trow there is none that looks well herein; but though he is blameless to the world, and fair to the show, yet certainly inwardly his face is foul arrayed, and so shameful, proud, diseased, and loathsome, that he cannot but be sorry at the contemplation thereof, and that so much more, by how much he continues to look in this glass accordingly.

And thus much concerning the second mean to the stirring up of sorrow for sin, that next unto prayer we should look in God's law spiritually; the which looking, if we use with

prayer, as I said, let us not doubt but at length God's Spirit will work as now, to such as believe; for to the unbelievers all is in vain, their eyes are stark blind, they can see nothing; to such as believe, (I say,) I trust something is done even already. But if neither by prayer, nor by looking in God's law spiritually, as yet thy hard unbelieving heart feels no sorrow nor lamenting for thy sins; thirdly, look upon the penalty attached to God's law: for as to man's law there is a penalty affixed, so is there to God's law a penalty, and that no small one, but such a great one as cannot but make us fear if we believe it, for all is in vain if we are faithless so as not to believe before we feel.

This penalty is God's malediction or curse: "Lo! accursed," says he, "is all," no exception, all, says God, "which continues not in all things, (for he that is guilty of one is guilty of the whole, says St. James,) in all things therefore (says the Holy Ghost) which are written in the book of the law to do them." He says not to hear them, to talk of them, to dispute of them, but to do them.

Who is he now that does these? Rara avis (a rare bird, editor), few such birds, yea none at all. For all are gone out of the way, though not outwardly by word or deed, yet inwardly, at least by default and wanting of that which is required; so that a child of one night's age is not pure, but (by reason of birth-sin) in danger of God's malediction; much more then we, which, alas! have drunken in iniquity, as it were water, as Job says. ([Chap. xv.](#)) But yet, alas! we quake not.

Tell me now, good brother, why do you so lightly consider God's curse that for your past sins you are so careless, as though you had made a covenant with death and damnation, as the wicked did in Isaiah's time? What is God's curse? At the pope's curse with hook, belly and candle, oh! how we trembled which heard it, and though the same was not directed unto us, but unto others. For is God's curse, which is incomparably more fell and importable (severe and unbearable, editor) and is directed to us, yea, hanging over us all reason of our sins, alas! how careless are we! Oh! faithless hard hearts! oh! Jezebel's guests! rocked and laid in a sleep in her bed! ([Rev. ii.](#)) Oh! wicked wretches! which being come into the depth of sin, do entomb the same. Oh! sorrowless sinners, and shameless harlots!

Is not the anger of a king death? And is the anger of the King of all kings a matter to be so lightly regarded as we do regard it, who are so reckless for our sins that we slug and sleep it out? As wax melts away at the heat of the fire, (says David,) so do the wicked perish at the face or countenance of the Lord. If, dearly beloved, his face is so terrible and intolerable for sinners and the wicked, what think we his hand is? At the face or appearing of God's anger, the earth trembles, but we, earth, earth, yea, stones, iron, flints, tremble nothing at all. It will not tremble in hearing, woe unto us, for then we shall be crushed in pieces, in feeling. If a lion roar, the casts quake; but we are worse than beasts, which quake not at the roaring of the lion; I mean the Lord of hosts. And why? because the curse of God, hardness of heart, is already fallen upon us, or else we could not but lament and tremble for our sins, if not

for the shame and foulness hereof, yet at least for the malediction and curse of God, which hangs over us for our sins.

Lord, be merciful unto us, for thy Christ's sake, and spare us; in thine anger remember thy mercy towards us. Amen. And thus much for the third thing to the moving of us to sorrow for our sins, that is, for the penalty affixed to God's law, I mean, for the malediction and curse of God. But if our hearts are so hard, that we feel not yet hearty sorrow for our sins, let us, fourthly, set before us examples past and present, old and new, that thereby the Holy Spirit may be effectual to work in his time this work of sorrowing for our sin.

Look upon God's anger for sin in Adam and Eve, for eating a piece of an apple. Were not they, the dearest creatures of God, cast out of paradise? Were not they subject to mortality, travail, labour, &c.? Was not the earth accursed for their sins? Do not we all feel the same, men in labour, women in travailing with child, and all in death, mortality, and misery, even in this life? And was God so angry for their sin, and will he, being the same God, say nothing to us for ours, (alas!) much more horrible than the eating once of one piece of one apple?

In the time of Noah and Lot, God destroyed the whole world with water, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Zeboim and Admah, with fire and brimstone from heaven for their sins; namely, for their whoredoms, pride, idleness, unmercifulness to the poor, tyranny, &c. In which wrath of God even the very babes, birds, fowls, fishes, herds, trees, and grass perished; and think we that nothing will be spoken to us, who are much worse and more abominable than they? For all men may see, if they will, that the whoredoms, pride, unmercifulness, tyranny, &c. of England in this age far passes any age that ever was before. Lot's wife looking back was turned into a salt stone; and will our looking back again, yea, our running back again to our wickedness, do us no hurt? If we were not already blind, we should blush. Pharaoh's heart was hardened, so that no miracle could convert him; if ours were any thing soft, we should begin to sob.

Of six hundred thousand men, only two entered into the land of promise, because they had ten times sinned against the Lord, as he himself says, ([Numb. xiv.](#);) and think we that God will not swear in his wrath, that we shall never enter into his rest, which have sinned so many ten times as we have hairs of our heads and beards, (I tear,) and yet we repent not.

The man that swore, and he that gathered sticks on the sabbathday, were stoned to death; but we think our swearing is no sin, our bibbing (drinking, editor), rioting, yea, fornication on the sabbath-day, pleases God, or else we would something amend our manners.

Eli's negligence in correcting his sons, brake his neck in two; but ours, which pamper up our children like puppets, will put us to no plunge (difficulty, editor). Eli's sons, for disobeying their father's admonition, brought over them God's vengeance; and will our stubbornness do nothing?

Saul's malice to David, Ahab's displeasure against Naboth, brought their blood to the ground for dogs to eat; yea, their children were hanged up and slain for this; but we continue in malice, envy, and murders as though we were able to wage war with the Lord.

David's adultery with Bathsheba was visited on the child born; on David's daughter, defiled by her brother; and on his children, one slaying another; his wives defiled by his own son; on himself driven out of his realm in his old age, and otherwise also, although he most heartily repented his sin. But we think we are more dear unto God than David, which yet was a man after God's own heart, or else we could not but tremble, and begin to repent.

The rich glutton's gay paunch-filling, what did it? It brought him to hell; and have we a placard (a notice or declaration, editor) that God will do nothing to us?

Achan's subtle theft provoked God's anger against all Israel; and our subtilty, yea, open extortion, is it so fine and politic that God cannot espy it?

Gehazi's covetousness brought the leprosy upon him and on all his seed. Judas also hanged himself. But the covetousness of England is of another cloth and colour. Well, if it were so, the same tailor will cut it accordingly

Ananias and Sapphira, by lying, linked to themselves sudden death; but ours now prolongs our life, the longer to last in eternal death.

The false witnesses of the two judges against Susanne lighted on their own pates; and so will ours do at length.

But what go I about to avouch ancient examples, where daily experience teaches? The sweating sickness of the other year, the storms the winter following, call upon us to weigh them in the same balances. The hanging and killing of men themselves, which are (alas!) too rife (frequent, editor) in all places, require us to register them in the same rolls. At the least in children, infants, and such like, which cannot yet utter sin by word or deed, we see God's anger against sin in punishing them by sickness, death, mishap, or otherwise, so plainly that we cannot but groan and lament again, in that we have gushed out this more abundantly in word and deed.

And here with me a little look on God's anger yet so fresh, that we cannot but smell it, although we stop our noses never so much; I pray God we smell it not more fresh hereafter; I mean it forsooth, for I know you look for it, in our dear late sovereign lord the king's majesty (King Edward VI, editor). You all know he was but a child in years; defiled he was not with notorious offences. Defiled, quoth I? nay, rather adorned with so many goodly gifts and wonderful qualities, as never prince was from the beginning of the world, should I speak of his wisdom, of his ripeness in judgment, of his learning, of his godly zeal, heroical heart, fatherly care for his commons, nurse-like solicitude for religion, &c. Nay, so many things are to be spoken in commendation of God's exceeding graces in this child, that, as Sallust writes of Carthage, I had rather speak nothing than too little, for too much is too little. This gift God gave unto us Englishmen before all nations under the sun, and that of

his exceeding love towards us. But, alas, and well away, for our unthankfulness' sake, for our sin's sake, for our carnality, and profane living, God's anger has touched not only the body, but also the mind of our king by a long sickness, and at length has taken him away by death, death, cruel death, fearful death.

Oh! if God's judgment is begun in him which, as he was the chiefest, so I think he was the holiest and godliest in the realm of England, alas! what will it be on us, whose sins are overgrown to our heads, so that they are climbed up into heaven! I pray you, my good brethren, know that God's anger towards us for our sins cannot but be great; yea, we see it was so great, that our good king could not bear it. What followed to Jewry after the death of Josias? May God save England, and give us repentance! My heart will not suffer me to tarry longer herein. I think this will thrust out some tears of repentance.

If therefore prayer for God's fear, the looking in God's glass, and the penalty thereto, will not burst open thy blackish heart, yet I think the tossing to and fro of these examples, and especially of our late king, and this troublesome time, will tumble some tears out of your heart, if you still pray for God's Spirit accordingly. For who are you, (think always with yourself that God should spare you more than them whose examples thou hast heard? What friends have you? Were not these kings prophets, apostles, learned, and come of holy stocks? I deceive myself (think you with yourself) if I believe that God, being the same God that he was, will spare me, whose wickedness is no less, but much more than some of theirs. He hates sin now as much as ever he did. The longer he spares, the greater vengeance will fall; the deeper he draws his bow, the sorer will the shaft pierce.

But if yet your heart is so hardened that all this will not move you, surely you are in a very evil state, and remedy now know I none. What! said I, none? know I none? Yes; there is one which is sure to serve, if anything will serve. You look to know what this is; it is the passion and death of Jesus Christ. You know that the cause why Christ became man, and suffered as he suffered, was the sins of his people, that he might save them from the same. Consider the greatness of the sore, I mean sin, by the greatness of the Surgeon and of the remedy. Who was the Surgeon? No angel, no saint, no archangel, no power, no creature in heaven or in earth, but only He by whom all things were made, all things are ruled, also even God's own darling and only beloved Son becoming man.

Oh! what a great thing is this that could not be done by the angels, archangels, potentates, powers, or all the creatures of God, without his own Son, who yet must needs be thrust out of heaven, as a man would say, to take our nature, and become man. Here have you the Surgeon; great was the cure that this mighty Lord took in hand.

Now what was the remedy? It was purchased dearly, and of many compositions; I cannot recite all, but rather must leave it to your hearty consideration. Three-and-thirty years was he curing our wounds: he sought it earnestly by fasting, watching, praying, &c. The same night that he was betrayed, I read how busy he was about a remedy in the garden, when he,

lying flat on the ground, praying with tears, and that of blood, not a few, but so many as flowed down on the ground, crying in this sort: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup depart from me;" that is, if it be possible that the sin of mankind can be otherwise taken away, grant that it may be so. Thou heard Moses crying, for the idolaters; thou heard Lot for the Zoarites; Samuel, David, and many others, for the Israelites; and, dear Father, I only am thine own Son, as thou hast said, in whom thou art well pleased; wilt thou not hear me? I have by the space of three-and thirty years done always thy will; I have so humbled myself, that I would become an abject among men to obey thee; therefore, dear Father, if it be possible, grant my request, save mankind now without any further labour or remedy." But yet, (says he,) "not as I will, but as thou wilt."

But, sirs, what heard he? Though he sweat blood and water in making his remedy for our sore of sin, yet it framed (sufficed, editor) not. Twice he cried without comfort; yea, though God sent an angel to comfort him, we yet knot that this remedy was not allowed for sufficient, until Christ Jesus was betrayed, forsaken of all his disciples, forsworn of his dearly beloved, bound like a thief, belied, buffeted, whipped, scourged, crowned with thorns, derided, crucified, racked, wailed, hanged up between two thieves, cursed and railed upon, mocked in misery, and had given up the ghost. Then bowed down the head of Christ, that is, God the Father, which is the head of Christ; then he allowed the remedy to be sufficient and good for the healing of our sore, which is sin. Now God would abide us, because the damnation or guiltiness was taken away by this Lamb, thus offered once for all!

So that here, dearly beloved, we as in a glass may see God's great judgment and anger against sin for the bruising of our blackish hard hearts. The Lord of lords, the King of kings, the brightness of God's glory, the Son of God, the darling of his Father, in whom he is well pleased, hangs between two thieves, crying for thee and me, and for us all, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Oh! hard hearts that we have, which make light of sin. Look on this; look on the very heart of Christ, pierced with a spear, wherein you may see and read God's horrible anger for sin. Woe to thy hard heart that pierced it.

And thus much for the first part of repentance; I mean, for the means of working contrition: first, use prayer; then look on God's law; thirdly, see his curse; fourthly, set examples of his anger before you; and, last of all, set before you the death of Christ. From this and prayer cease not until you feel some hearty sorrow for your sin; which when you feel, then labour for the second part, that is, for faith, on this sort.

II. As first, in contrition, I willed you not to trust to your free will for the attaining of it, so do I will you in this. Faith is so far from the reach of man's free will, that to reason, it is plain foolishness; you must first go to God; whose gift it is; you must, I say, get you to the Father of mercy, whose work it is, that, as he has brought you down by contrition, and humbled you, so he would give you faith, raise you up, and exalt you.

On this manner therefore with the apostles, and the poor man in the gospel, that cried, "Lord, increase our faith; Lord, help my unbelief;" pray you and say, "O merciful God, and dear Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom as thou art well pleased, so hast thou commanded us to hear him; forasmuch as he often bids us to ask of thee, and thereto promises that thou wilt hear us, and grant us that which in his name we shall ask of thee: lo! gracious Father, I am bold to beg of thy mercy, through thy Son Jesus Christ, one sparkle of true faith, and certain persuasion of thy goodness and love towards me in Christ, wherethrough I, being assured of the pardon of all my sins, by the mercies of Christ, thy Son, may be thankful to thee, love thee, and serve thee, in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life."

On this sort I say, or otherwise, as God shall move you, pray first of all, and look for your request at God's hand; and without any doubting, though forthwith you feel not the same; for oftentimes we have things of God given us long before we feel them as are would do. Now unto this prayer, use these means following:

After prayer for faith, which I would should be first; secondly, because the same springs out of the hearing, not of masses, matins, canons, councils, doctors, decrees, but out of the hearing of God's word; get God's word, but not that part which serves especially to contrition, that is the law, but the other part, which serves especially to consolation and certain persuasion of God's love towards thee, that is the gospel or publication of God's mercy in Christ; I mean the free promises.

But here you must know, that there are two kinds of promises; one, which is properly of the law, another, which is properly of the gospel. In the promises of the law we may indeed behold God's mercy, but so that it hangs upon the condition of our worthiness; as, if thou love the Lord with all thy heart, &c., thou shalt find mercy. This kind of promises, though it declare unto us God's love, which promises where he need not, yet unto him that feels not Christ, which is the end of the law, they are so far from comforting, that with the law they utterly bring man to deep despair, so greatly are we corrupted, for none loves God as he ought to do. From these therefore get thee to the other promises of the gospel, in which we may see such plenty and frank liberality of God's goodness, that we cannot but be much comforted, though we have very deeply sinned.

For these promises of the gospel do not hang on the condition of our worthiness, as the promises of the law do, but they depend and hang on God's truth; that as God is true, so they cannot but be performed to all them which lay hold on them by faith I had almost said, which cast them not away by unbelief.

Mark in them therefore two things, namely, that they are free promises without any condition of our worthiness, as also that they are universal, offered to all; all, I say, who are not so stubborn, as by unbelief, to keep their hands still, whereby they should receive this alms in their bosom. As concerning infants and children, you know I now speak not, but

concerning such as are of years of discretion; and now you look that I should give you a taste of these promises, which are both free and universal, excepting none but such as except themselves. Well, you shall have one or two for a say (specimen, editor).

In the third of John, says our Saviour, "So God loved the world, that he would give his darling, his own only Son, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Lo! sir, he says not that some might have life; but all, says he. And what all? All that love him with all their hearts, all that have lived a godly life? Nay, all that believe in him; although thou hast lived a most wicked and horrible life, if now thou believe in him, thou shalt be saved. Is not this sweet?

Again, says Christ, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are laden, and I will refresh you." Let us a little look on this letter. "Come unto me." Who should come? Lords, priests, holy men, monks, friars; yea, cobblers, tinkers, harlots, thieves, murderers also, if they lament their sins." Come unto me (says he) all ye that labour and are laden," that is, which are afraid of your sins. And what wilt thou do, Lord? "And I will refresh you," says he. Oh! what a thing is this, "And I will refresh you." Wot (know, editor) you who spake this? He that never told a lie; he is the truth, there was never guile found in his mouth, and now will he be untrue to you, good brother, who are sorry for your grievous sins? No, truly! Heaven and earth shall pass and perish, but his word shall never fail. Saint Paul says, "God would have all men saved." Lo! he exempts none. And to Titus, "The grace of God brings salvation to all men." As from Adam all have received sin to damnation, so by Christ all have grace offered to salvation, if they reject not the same. I speak not now of infants, I say, and I need not enter into the matter of predestination. In preaching of repentance, I would gather where I could with Christ. "As surely as I live, (says God,) I will not the death of a sinner." Art thou a sinner? Yea. Lo! God swears he desires not thy death. How can thou now perish? Consider with yourself what profit you should have to believe this to be true to others, if not to yourself also. Satan does so. Rather consider with Peter, that the promise of salvation pertains not only to them which are nigh, that is, to such as are fallen a little, but also to all whom the Lord has called, be they ever so far off

Lo! now by me the Lord calls thee, thou man, thou woman, that art very far off. The promise therefore pertains to thee: needs must thou be saved, except thou with Satan say God is false; and yet if thou do so, God is faithful, and cannot deny himself; as thou shalt feel by his plagues in hell, for so dishonouring God as to think that he is not true. Will he be found false now? The matter hangs not on your worthiness; but it hangs on God's truth. Take hold on it, and I warrant you Christ is the propitiation for our sins, yea, for the sins of the whole world; believe this, man, I know you believe it; say therefore in your heart, still, Lord, increase my faith; Lord, help my unbelief. Blessed are they which see not this by reason, but yet believe; hope, man, past all hope, as Abraham did.

And thus much for a taste of these promises which are everywhere not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old. Read the latter end of Leviticus, xxvi., the prophet Isaiah, xxx. where he says, God tarries, looking for thee to show thee mercy; also the 40th, and so on to the 60th. Read also [Psa. xxxii.](#), Joel, ii. &c.

Howbeit, if this will not serve, if yet thou feel no faith, no certain persuasion of God's love, then unto prayer add diligent considering of the free and universal promises of the gospel. Thirdly set before thee those benefits which God has heretofore given thee, and at present gives thee. Consider how he has made you a man or a woman, who might have made you a toad, a dog. And why did he this? Verily, because he loved you. And do you think, that if he loved thee when you were not, to make thee such a one as he most graciously has made thee, will he not now love thee, being his handiwork? Does he hate anything that he has made? Is there unablensness with him? Does he love for a day and so farewell? No, indeed, he loves to the end, his mercy endures for ever. Say therefore with Job, "To the work of thy hands put thy helping hand." Again, has he not made you a Christian man or woman, whereas if he would, he might have made you a Turk or pagan? This you know he did of love. And do you think his love if lessened, if you lament your sin? Is his hand shortened for helping you? Can a women forget the child of her womb? And though she should do it, yet will not I forget thee, says the Lord. He has given you limbs to see, hear, go, &c.; he has given you wit, reason, discretion, &c.; he has long spared you, and borne with you, when you never purposed to repent; and now you repent, will he not give you mercy? Wherefore does he suffer you to live at this present to hear me speak this and suffer me to speak this, but of love to us all? Oh! therefore let us pray him, that he would add to this, that we might believe these love-tokens that he loves us, and indeed he will do it. Lord, open our eyes, in thy gifts to see thy gracious goodness. Amen.

But tarry in this I will not. Let every man consider God's benefits past and present, public and private, spiritual and corporeal, to confirm his faith concerning the promises of the gospel, for the pardon of his sins. I will now endeavour to show you a fourth means to confirm your faith in this, even by examples. Of these there are in the scriptures very many, as also daily experience diversely teaches the same, if we were diligent to observe things accordingly; wherefore I will be more brief herein, having respect to time, which steals fast away.

Adam in paradise transgressed grievously, as the painful punishment, which we all as yet do feel, proves, if nothing else did. Though by reason of his sin he displeased God sorely, and ran away from God, for he would have hid himself, yea, he would have made God the causer of his sin, because he gave him such a mate, so far was he from asking mercy; yet notwithstanding all this, God turned his fierce wrath neither upon him nor Eve who also required not mercy, but upon the serpent, Satan promising unto them a seed, Jesus Christ, by whom they at length should be delivered. In token whereof, though they were cast out

of paradise for their nurture (instruction or correction, editor), to serve in sorrow since they would not serve in joy; yet he made them apparel to cover their bodies, a visible sacrament and token of his invisible love and grace concerning their souls. If God was so merciful to Adam, who so brake his commandment, and rather blamed God than asked mercy; thinkest thou, O man, that he will not be merciful to thee, which blamest thyself, and desirest pardon?

To Cain he offered mercy, if he would have asked it. "What hast thou done? (says God:) the voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me out of the earth." O merciful Lord, Cain should have said, I confess it! But, alas! he did not so, and therefore said God, "Now," that is, in that thou desirest not mercy, now, "I say, be thou accursed," &c. Lo, to the reprobate he offered mercy, and will he deny it to thee, which art his child?

Noah, did not he sin, and was dumb? Good Lot also both in Sodom dissembled a little with the angels, prolonging the time, and out of Sodom he fell very foully ([Gen. xix.](#)) as did Judah and the patriarchs against Joseph; but yet I ween (doubt not, editor) they found mercy. Moses, Miriam, Aaron, though they stumbled a little, yet they received mercy; yea, the people in the wilderness often sinned and displeased God, so that he was purposed to have destroyed them. Let me alone, says he to Moses, that I may destroy them; but Moses did not let him alone, for he prayed still for them, and therefore God spared them. If the people were spared through Moses' prayer, they not praying with him, but rather worshipping their golden calf, eating, drinking, and making good cheer, why should thou doubt whether God will be merciful to thee, having, as indeed thou hast, One much better than Moses to pray for thee ([Numb. xiv.](#)) and with thee, even Jesus Christ, who sits on the right hand of his Father, and prays for us, being no less faithful in his Father's house, the church, than Moses was in the synagogue? David the good king had a foul foil (fall, editor) with Bathsheba. whereunto he added also a mischievous murder, causing her husband, his most faithful soldier, Uriah, to be slain with an honest company of his most valiant men of war, and that with the sword of the uncircumcised.

In this his sin, though he lay asleep a great while, (as many do now-a-days, God give them good waking!) thinking, that by the sacrifices he offered, all was well, and that God was content; yet at length, when the prophet by a parable had opened the poke, and brought him in remembrance of his own sin in such sort, that he gave judgment against himself, then he quaked. Eli's sacrifices had no more taken away his sins, than our sir John's trentals (Romish priest's services, editor) and wagging of his fingers over the heads of such as lie asleep in their sins, out of the which, when they are awaked, they will well see that it is neither mass nor matins, blessing nor crossing, will serve. Then, I say, David cried out, saying, "I have sinned against my Lord and good God, which has done so much for me; indeed I caused Uriah to be killed; I have sinned, I have sinned. What shall I do? I have sinned, and am worthy of eternal damnation." But what says God by his prophet? "The Lord has taken away thy sins; thou shalt not die." "O good God," he said, "but I have sinned," but he said so

from his heart and not from the lips only, as Pharaoh and Saul did, and he speedily heard, "thou shalt not die; the Lord has taken away thy sins," or rather, has laid them upon another, yea, translated them upon his Son Jesus Christ, who bare there, and not only them, but thine and mine also, if we will now but cry, from our hearts, "We have sinned, good Lord, we have done wickedly, enter not into judgment with us, but be merciful unto us after thy great mercy, and according to the multitude of thy compassions do away our iniquities, &c." For indeed God is not the God of David only; he is the God of all, so that he or she, whosoever they are, that call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. In confirmation whereof this history is written, as are also the others which I have recited, and many more which I might recite. As of Manasses, the wicked king, who slew Isaiah the prophet, and wrought very much wickedness, yet the Lord showed mercy upon him, being in prison, as his prayer does teach us. Nebuchadnezzar, though for a time he bare God's anger, yet at length he found mercy. The city of Nineveh also found favour with God, as did many others, which I omit for time's sake, and will bring forth one or two out of the New Testament, that we may see God is the same God in the New Testament that he was in the Old.

I might tell you of many, if I should speak of the lunatic, such as were possessed with devils, lame, blind, dumb, deaf; lepers, &c., but time will not suffice me; one or two therefore shall serve. Mary Magdalen had seven devils, but yet they were cast out of her; and of all others she was the first that Christ appeared unto after his resurrection. Thomas would not believe Christ's resurrection, though many told him which had seen and felt him, by reason whereof a man might have thought that his sins would have cast him away. "Except I should see and feel, says he, I will not believe." Oh! wilful Thomas, "I will not" said he. But Christ appeared unto him, and he will not loose him, as he will not loose you, good brother, if with Thomas you will keep company with the disciples, as Thomas did. Peter's fall was ugly; he accursed himself if ever he knew Christ, and that for fear of a girl, and this not once, but even three divers times, and that in the hearing of Christ his Master; but yet the third time Christ looked back, and cast on him his eye of grace, so that he went out, and wept bitterly. And after Christ's resurrection, not only did the angels direct the women to tell Peter that Christ was risen, but Christ himself appeared to him alone, such a good Lord is he. The thief hanging on the cross said but this: "Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom, remember me;" and what answer had he? "This day," said Christ, "shalt thou be with me in paradise." What a comfort is this! since he is now the same Christ to you, and to me, and to us all, if we will run unto him; for he is the same Christ today, and tomorrow, and until he come to judgment. Then indeed he will be inexorable, but now is he more ready to give than you are to ask. If you cry, he hears you, yea, before you cry. (Isaiah.) Cry therefore, be bold, man; he is not partial. "Call," says he, "and I will hear thee. Ask, and thou shalt have; seek, and thou shalt find, though not at the first, yet at the length." (*Matt. vii.*) If he tarry awhile, it is but to try you; he is coming, and will not be long. (*Heb. x.*)

Thus have you four means which you must use to the attainment of faith or certain persuasion of God's mercy towards you, which is the second part of penance, namely 1, Prayer. 2, The free and universal promises of Gods grace. 3, The remembrance of the benefits of God, past and present. 4, The examples of God's mercy. Which, although they might suffice, yet will I put one more to them, which alone of itself is fully sufficient: I mean the death of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, which, if thou set before the eyes of thy mind, it will confirm thy placard (grant, editor); for it is the great seal of England as they say, yea, of all the world, for the confirmation of all patents and perpetuities of the everlasting life, whereunto we are all called.

If I thought these which I have before recited were not sufficient to confirm your faith of God's love towards such as do repent, I would tarry longer herein; but because both I have been long, and also I trust you have some exercise of conscience in this daily, (or else you are to blame,) I will but touch and go. Consider with yourselves what we are, miserable wretches, and enemies to God. Consider what God is, even he which has all power, majesty, might, glory, riches, &c., perfectly of himself, and needs nothing, but has all things. Consider what Christ is concerning his Godhead, co-equal with his Father, even him by whom all things were made, are ruled and governed concerning his manhood, the only darling of his Father, in whom is all his joy. Now, sirs, what a love is this, that this God, which needs nothing, should give wholly his own self to thee his enemy, wreaking his wrath upon himself in this his Son, as a man may say, to spare you, to save you, to win you, to buy you, to have you, to enjoy you for ever. Because thy sin had separated thee from him, that thou might come speedily into his company again, and therein remain, he himself became, as a man would say, a sinner, or rather sin itself, even a malediction or curse, that we sinners, we accursed by our sin, might, by his oblation or offering for our sins, by his curse be delivered from sin and malediction. For by sin he destroyed sin, killing death, Satan, and sin, by their own weapons, and that for thee and me, (O man!) if we cast it not away by unbelief Oh! wonderful love of God! Who ever heard of such a love, the Father of heaven, for us his enemies, to give his own dear Son Jesus Christ! And that not only to be our brother, to dwell among us, but also to the death of the cross for us! Oh, wonderful love of Christ to us all! He was content and willing to work this feat for us. Was there any dove like to this dove?

God indeed has commended his charity and love to us herein, that when we were very enemies unto him, he would give his own Son for us; that we, being men, might become, as you would say, gods, God would become man; that we, being mortal, might become immortal, the immortal God would become mortal man;- that we, earthly wretches, might be citizens of heaven, the Lord of heaven would become, as a man would say, earthly; that we, being accursed, might be blessed, God would be accursed; that we, by our father Adam being brought out of paradise into the puddle of all pain, might be redeemed, and brought into paradise again, God would be our Father and an Adam thereunto; that we, having nothing,

might have all things, God having all things, would have nothing; that we, being vassals and slaves to all, even to Satan the fiend, might be lords of all, and of Satan; the Lord of all would become a vassal and a slave to us all, and in danger of Satan. Oh, love incomprehensible! If the gracious good Lord disdained not to give his own Son, his own heart's joy, for us his very enemies, before we thought to beg any such thing at his hands, yea, before we were; who can think otherwise but that with Him he will give us all good things? If when we hated him and fled away from him, he sent his Son to seek us, who can think otherwise than that now, we loving him and lamenting because we love him no more, he will for ever love us? He that gives the greater to his enemies, will not he give the lesser, think you, to his friends? God has given his own Son, than which nothing is greater, to us his enemies, and we now being become his friends, will he deny us faith and pardon of our sins which, though they are great, yet in comparison they are nothing at all? Christ Jesus would give his own self for us when we willed it not, and will he now deny us faith, if we will it? This will is his earnest, that he has given us truly to look indeed for the thing willed. And look thou for it indeed; for as he has given thee to will, so will he give thee to do.

Jesus Christ gave his life for our evils, and by his death delivered us. Oh then, since he lives now, and cannot die, will he forsake us? His heart's blood was not too dear for us when we asked it not; what then can be now too dear for us asking it? Is he a changeling? Is he mutable as man is? Can he repent of his gifts? Did he not foresee our falls? Paid not he the price therefore? Because he saw we should fall sorely, therefore he would suffer sorely, yea, if his suffering had not been enough, he would yet once more come again. I am sure that God the Father, if the death of his Son incarnate would not serve, would himself and the Holy Ghost also become incarnate, and die for us (it is better to avoid such suppositions, editor). This death of Christ, therefore; look on as the very pledge of God's love towards them whosoever thou art, how deeply soever thou hast sinned. See God's hands are nailed, they cannot strike thee; his feet also, he cannot run from thee; his arms are wide open to embrace thee, his head hangs down to kiss thee, his very heart is open, so that therein see, look, spy, behold, and thou shalt see nothing therein but love, love, love to thee; hide thee therefore, lay thy head there with the evangelist.

This is the cleft of the rock where lilies stood. This is the pillow of down for all aching heads. Anoint your head with this oil, let this ointment embalm your head and wash your face. Tarry thou here, and quite sure are you. I warrant thee. Say with Paul, What can separate of from the love of God? Can death, can poverty, sickness, hunger, or any misery persuade you now that God loves thee not? Nay, nothing can separate you from the love wherewith God has loved you in Christ Jesus; whom he loves he loves to the end: so that now where abundance of sin has been in you, the more is the abundance of grace. But to what end? Even that as -sin has reigned to death, as you see, to the killing of God's Son, so now grace

must reign to life, to the honouring of God's Son, who is now alive, and cannot die any more.

So that they which by faith feel this, cannot any more die to God, but to sin, whereunto they are dead and buried with Christ. As Christ therefore lives, so do they, and that to God, to righteousness and holiness. The life which they live is in the faith of the Son of God; whereby you see that now I am slipped into that which I made the third part of penance, namely, newness of life, which I could not so have done if it were a part of itself indeed, as it is an effect or fruit of the second part, that is, of faith or trust in God's mercy. For he that believes, that is, he who certainly is persuaded sin is such a thing that it is the cause of all misery, and of itself so greatly angers God, that in heaven or in earth nothing could appease his wrath, save only the death and precious blood-shedding of the Son of God, in whom is all the delight and pleasure of the Father; he, I say, that is persuaded thus of sin, the same cannot but in heart abhor and quake to do or to say, yea, to think anything willingly which God's law teaches him to be sin.

Again: he that believes, that is, he who certainly is persuaded God's love to be so much towards him, that whereas through sin he was lost, and made a firebrand of hell; yet the eternal Father of mercy, who is the all-sufficient God, and needs nothing of us, or of anything that we can do, to deliver us out of hell, and to bring us into heaven, sent even his own most dear Son out of his bosom, out of heaven into hell, as a man would say, to bring us, as I said, from thence into his own bosom and mercy, we being his very enemies. He, I say, that is thus persuaded of God's love towards him, and of the price of his redemption, by the dear blood of the Lamb immaculate, Jesus Christ, the same man cannot but love God again, and of love do that which might please God, and heartily desire to do still better. Think you, that such a one as knows this by faith will willingly welter and wallow in his wilful lusts, pleasures, and fantasies? Will such a one as knows by faith Christ Jesus to have given his blood to wash him from his sins, play the sow, to wallow in his puddle of filthy sin and vice again? Nay, rather than he will be defiled again by wilful sinning, he will wash often the feet of his affections, watching over that vice still sticking in him, which as a spring continually sends out poison enough to drown and defile him, if the sweet water of Christ's passion did not wash it in God's sight, and his blood satisfy the rigour of God's justice due for the same. This blood of Christ, shed for our sins, is so dear in the sight of him that believes, that he will abhor sin in his heart, and stamp it and tread it under his feet. He knows now by his belief that it is too much, that hitherto he has set too little by it and is ashamed thereof; therefore for the residue of his life he purposes to take better heed to himself than he did before: because he sees by his faith the grievousness of God's anger, that foulness of his sin, the greatness of God's mercy, and of Christ's love towards him, he will now be heedful (careful, editor) to pray to God to give him his grace accordingly; that as with his eyes, tongue, hands, feet, &c. he has displeased God, doing his own will, even so now with the same eyes, tongue, ears, hands,

feet, &c. he may displease his own self, and do God's will. He will not willingly do that which might renew the death of the Son of God? He knows he has too much sin in him unwillingly, so that thereto he will not add willing offences.

This willing and witting (knowing, editor) offending and sinning, whosoever flatters himself therein, evidently demonstrates and shows that he never yet tasted of Christ truly; he never was truly persuaded or believed how foul a thing sin is, how grievous a thing God's anger is, how joyful and precious a thing God's mercy in Christ is, how exceeding broad, wide, high, and deep Christ's love is. Perchance he can write, prate, talk, and preach of this; but yet he in part by faith never felt this. For if he once felt this indeed, then would he be so far from continuing in sin willingly: and wittingly, that he would wholly and heartily give himself over to that which is contrary; I mean, to a new life, renewing his youth, even as the eagle.

For, as we, being in the servitude of sin, demonstrated our service by giving over our members to the obeying of sin, from iniquity to iniquity; even so we, being made free from sin by faith in Jesus Christ, and endued with God's Spirit, a spirit of liberty, must needs demonstrate this freedom and liberty, by giving over our members to the obedience of the Spirit; by which we are led and guided from virtue to virtue, and all kinds of holiness. As the unbelievers declare their unbelief by the evil spirit working in them outwardly the fruits of the flesh, even so the believers declare their faith by the working of God's good Spirit in them outwardly the fruits of the Spirit. For as the devil is not dead in those which are his, but works still their damnation; so is not God dead in those who are his, but he works still to their salvation; which working is not the cause of the one or the other being in any, but only a demonstration, a sign, a fruit of the same, as the apple is not the cause of the apple-tree, but a fruit of it. ([Matt. vii.](#))

Thus, then, you see briefly that newness of life is not indeed a part of penance, but a fruit of it, a demonstration of justifying faith, a sign of God's good Spirit possessing the heart of the penitent; as the old life is a fruit of impenitence, a demonstration of a lip-faith or unbelief, a sign of Satan's spirit possessing the heart of the impenitent, which all those are that are not penitent. For I know no middle state. He that is not penitent, the same is impenitent; he that is not governed by God's Spirit, the same is governed by Satan's spirit; for all that are Christ's are governed by the Spirit of Christ, which Spirit has his fruits. All others that are not Christ's are the devil's. He that gathers not with Christ, scatters abroad.

Therefore, dearly beloved, I beseech you to consider this, and deceive not yourselves; if you are not Christ's, then you pertain to the devil of which the fruits of the flesh assure you, as whoredom, adultery, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft, envy, strife, contention, wrath, sedition, murder, drunkenness, gluttony, blasphemy, slothfulness, idleness, licentious talking, slandering, &c. If these apples grow out of the apple-trees of your heart, surely, surely the devil is at inn (abiding, editor) with you; you are his birds, whom, when

he has well fed, he will broach (spit, editor) you and eat you, chew you and chump you, world without end, in eternal woe and misery. But I am otherwise persuaded of you all; I trust you are all Christ Jesus' people and children, yea, brethren by faith.

As you see your sins in God's law, and tremble, sigh, sorrow, and sob for the same, even so you see his great mercies in his gospel and free promises, and therefore are glad, merry, and joyful, that you are accepted into God's favour, have your sins pardoned, and are endued with the good Spirit of God, even the seal and sign manual of your election in Christ before the beginning of the world; the which Spirit, for that he is the Spirit of life, is given to you, to work in you, with you, and by you, here in this life, sanctification and holiness, whereunto you are called, that you might be holy, even as your heavenly Father is holy. I beseech you all, by admonishing and warning you, that you would stir up the gift of God given to you, generally and particularly, to the edifying of his church; that is, I pray you that you would not molest the good Spirit of God, by refuelling against it when it excites and calls you to go on forwards, that he which is holy, might yet be more holy, that he which is righteous, might be more righteous; as the evil spirit moves and stirs up the filthy to be yet more filthy, the covetous to be more covetous, the wicked to be more wicked.

Declare now your repentance by works of repentance; bring forth fruits, and worthy fruits; let your sorrowing for your evils demonstrate itself by departing from the evils you have used. Let your certainty of pardon of your sins through Christ, and your joy in him be demonstrated by pursuing the good things which God's word teaches you. You are now God's workmanship in Christ Jesus, to do good works, which God has prepared for you to walk in. For the grace of God, which brings salvation unto all men, has appeared, and teaches us that we should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the mighty God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all unrighteousness, and to purge us a peculiar people unto himself; fervently given unto good works. Again ([Titus iii.](#)) for we ourselves also were in times past unwise, disobedient, deceived, serving lusts and divers pleasures, living in maliciousness and envy, full of hatred, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by the deeds of righteousness which we wrought, but of his mercy, He saved us by the fountain of the new birth, and with the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that we being once justified by his grace should be heirs of eternal life through hope. This is a true saying; but I will make an end, for I am too tedious.

Dearly beloved, repent your sins, that is, be sorry for that which is past; believe in God's mercy for pardon, how deeply soever you have sinned, and both purpose and earnestly pursue a new life, bringing forth worthy and true fruits of repentance. As you have given over your members from sin to sin, to serve the devil, your tongues to swear, to lie, to flatter,

to scold, to jest, to scoff, to lewd talk, to vain jangling, to boasting, &c., your hands to picking, groping, idleness, fighting, &c., your feet to skipping, going to evil, to dancing, &c.; your ears to hear garbles, lies, vanities, and evil things, &c.; so now give over your members to godliness, your tongues to speak, your ears to hear, your eyes to see, your mouths to taste, your hands to work, your feet to go about such things as may make to God's glory, sobriety of life, and love to your brethren, and that daily more and more diligently; for you cannot stand still, you are either better or worse today than you were yesterday. But better I trust you are, and will be, if you mark well my theme, that is, repent you; which I have humbly besought you to do, and yet once more I do again beseech you, and that for the tender mercies of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, "repent you, repent you, for the kingdom of heaven" (that is, a kingdom full of all riches, pleasures, joy, beauty, sweetness, and eternal felicity! "is at hand." The eye has not seen the like, the ear has not heard the like, the heart of man cannot conceive the treasures and pleasures of his kingdom, which is now at hand, to such as repent, that is, to such as are sorry for their sins, believe God's mercy through Christ, and earnestly purpose to lead a new life. The God of mercy, through Christ his Son, grant us his Holy Spirit, and work in our hearts this sorrow, faith, and new life, which through his grace I have spoken of, both now and for ever. Amen.

A Sermon upon the Supper of the Lord

There are two sacraments in Christ's church; the one of initiation, that is, wherewith we are enrolled, as it were, into the household and family of God, which sacrament we call baptism; the other wherewith we are conserved, fed, kept, and nourished, to continue in the same family, which is called the Lord's supper, or the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, broken for our sins, and shed for our transgressions.

Of the former sacrament, that is, of baptism, I do not design to speak now. But of the Lord's supper I purpose at present to speak, through the help of God, because we are assembled in Christ (I hope) to celebrate the same. Now that what I shall speak may be better observed and retained by you, I will tell you how and in what sort I will speak of it. Three things I would have marked, as the principles and scopes whereto I will refer all that I shall at this time speak of it. They are these: Who, What, and Wherefore. That is, First: Who instituted this thing which we are about to celebrate? Secondly, What the thing is which is instituted? And, Thirdly, Wherefore and to what end it was instituted? whereby we shall be taught how to use it.

First, Who instituted this sacrament and supper? You all know that things are more esteemed sometimes by the dignity and authority of the person, sometimes for the wisdom of the person, sometimes for the power and magnificence of the person, and sometimes for the tender love and kindness of the person.

If need were, I could by examples set forth each of these; but I hope it is not necessary. Now then, how can the thing, which we are about to celebrate, but be highly esteemed of every one, since the Author of it does want no dignity, no authority, no wisdom, no power, no magnificence, no holiness, no tender love and kindness, but has all dignity, authority, wisdom, power, magnificence, holiness, tender love, mercy, glory, and absolutely all that can be wished. He is God eternal, coequal and substantial with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost, the Image of the substance of God, the Wisdom of the Father, the Brightness of his glory, by whom all things were made, are ruled, and governed. He is the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords. He is the Messiah of the world, our most dear and loving Brother, Saviour, Mediator, Advocate, Intercessor, Husband, Priest. So that whatever comes from Him cannot but be esteemed, loved, and embraced, if dignity, authority, wisdom power, glory, goodness, and mercy please us. Yea, if any thing that can be wished please us, then cannot this which our Lord instituted but please us, and that so much the more, by how much it is one of the last things which he instituted and commanded. May God open our eyes to see these things accordingly, so shall we come with more reverence to this table of the Lord, which may he grant for his mercy's sake. Amen. And thus much for the first, Who instituted this sacrament.

Second, What the sacrament is? If we ask our eyes, our nose, our mouth, our taste, our hands, and the reason of man, they will all make the same answer that it is bread and wine. And verily, herein they speak the truth and lie not, as by many things may be proved, although the papists prate their pleasure to the contrary.

And here, my dearly beloved, I think I shall not be either tedious or unprofitable unto you if I tarry a little in showing this verity, that the substance of bread and wine remains in the sacrament after the words of consecration (as they call them) are spoken: whereby we may learn how shameless they are, who would force men to believe transubstantiation, which is an error whereupon in a manner all popery depends. For it is the stay of their priesthood, which is neither after the order of Aaron, nor after the order of Melchizedek, but after the order of Baal, as is partly seen by their number. For the false prophets and priests of Baal were always many more in number, when the wicked were in authority, than the true priests and prophets of the Lord, as the holy histories of the Bible teach. Read [1 Kings xviii](#).

The supper of the Lord, or the sacrament of Christ's body, which the papists call the sacrament of the altar, as though that were Christ's sacrament, which they can never prove; for it being perverted and used to a contrary end (as sacrificing propitiatorily for the sins of the quick and of the dead, and idolatry, by adorning or worshipping it by godly honour, &c.) is no more Christ's sacrament but a horrible profanation of it. And therefore as Christ called God's temple, which was called a house of prayer, a den of thieves, because of the abusing and profaning of it by the priests; so this which the papists call the sacrament of the altar, we may truly call an abominable idol and therefore I would all men should know that the sacrament of the altar, as the papists now do abuse it, omitting certain substantial points of the Lord's institution, and putting in the stead thereof their own dregs and dreams is not the sacrament of Christ's body, nor the Lord's supper, whereof, when we speak reverently, as our duty is, we would not that men should think we speak of the popish mass. I say, therefore, in the supper of the Lord, or in the sacrament of Christ's body, there remains the substance of bread and wine, as our senses and reason teach, and these many things also teach the same.

First, the Holy Ghost plainly tells us so, by calling it often bread, after the words of consecration, as [1 Cor. x](#). "Is not the bread which we break a partaking of the body of Christ?" says Paul. Lo! he plainly says, the bread which we break, not only calling it bread, but adding thereto 'breaking,' which cannot be attributed either to Christ's body, whereof no bone was broken, nor to any accident (or mere appearance without substance, editor), but must needs be of a substance, which substance, if it is not Christ's body, must be bread. As in the 11th chapter four times he plainly calls it so. "He that eats of this bread, he that receives this bread," &c. And in the Acts of the Apostles, we read how that (in speaking of the communion) "they met together break bread," &c. So that it is plain that the substance of bread and wine

remains in the supper after the words of consecration, as also may appear plainly by Christ's own words, who calls that which he gave them in the cup, wine, or the fruit of the vine, as both Matthew and Mark write: whereby we see that there is no transubstantiation of the wine, and therefore we may also see, that there is no transubstantiation of the bread.

As for the papists' cavilling, that it has the name of bread, because it was bread, as Simon the leper was still called leprous, though he was healed, or as Moses' rod, being turned into a serpent, was still called a rod, ([Matt. xxvi.](#), [Exod. vii.](#).) it proves nothing; for there was in the one a plain sight, and the senses certified, that Simon was no leper, and in the other plain mention that the rod was turned into a serpent. But concerning the sacrament, neither the senses see any other thing than bread, neither is there any mention made of turning; and therefore their cavil is plainly seen to be but a cavil, and of no force. But to bring more reasons against transubstantiation.

Secondly, that the substance of bread remains still, the very text teaches, ([Matt. xxvi.](#), [Mark xiv.](#), [Luke xxii.](#), [1 Cor. xi.](#)) For the evangelist and the apostle St. Paul witness that Christ gave *that* to his disciples, and called it his body, which he took, for which he gave thanks, and which he brake; but he took bread, gave thanks on bread, and broke bread; therefore he gave bread, and called bread his body, as he called the cup the new testament; so that it follows by this, that there is no transubstantiation. And this reason I myself have promised in writing to prove by the authority of the fathers, namely, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Epiphanius, Jerome, Augustine, Theodoret, Cyril, Bede, if I may have the use of my books.

Thirdly, that in the sacrament there is no transubstantiation of the bread, I prove by this reason. As by our Saviour Christ, the Spirit of truth spake of the bread. "This is my body," so says the same Spirit of truth of the same bread, that we being many are one body and one bread, &c. ([1 Cor. x.](#)) So that as it appears the sacrament is not the church by transubstantiation, even so is it not Christ's natural body by transubstantiation.

Fourthly, I prove that there is no transubstantiation, by Luke and Paul's words spoken over the cup. For they are no less effectual to transubstantiate the cup, than their words spoken of the bread are operative and mighty to transubstantiate the bread. For as they say of the bread 'This is my body,' so say they of the cup, 'This cup is the new testament,' which is absurd to be spoken or thought either of the cup, or of the thing in the cup, by transubstantiation; yea, rather in saying these words, 'This cup is the new testament,' we are taught by their coupling the word cup to the demonstrative *this*, how we should in the words, 'This is my body,' know that the word *this* there demonstrates bread.

Fifthly, as the reasons before brought forth prove, that the substance of bread remains in the sacrament, so does the definition of a sacrament. For the fathers affirm it to Consist of an earthly thing and of a heavenly thing, of the word and of the element, of sensible things and of things which are perceived by the mind. But transubstantiation wholly takes away

the earthly thing, the element, the sensible thing, and so makes it no sacrament; and therefore the definition of a sacrament teaches, that bread, which is the earthly thing, the sensible thing, and the element, remains still, as St. Augustine says. The word comes to the element, (he says not, takes away the element,) and so it is made a sacrament.

Sixthly, the nature and property of a sacrament teaches also what I have alarmed. For as Cyprian writes, that sacraments bear the names of the things which they signify, so St. Augustine teaches, that if sacraments have not some signification with the things whereof they are sacraments, then they are no sacraments. Now in the Lord's supper this similitude is first in nourishing, that as bread nourishes the body, so Christ's body broken feeds the soul; secondly, in bringing together many into one, that as in the sacrament many grains of corn are made one bread, many grapes are made one liquor and wine, so the multitude, which worthily receive the sacrament, are made one body with Christ and his church. Last of all, in a still stronger likeness or similitude, that as bread eaten turns into our nature, so we, rightly eating the sacrament by faith, turn into the nature of Christ; so that it is plain to them that will see, that to take the substance of bread away is quite against the nature and property of a sacrament.

I will speak nothing how this their doctrine of transubstantiation, besides the manifold absurdities it has in it, (to rehearse which I omit,) utterly overthrows the use of the sacrament, and is quite contrary to the end wherefore it was instituted, and so is no longer a sacrament, but an idol, and is the cause of much idolatry, converting the people's hearts from a heavenly conversation to an earthly, and turning the communion into a private action, and a matter of gazing and peeping, adoring and worshipping the work of men's hands for the living God, who dwells not in temples made with men's hands, much less lies he in pixes (the box or case in which the consecrated wafer is carried, editor) and chests (or tabernacle, a repository upon the altar in which the wafer is kept, editor), whose true worship is in spirit and verity, which may God grant us all to render unto him continually. Amen.

The sacrament of baptism also teaches us, that as the substance of the water remains there, so in the Lord's supper the substance of bread remains after consecration. For as by baptism we are engrafted into Christ, so by the supper we are fed with Christ. These two sacraments the apostle gladly unites together, [1 Cor. x.](#) and [xii.](#) "We are baptised into one body, (says he,) and have drunk all of one spirit," meanings by it the cup, as Chrysostom and other great and learned men well interpret it. As therefore in baptism is given unto us the Holy Ghost, and pardon of our sins, which yet lie not lurking in the water, so in the Lord's supper is given unto us the communion of Christ's body and blood, that is, grace, forgiveness of sins, innocence, life, immortality, without any transubstantiation, or including of the same in the bread. By baptism the old man is put off, and the new man put on; yea, Christ is put on, but without transubstantiating the water. ([Gal. iii.](#)) And even so it is in the

Lord's supper. We, by faith, spiritually in our souls, feed on Christ's body broken, eat his flesh and drink his blood, dwell in him and he in us, but without transubstantiation.

As for the cavil they make, that we are baptised into one body, meaning thereby the mystical body, and not the natural body of Christ, whereby they would enforce that we are fed with the natural body of Christ, while we are not engraved into it, but into the mystical body, and so would put away the reason aforesaid as for this cavil, I say, we may soon avoid (refute, editor) it, if we consider that Christ, who is the head of the mystical body, is not separate from the body; and therefore to be engrafted into the mystical body, is to be engrafted into the natural body of Christ, to be a member of his flesh, and bone of his bones, as pope Leo well does witness, in saying, that 'the body of the regenerate is made the flesh of Christ crucified.' And hereto I could add some reasons for the excellency of baptism. I trow (think, editor) it is rather to be begotten than to be nourished. As for the excellent miracle of the manifestation of the Trinity, and the descending of the Holy Ghost in baptism in a visible form, the like whereto was not seen in the Lord's supper, I will omit to speak of it further than that I would you should know that it were not difficult to set forth the excellency of this sacrament, as well as of the supper.

It is a plain sign of antichrist, to deny that the substance of bread and wine is in the Lord's supper after consecration; for in so doing and granting transubstantiation the property of the human nature of Christ is denied, for it is not of the human nature, but of the divine nature, to be in many places at once. Now grant transubstantiation, and then Christ's natural body must needs be in many places, which is nothing else but to confound the two natures in Christ, or to deny Christ's human nature which is the selfsame that St John says is to deny Christ to be come in the flesh. And this whoso does, by the testimony of St. John, is an anti-christ in his so doing whatsoever otherwise he may say. Read St. Augustine in his Epistle to Dardanus, and his thirty-first treatise upon St. John, and you shall easily see that Christ's body must needs be in one place, but his truth is in all places.

If there is no substance of bread in the sacrament but transubstantiation, then Christ's body is received of the ungodly, and eaten with their teeth, which is not only against St Augustine, who calls this expression, "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man," &c. a figurative speech; but also against the plain scriptures, which affirm them to dwell in Christ and Christ in them, and they to have everlasting life that eat him, which the wicked have not, although they eat the sacrament. He that eats of this bread (says Christ) shall live for evermore: therefore they eat not Christ's body, but (as Paul says,) they eat in judgment and damnation, which I think is another thing than Christ's body. And this St. Augustine affirms, saying, None eat Christ's body who are not in the body of Christ, that is, (as he expounds it,) in whom Christ dwells not, and he in Christ: which thing the wicked do not, because they want faith and the Holy Spirit, which are the means whereby Christ is received.

Besides the things which I have here brought forth to impugn transubstantiation, I could bring the fathers, who succeeded continually many hundred years after Christ, to confirm the same. Also I could show that transubstantiation is only a new doctrine, not established before satan, who was tied for a thousand years, was let loose: also I could show that ever hitherto since it was established, in all times it has been resisted and spoken against; yea, before this doctrine, the church was by no means so endowed with goods, lands, and possessions, as it has been ever since. It has brought no small gain, no small honour, no small ease to the clergy, and therefore no marvel that they strive and fight for it. It is their Maozim ([Dan. 11:38](#), editor), it is their Helen (an allusion to the Trojan war: Bradford means that transubstantiation is the leading object with the church of Rome, which it will not relinquish, and for which it will hazard all other things, editor). May God destroy it with the breath of his mouth, as shortly he will for his name's sake. Amen.

If time would serve, I could and would here tell you of the absurdities which come by this doctrine, but for time's sake I must omit it. Only, I beseech you, see this; already I have proved that this their doctrine of transubstantiation is an untruth; and forget not that it is the whole stay of all popery, and the pillow of their priesthood, whereby Christ's priesthood, sacrifice, ministry, and truth is hindered, yea, perverted and utterly overthrown. May God our Father, in the blood of his Son Christ, open the eyes and minds of all our magistrates, and all others that bear the name of Christ, to see it in time, to God's glory and their own salvation. Amen.

Now to return to the second matter, What the sacrament is? you see that to the senses and reason of man it is bread and wine, which is most true, as by the scriptures and otherwise I have already proved, and therefore away with transubstantiation.

But here, lest we should make it no sacrament, for a sacrament consists of two things, and lest a man should by this gather, that we make it none other thing but bare bread and a naked sign, and so rail at their pleasure on us, saying, How can a man be guilty of the body and blood of Christ by unworthy receiving of it, if it is but bare bread, and so forth? For this purpose I will now speak a little more about it, by God's grace, to stop their mouths, and to stir up your good hearts more to the worthy estimation and perception of this holy mystery. When a loving friend gives to you a thing, or sends to you a token, even though it be of small account, I think you do not as you should do, if with the thing you consider not the mind of your friend that sends or gives it, and esteem and receive it accordingly. And so of this bread, I think, that if you do not rather consider the mind of Christ than the thing which you see; yea, if you do not altogether consider Christ's mind, you deal dishonestly and harlot-like with him. For it is the property of harlots to consider the things given and sent them, rather than the love and mind of the giver and sender; whereas, true lovers do not consider in any point the things given or sent, but the mind of the party: so we, if we are true lovers of Christ, must not consider merely the outward thing which we see, and our senses perceive,

but rather altogether we must and should see and consider the mind of Christ, and thereafter and accordingly esteem the sacrament.

But how shall we know the mind of Christ? Even as a man's mind is best known by his word, so by Christ's word shall we know his mind. Now his words are manifest and most plain. "This (says he) is my body," therefore should we esteem, take, and receive it accordingly. If he had spoken nothing, or if he had spoken doubtfully, then might we have been in some doubt. But since he speaks so plainly, saying, "This is my body," who can, may, or dare be so bold as to doubt of it? He is the truth, and cannot lie; he is omnipotent, and can do all things, therefore it is his body. This I believe, this I confess, and pray you all heartily to beware of thinking these and such like words, to be but a sign or a figure of his body; except you will discern betwixt signs which signify only, and signs which also represent, confirm, and seal up, or (as a man may say) give with their signification. As for example: an ivy-bush is a sign of wine to be sold; the budding of Aaron's rod signified Aaron's priesthood allowed of the Lord; the reservation of Moses' rod signified the rebellion of the children of Israel; the stones taken out of Jordan, Gideon's fleece of wool, &c.; such as these are signs significative, and show no gift. But in the other signs, which some call exhibitiv, there is not only a signification of the thing, but also a declaration of a gift, yea, in a certain manner, a giving also. As baptism signifies not only the cleansing of the conscience from sin by the merits of Christ's blood, but also is a very cleansing from sin; and therefore it was said to Paul, that he should arise, and wash away his sins, and not that he should arise, and take only a sign of washing away his sins. In the Lords supper the bread is called a partaking of the Lord's body, and not only a bare sign of the Lord's body.

This I speak not as though the elements of these sacraments were transubstantiated, which I have already impugned, neither as though Christ's body were in the bread or wine, or were tied to the elements, otherwise than sacramentally and spiritually, nor that the bread and wine may not and must not be called sacramental and external figures, but that they might be discerned from significative and bare signs only, and be taken for signs exhibitiv and representative.

By this means a Christian conscience will call and esteem the bread of the Lord as the body of Christ; for it never will esteem the sacraments of Christ after their exterior appearance, but after the words of Christ, whereof it comes that the fathers, as Chrysostom and others speak with so full a mouth, when they speak of the sacrament, for their respect was to Christ's words. If the schoolmen who followed them had possessed the same spirit which they had, then would they never have consented to transubstantiation. For with great admiration some of the fathers do say that the bread is changed, or turned into the body of Christ, and the wine into his blood, meaning it of a mutation or change, not corporeal, but spiritual, figurative, sacramental, or mystical. For now it is not common bread nor common wine, being ordained to serve for the food of the soul. The schoolmen have understood it as the

papists now preach, of a substantial changing, as though it were no great miracle that common bread should now be assumed into that dignity, that it should be called Christ's body, and serve for a celestial food, and be made a sacrament of his body and blood.

As therefore I have before spoken, I would wish that this sacrament should be esteemed and called by us Christian men, after Christ's words, namely, Christ's body, and the wine Christ's blood, rather than otherwise. Not that I mean any other presence of Christ's body than a presence of grace, a presence to faith, a presence spiritually; and not corporally, really, naturally, and carnally, as the papists mean. For in such a manner Christ's body is only in heaven, on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, whither our faith in the use of the sacrament ascends, and receives the whole Christ accordingly.

Yea, but one will say, that to call the sacrament on that sort is to give an occasion of idolatry to the people, who will take the sacrament which they see simply for Christ's body, as we are well taught by experience; and therefore it were better to call it bread, and so should there be less harm, especially in this age.

To this objection I answer, that indeed great idolatry is committed to and about this sacrament, and therefore men ought, as much as they can, to avoid occasioning or confirming it. But inasmuch as the Holy Ghost is wiser than man, and had foresight of the evils that might be, and yet notwithstanding calls it Christ's body, I think we should do evil, if we should take upon us to reform his speech. If ministers did their duties in catechising and preaching, then doubtless to call the sacrament Christ's body, and to esteem it accordingly could not give occasion to idolatry, and confirm it; therefore woe unto them that preach not.

There are two evils about the sacraments, which the Holy Ghost has taught us to avoid. For lest we should with the papists think Christ's body present in or with the bread really, naturally, and corporally to be received with our bodily mouths (whereas there is no other presence of Christ's body than spiritual and to the faith,) in many places he keeps still the name of bread, as in the epistle to the Corinthians, the tenth and eleventh chapters. And lest we should make too light of it, making it but a bare sign, and no better than common bread, the Holy Ghost calls it Christ's body, whose speech I wish we would follow, and that not only as well to avoid the evil which is nowadays most to be feared concerning the sacrament, I mean the contemning it, as also because no faithful man comes to the sacrament to receive bread simply, but rather, yea, altogether to communicate with Christ's body and blood; for to eat and drink (as Paul says,) they have houses of their own. The contempt of the sacrament in the days of king Edward caused these plagues upon us at present; the Lord be merciful unto us. Amen. And thus much for the objection of calling the sacrament by the name of Christ's body.

But some may say, "To call the sacrament Christ's body, and to make no other presence than by grace or spirituality to faith, which is of things hoped for, and of things which to

the bodily senses do not appear, is to make no presence at all, or to make him no otherwise present, than he is in his word when it is preached, and therefore what need have we to receive the sacrament: inasmuch as by this doctrine a man may receive him daily in the field, as well and as much as in the church, in the celebration and use of the sacrament?"

To this objection I first answer, that indeed neither the scripture nor Christian faith will give us leave to suppose there is any carnal, real, natural, corporeal, or any such gross presence of Christ's natural body in the sacrament, for it is in heaven, and the heavens must have it (as says Peter,) till Christ's coming to judgment; except we would deny the humanity of Christ, and the verity of man's nature in him. The presence therefore which we believe and confess, is such a presence as reason knows not, and the world cannot learn, nor any that look at this matter with other eyes, or hear with other ears, than with the ears and eyes of the Spirit and of faith; which faith, though it is of things hoped for, and so of things absent to the corporeal senses, yet this absence is not an absence indeed, except to reason and the odd man; the nature of faith being a possession of things hoped for; therefore to grant a presence to faith is not to make no presence at all, except to such as know not faith. And this the fathers taught, affirming Christ to be present by grace, and therefore there was not only a signification, but also an exhibition and giving of the grace of Christ's body, that is, of life, and of the seed of immortality, as Cyprian writes. We eat life, and drink life, says St. Augustine. We feel a presence of the Lord by grace or in grace, says Chrysostom. We receive the celestial food that comes from above, says Athanasius. We receive the property of the natural conjunction and knitting together, says Hilarius. We perceive the nature of flesh, the blessing that gives life, in bread and wine, says Cyrillus: and elsewhere he says, that with the bread and wine we eat the virtue of Christ's proper flesh, life, grace, and the property of the body of the only begotten Son of God,, which he himself expounds to be life. Basilus says, that we by the sacrament receive the mystical advent of Christ, grace, and the very virtue of his very nature. Ambrose says, that we receive the sacrament of the true body. Epiphanius says, we receive the body of grace. And Jerome says, that we receive spiritual flesh, which he calls other flesh than that which was crucified. Chrysostom says, that we receive influence of grace, and the grace of the Holy Ghost. St. Augustine says, that we receive grace and verity, the invisible grace and holiness of the members of Christ's body. All these sayings of the fathers confirm this our faith and doctrine of the sacrament, we granting all things herein according to them, and they in like manner unto us. And therefore the lying lips, which belie the doctors, as though they granted a carnal and real presence of Christ's body naturally and corporally according to the papists' declaration and meaning, and which belie us also, as though we denied all presence of Christ, and so made it but a bare sign, these lying lips the Lord will destroy, if they repent not, and with us believe and teach the truth, that the sacrament is a food of the soul and a matter of faith, and therefore spiritually and by faith to be talked of and understood; which faith they want, and therefore they err

so grossly, since they would have such a presence of Christ as is contrary to all the Scriptures, and to our Christian religion; whereby comes no such advantage to the receiver as by the spiritual presence which we teach and affirm, according to God's word.

For we teach these benefits to be had by the worthy receiving of this sacrament, namely, that we abide in Christ, and Christ in us: again, that we attain by it a celestial life, or a life with God; moreover, that by faith and in spirit we receive not only Christ's body and blood, but also whole Christ God and man. Besides these, we grant that by the worthy receiving of this sacrament we receive remission of our sins, and confirmation of the New Testament. Last of all, by worthy receiving we get an increase of incorporation with Christ, and amongst ourselves which are his members, than which what more can be desired? Alas! that men consider nothing at all how that the coming (or union, editor) of Christ's body and blood to the sacrament is a spiritual thing, and therefore there needs no such carnal presence as the papists imagine. Who will deny a man's wife to be one body and flesh with her husband, although he be at London, and she at York? But the papists are carnal men, guided by carnal reason only, or else they would know that the Holy Ghost, because of our infirmity, uses metaphorically the words of abiding dwelling, eating, and drinking of Christ, that the unspeakable conjunction of Christ with us might partly be known. May God open their eyes to see it: and thus much for this.

Now to that part of the objection which says, that we teach Christ to be none otherwise present in the sacrament than in his word. I wish that the objectors would well consider what a presence of Christ is, in his word. I remember that St. Augustine writes that Christ's body is received sometimes visibly, and sometimes invisibly. The visible receiving he calls that which is by the sacrament; the invisible receiving he calls that which we receive by the exercise of our faith with ourselves. And St. Jerome, in the third book upon Ecclesiastes, affirms, that we are fed with the body of Christ, and we drink his blood, not only in mystery, but also in the knowledge of holy scripture; wherein he plainly shows that the same meat is offered in the words of scripture, which is offered in the sacraments; so that Christ's body and blood is no less offered by the scriptures than by the sacraments. Upon the 147th Psalm he writes also, that though these words, "He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood," may be understood as a mystery, yet he says it is more true to take Christ's body and his blood for the word of the scriptures and the doctrine of God. Yea, upon the same Psalm he says plainly, that Christ's flesh and blood is poured into our ears by hearing the word, and therefore great is the peril if we yield to other cogitations while we hear it. And therefore St. Augustine says, that it is no less dangerous to hear God's word negligently than so to use the sacrament. But hereof may no man gather, that therefore it needs not to receive the sacrament, or to affirm that a man by himself meditating the word in the field may as much receive Christ's body as in the church, in the right use of the sacrament. For Christ ordains

nothing in vain or superfluously; he ordains nothing whereof we have not need, although his authority is such, that without any questioning, his ordinances are to be observed.

Again, though in the fields a man may receive Christ's body by faith in the meditation of the word, yet I deny that a man ordinarily receives Christ's body by the meditation of Christ's death only, or by hearing of his word, with so much sight and by such sensible assurance (whereof God knows our infirmity has no small need,) as he does by the receiving of the sacrament. Not that Christ is not so much present in his word preached as he is in or with his sacrament, but because there are in the perception of the sacrament more windows open for Christ to enter into us, than by his word preached or heard. For there, I mean in the word, he has an entrance into our hearts, but only by the ears through the sound and voice of the words; but here in the sacrament he has an entrance by all our senses, by our eyes, by our nose, by our taste, and by our handling also; and therefore the sacrament well may be called seeable, sensible, tasteable, and touchable words. As therefore when many windows are opened in a house, more light may come in than when there is but one opened, even so by the perception of the sacrament a Christian man's conscience has more help to receive Christ, than simply by the word preached, heard or meditated. And therefore I think the apostle rightly calls the sacraments oblations or scalings of God's promise. Read [Rom. iv.](#) of circumcision. And thus much for the answer to the objection aforesaid.

Now to return from whence we came, namely, to the consideration of the second thing, What the sacrament is? I have told you that it is not simply bread and wine, but rather Christ's body, so called by Christ, and so to be called and esteemed by us. But here let us mark what body and what blood Christ called it. The papists still dabble, "This is my body, this is my blood;" but what body it is, what blood it is, they show not. Look therefore, my dearly beloved, on Christ's own words, and you shall see that Christ calls it "his body broken," and "his blood shed." Mark, I say, that Christ calls it his body, which is broken, his blood, which is shed at present, and, not which was broken, or shall be broken, which was shed, or shall be shed, even as the Greek texts plainly show, thereby teaching us, that as God would have the Passover called, not "which was the Passover," or "which shall be the Passover," but plainly "the Passover," that in the use of it the passing over of the striking angel should be set before their eyes as present; so in the celebration of the Lords supper, the very passion (sufferings, editor) of Christ should be beholden with the eyes of faith as if present: for which end Christ our Saviour especially instituted this supper, saying, "Do ye this in remembrance of me;" or, as Paul says, "Show you the Lord's death till he come". The supper of the Lord then is not simply Christ's body and blood, but Christ's body broken and his blood shed. Wherefore broken, wherefore shed? Forsooth, Christ himself teaches that, saying, "Broken for you, shed for your sins, and for the sins of many." Here then we have occasion in the use of the sacrament to call to mind the greatness and grievousness of sin, which could not be taken away by any other means than by the shedding. of the most precious blood, and

the breaking of the most pure body of the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ; by whom all things were made, all things are ruled and governed, &c. Who, considering this, shall not be touched to repent? Who in receiving this sacrament, thinking that Christ says to him, "Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for thee; this is my blood, which is shed for thy sins;" can but tremble at the grievousness of his sins, for which such a price was paid? If there were no plague at all else to admonish man of sin, to show how grievous a thing it is in God's sight, surely that one were enough. But, alas! how are our hearts bewitched through Satan's subtilties, and the custom of sin, that we make sin a thing of no moment! May God open our eyes in time, and give us repentance, which we see this sacrament, as it were, enforces us unto, in the reverence and true use of the same.

Again, in hearing that this which we take and eat is Christ's body broken for our sins, and his blood shed for our iniquities, we are occasioned to call to mind the infinite greatness of God's mercy and truth, and of Christ's love towards us. For what a mercy is this, that God would, for man, being lost through his wilful sins, be content, yea, desirous to give his own only Son, "the image of his substance, the brightness of his glory," being in his own bosom, to be made man for us, that we men by him might be, as it were, made gods! What a mercy is this, that God the Father should be so merciful to us, that he would make this his Son, being coequal with him in divinity, a mortal man for us, that we might be made immortal by him! What a kindness is this, that the Almighty Lord should send to us his enemies, his dearly beloved Son, to he made poor, that we by him might be made rich! What compassion was this, that the omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth would deliver his own only beloved Son, for his creatures, to be not only flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bones, that we might by him through the Holy Ghost be made one with him, and so with the Father by communicating the merits of his flesh, that is, righteousness, holiness, innocence, and immortality, but also to be a slain sacrifice for our sins, to satisfy his justice, to convert or turn death into life, our sin into righteousness, hell into heaven, misery into felicity for us. What a mercy is this, then God raised up this his Son Christ, not only to justify and regenerate us, but also in his person to demonstrate unto us our state which we shall have; for in his coming we shall be like unto him. Oh! wonderful mercy of Gods which would assume (take up, editor) this his Christ, even in human body, into the heavens, there to take and keep possession for us, to lead our captivity captive, to appear before him, always praying for us; to make the throne of justice a throne of mercy, the seat of glory a seat of grace; so that with boldness we may come and appear before God, to ask and find grace in time convenient! Again, what a verity and constant truth in God is this, that he would, according to his promise made first to Adam, and so to Abraham and others, in his time accomplish it, by sending his Son so graciously! Who would doubt hereafter of any thing that he has promised? And as for Christ's dove, oh! whose heart can be able to think of it at all as it deserves? He being God would become man, he being rich would become poor, he being Lord of all the world, became

a servant to us all; he being immortal, would become mortal, miserable, and last of all, endure God's curses for us. His blood was nothing too dear, his life he nothing considered, to bring us from death to life. But this his love needs more hearty weighing than many words speaking, and therefore I omit and leave it to your consideration; so in the receiving of this supper, as I desire you would tremble at God's wrath for sin, so would I have you to couple to that terror and fear, true faith, by which you might be assuredly persuaded of God's mercy towards you, and Christ's love, though all things else preached to the contrary.

Does every one of you surely think when you hear these words, .` Take, eat, this is my body, broken for your sins; drink, this is my blood, shed for your sins; that God the eternal Father, embracing you, Christ calls and embraces you most lovingly, making himself one with you, and you one with him, and one with another amongst yourselves? You ought no less to be certain now that God loves you, pardons your sins, and that Christ is all yours, than if you heard an angel out of heaven speaking so unto you. And therefore rejoice and be glad, and make this supper *Eucharistiam*, a thanksgiving, as the fathers named it. Be no less certain that Christ and you now are all one, than you are certain the bread and wine is one with your nature and substance after you have eaten and drunk it. Howbeit, in this it differs, that you by faith are, as it were, changed into Christ, and not Christ into you, as the bread is; for by faith he dwells in us, and we in him. May God give us faith in the use of this sacrament to receive Christ, as he gives us hands to receive the element, symbol, and visible sacrament. May God grant us, not to prepare our teeth and belly, (as St. Augustine says,) but rather of his mercy may he prepare and give us true and lively faith to use this, and all his other ordinances, to his glory and our comfort. May he sweep the houses of our hearts, and make them clean, that they may be a worthy harbour and lodging for the Lord. Amen.

Now let us come and look on the third and last thing, namely, Wherefore the Lord instituted this sacrament? Our nature is very oblivious (apt to forget, editor) of God and all his benefits: and again, it is very full of dubitation and doubting of God's love, and his kindness; therefore that these two things might be somewhat reformed and helped in us, the Lord has instituted this sacrament. I mean, that we might have in memory the principal benefit of all benefits, that is, Christ's death, and that we might be on all parts assured of communion with Christ, of all kindness the greatest that ever God gave unto man. That the former is the end wherefore Christ instituted this sacrament, he himself teaches us, saying, "Do ye this in remembrance of me." The latter the apostle no less sets forth in saying, "The bread which we break, is it not the partaking or communion of the body of Christ? Is not the cup of blessing which we bless, the partaking or communion of the blood of Christ?" So that it appears that this sacrament was instituted for the reformation and help of our forgetfulness of that which we should never forget, and our dubitation of that whereof we ought to be most certain.

Concerning the former, namely, the memory of Christy death, what advantage it brings with it, I will purposely, for time's sake, omit. Only a little will I speak of the advantages coming unto us by the partaking and communion we have with Christ. First, it teaches us, that no man can communicate with Christ, but the same must needs communicate with God's grace and favour, wherethrough sins are forgiven; therefore this advantage comes herethrough, namely, that we should be certain of the remission and pardon of our sins; which we may also perceive by the cup, in that it is called the cup of the new testament, to which testament is properly attributed on God's behalf, oblivion or remission of our sins. First, I say, therefore the supper is instituted to this end, that he which worthily receives should be certain of the remission and pardon of his sins and iniquities, how many and great soever they are. How great a benefit this is they only know who have felt the burden of sin, which of all head things is the most heavy. Again, no man can communicate with Christ's body and blood, but the same must communicate with his Spirit, for Christ's body is no dead carcass. Now he that communicates with Christ's Spirit, communicates, as with holiness, righteousness, innocence and immortality, and with all the merits of Christ's body; so does he with God and all his glory, and with the church, and all the good that ever it or any member of it had, has, or shall have. This is the communion of saints, which we believe in our creed, which has waiting on it remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and life everlasting.

To the end that we should be most assured and certain of all these, Christ our Saviour instituted this his supper, and therefore would have us use it; so that, I think, there is no man who sees not great cause for giving thanks to God for this holy sacrament of the Lord, whereby, if we worthily receive it, we ought to be certain that all our sins, whatsoever they are, are pardoned clearly; that we are regenerate, and born again unto a lively hope, unto an inheritance immortal, undefiled, and which can never wither away; that we are in the fellowship of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that we are God's temples, at one with God, and God at one with us; that we are members of Christ's church, and fellows with the saints in all felicity; that we are certain of immortality in soul and body, and so of eternal life, than which what more can be demanded? Christ is ours, and we are Christ's; he dwells in us, and we in him. Oh! happy eyes, that see these things, and most happy hearts, that feel them! My dear brethren, let us pray unto the Lord to open our eyes to see these wonderful things, to give us faith to feel them. Surely we ought no less to be assured of them now in the worthy receiving of this sacrament than we are assured of the exterior symbols and sacraments. If an angel from heaven should come and tell you these things, then you would rejoice and be glad. And, my dear hearts in the Lord, I even now, though most unworthy, am sent of the Lord to tell you no less, but that you, worthily receiving this sacrament, shall receive remission of all your sins, or rather a certainty that they are remitted, and that you are even now God's darlings, temples, and fellow-inheritors of all the good that ever he

has; wherefore see that you give thanks unto the Lord for this his great goodness, and praise his name for ever.

Oh, says one, I could be glad in very deed, and give thanks from my very heart, if I worthily received this sacrament. But, alas! I am a very grievous sinner, and I feel in myself very little repentance and faith, and therefore I am afraid that I am unworthy.

To answer this objection, I think it necessary to speak something of the worthy receiving in this sacrament, with as great brevity and plainness as I can. The apostle wills all men to prove and examine themselves before they eat of the bread, and drink of the cup, for they that eat and drink unworthily, eat and drink damnation; therefore this probation and examination is necessary. If men will try their gold and silver whether it is copper or no, is it not more necessary that men should try their consciences? Now how this should be, the papists teach amiss, in sending us to their auricular confession, which is impossible. The true probation and trial of a Christian conscience consists altogether in faith and repentance. Faith has respect to the doctrine and articles of our belief; repentance has respect to manners and conversation. Concerning the former, I mean faith, we may see the apostle teaches us ([1 Cor. ii.](#);) concerning the latter, or our conversation, those sins, which are commonly called mortal or deadly, are to be removed. These sins are discerned from other sins by the apostle ([Rom. vi.](#);) in saying, "Let not sin reign and bear sway in your mortal bodies." For truly we sin deadly when we give over to sin, and let it have the bridle at liberty, when we strive not against it, but allow it and consent to it. Howbeit, if we strive against it, if it displease us, then truly, though sin be in us, (for we ought to obey God without any resistance or unwillingness,) yet our sins are not of those sins which separate us from God, but for Christ's sake shall not be imputed unto us believing.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, if your sins do now displease you; if you purpose unfeignedly to be enemies to sin in yourselves and in others as you may, during your whole life if you hope in Christ for pardon; if you believe: according to the holy Scriptures and articles of the Christian faith set forth in your creed. If, I say, you now trust in God's mercy through Christ's merits; if you repent and earnestly purpose before God to amend your life, and to give yourselves over to serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness all the days of your life, although before this present you have most grievously sinned; I publish unto you, that you are worthy guests for this table, you shall be welcome to Christ, your sins shall be pardoned, you shall be endued with his Spirit, and so with communion with him and with the Father, and the whole church of God, Christ will dwell in you, and you shall dwell in him for evermore. Wherefore, behave yourselves accordingly with joyfulness and thanksgiving. Do you now appear before the Lord? Make clean your houses, and open the doors of your hearts by repentance and faith, that the Lord of hosts, the King of glory, may enter in; and for ever hereafter beware of all such things as might displease the eyes of his Majesty. Flee from sin as from a toad; come away from popery and all antichristian religion; be diligent and earnest

in prayer; hearken to the voice of God in his word, with reverence; live worthy of your profession. Let your light so shine in your life, that men may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. As you have been darkness, so now henceforth be light in the Lord, and have society with the works of light. Now has God renewed his covenant with you: in God's sight now you are as clean and healed from all your sores of sins. Go your way, sin no more, lest a worse thing happen onto you. See that your house is new swept, and furnished with godliness and virtue, and beware of idleness, lest the devil come with seven spirits worse than himself, and so take his lodging, and then your latter end will be worse than the first.

God our Father, for the tender mercy and merits of his Son, be merciful unto us, forgive us all our sins, and give us his Holy Spirit, to purge, cleanse, and sanctify us; that if he may be holy in his sight through Christ, and that we now may be made ready and worthy to receive this holy sacrament, with the fruits of the same, to the full rejoicing and strengthening of our hearts in the Lord. To whom be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

A Fruitful Treatise, and Full of Heavenly Consolation against the Fear of Death

Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall his wrath come, and in the day of vengeance he shall destroy thee. Stand fast in the way of the Lord, be steadfast in thine understanding, and follow the word or peace and righteousness.

Ecclesiasticus

Being minded, through the help of God, for my own comfort and the encouraging of others, to speak something of death, at whose door, though I have stood a great while, yet, according to man's judgment, never so near as I do now, I think it most requisite to call and cry for thy help, O blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who hast destroyed death by thy death, and brought in place thereof life and immortality, as appears by the gospel. Grant to me true and lively faith, whereby men pass from death to eternal life; that of practice, and not of mere speculation, I may write something concerning death, which is dreadful out of thee, and in itself, to the glory of thy holy name, to my own comfort in thee, and to the edifying of all them, to whom this my writing shall come, to be read or heard. Amen.

There are four kinds of death; one which is natural, another which is spiritual, a third which is temporal, and a fourth which is eternal. Concerning the first and the last, what they are I need not declare; but the second and third, perchance, are not so soon espied by the simple (uninstructed, editor), for whose sake especially I write.

By a spiritual death, I mean such a death as when though the body is living the soul is dead. This the apostle mentions in speaking of widows, who living daintily, being alive in body, are dead in soul. ([1 Tim. v.](#)) Thus you see what I mean by the spiritual death. Now, by a temporal death, I mean a death whereby the body and the affections thereof are mortified, that the spirit may live: of which kind of death the apostle speaks when exhorting us to kill our members. [Col. iii.](#) And thus much concerning the kinds of death, wherein the judgment of the world is not to be approved, for it cares less for spiritual death than for a natural death, it is less apprehensive of eternal death than temporal death, or else men would leave sin, which procures both the one and the other, I mean spiritual and eternal death, and would choose temporally to die, that, by natural death, they might enter into the full fruition of eternal life, which none can enjoy nor enter into, that will not here temporally die, that is, mortify their affections, and crucify their lusts and concupiscences; for by obeying them at the first came death, as we may read, [Gen. iii.](#) If Eve had not obeyed her desire in eating the forbidden fruit, whereby she died spiritually, none of these kinds of death had ever come unto man, nor been known by us. Therefore, as I said, here we must needs temporally die, that is, mortify our affections, to escape the spiritual death, and by natural death, not only escape eternal death of soul and body, but also by it, as by a door, enter into eternal life, which Christ Jesus our Saviour has procured and purchased to and

for all that are in him, changing eternal death into a deliverance of soul and body from all kind of misery and sin. By reason whereof we may see, that to those who are in Christ, that is, to such as believe, which believers are discerned from others by their not walking after the flesh, but after the Spirit, to those I say, death is no damage, but an advantage; no dreadful thing, but rather desirable, and of all messengers the most joyful, whilst looked upon with the eye of faith in the gospel. But more of this hereafter.

Thus I have briefly showed the kinds of death, what they are, whence they come, and what is the remedy for them. But now, as I purpose to treat only of the first kind of death, that is, of natural death, something to comfort myself and others against the dread and pains of the same, I will speak of it as God shall instruct me, and as I accustom myself to muse on it now and then, the better to be prepared against the hour of trial.

I have shown that this natural death came by spiritual death, that is, by obeying our affections in the transgression of God's precepts. But through the benefit of Christ, it is no destruction to such as are in him and die temporally, that is, to such believers as labour to mortify their affections, but only a plain dissolution, both of soul and body, from all kind of perils, dangers, and miseries; and therefore by such it is not to be dreaded, but to be desired, as we see in the apostle, who desired to be dissolved, ([Phil. i.](#)) and in Simeon, who desired to be loosed, saying, Dismiss, or loose me, O Lord. ([Luke ii.](#)) By which words he seems plainly to teach, that this life is a bondage, and nothing to be desired, as now I will partly show.

First, consider the pleasures of this life what they are, how long they last, how painfully we come by them, what they leave behind them, and thou shalt even in them see nothing but vanity. As for example: how long lasts the pleasure of licentiousness? How it leaves behind a certain loathsomeness. I will speak nothing of the sting of conscience, if pleasures are come by unlawfully. Who, well seeing this, and forecasting it beforehand, would not desire to forego unlawful pleasures?

Put the case, that the pleasures of this life were permanent during this life, yet since this life itself is as nothing, and therefore is full well compared to a candlelight, which is soon blown out; to a flower, which fades away; to a smoke, to a shadow, to a sleep, to running water, to a day, to an hour, to a moment, and to vanity itself; who would esteem pleasures and commodities (advantages, editor), which last so little a while? Before they are well begun they are gone and past away. How much of our time was spend in sleeping, in eating, in drinking, and in talking! Infancy is not perceived, youth is shortly overblown, middle age is nothing, old age is not long; and therefore, as I said, this life, even in the consideration of the pleasures and advantages of it, should little move us to love it, but rather to loath it. God open our eyes to see these things, and to weigh them accordingly. Secondly, consider the miseries of this life, so that if the pleasures and commodities in it should move us to love it, yet the miseries might countervail and make us take it as we should do; I mean, rather to

desire to be loosed and dismissed hence than otherwise. Look upon your bodies, and see in how many perils and dangers you are. Your eyes are in danger of blindness and blear-eyedness; your ears in danger of deafness; your mouth and tongue of cankers, toothache, and dumbness; your head in danger of rheums, and metrics; your throat in danger of hoarseness; your hands in danger of gout, palsies, &c. But who is able to express the number of diseases whereof man's body is in danger, seeing that some have written that more than three hundred diseases may happen unto man? I speak nothing of the hurt that may come to our bodies by poisons, venomous beasts, water, fire, horses, men, &c.

Again, look upon your soul, see how many vices you are in danger of, as heresy, hypocrisy, idolatry, covetousness, idleness, security, envy, ambition, pride, &c. How many temptations may you fall into? But this you shall better see by looking upon your old falls, folly, and temptations; and by looking on other men's faults, for no man has done any thing so evil but you may do the same. Moreover, look upon your name, and see how it is in danger of slanders and false reports. Look upon your goods, see what danger they are in from thieves, from fire, &c. Look upon your wife, children, parents, brethren, sisters kinsfolks, servants, friends, and neighbours, and behold how they also are in danger, both in soul, body, name, and goods, as you are. Look upon the commonweal and country. Look upon the church, upon the ministers and magistrates, and see what great dangers they are in, so that if you love them, you cannot, but for the evil which may come to them, be heavy and sad. You know it is not in your power, nor in the power of any man, to hinder all evil that may come. How many perils is infancy in danger of! What danger is youth subject unto! Man's state is full of cares; age is full of diseases and sores. If thou art rich, thy care is the greater; if thou art in honour, thy perils are the more, if thou art poor, thou art the more in danger from oppression. But, alas! what tongue is able to express the miserableness of this life, which, if considered, should make us little to love it!

I can compare our life to nothing so fitly as to a ship in the midst of the sea. In what danger is the ship and they that are in it! Here are they in danger of tempests, there of quicksands; on this side of pirates, on that side of rocks; now it may leak, now the mast may break, now the master may fall sick, now diseases may come among the mariners, now dissension may arise among themselves. I speak nothing of want of fresh water, meat, drink, and such other necessaries. Even such is this life. Here is the devil, there is the world; on this side is the flesh, on that side is sin; which thoroughly cleaves unto our ribs, and will do so as long as we are in this flesh, and natural life. So that none but blind men can see this life to be much and greatly desired; but rather as sailors are most glad when they approach to the haven, even so should we be most glad when we approach to the haven, that is, to death, which sets us to a land whose commodities no eye has seen, no tongue can tell, no heart can conceive, in any point as it should do. (1 Cor. ii.) Happy, oh! happy were we, if we saw these things accordingly! God open our eyes to see them. Amen.

If any man would desire testimonies of these things, al though experience, a sufficient mistress, is to be credited, yet I will here mark certain places whereunto the reader may resort, and he will find no less than I say, but rather much more, if he read and weigh the places with diligence. Job (x.) calls this life a warfare. In the eighth chapter he paints it out in a lively manner, under divers similitudes. St. James compares it to a vapour. ([James iv.](#)) All the book of Ecclesiastes teaches that it is but vanity. St. John says it is altogether put in evil. ([1 John viii.](#)) David (or rather Moses, editor) says, the best thing in this life is but vanity, labour, and sorrow. ([Ps. xc.](#)) But why go I hereabout, seeing that almost every leaf in the Scripture is full of the brevity and misery of this life, so that I think, as St. Austin writes, that there is no man who has lived so happily in this world, that he would be content, when death comes, to go back again by the same steps whereby he has come into the world and lived, except he is in despair, and looks for nothing after this life but confusion.

Thus I trust you see, that though the commodities of this life were such as could cause us to love it, yet the brevity, vanity, and misery of it is such, as should make us little regard it, who believe and know, death is the end of all miseries to them that are in Christ, as we all ought to take ourselves to be, (being baptised in his name, for our baptism requires this faith under pain of damnation,) although we have not observed our profession as we should have done, if we now repent, and come to amendment. By such I say as are in Christ, death is to be desired, even in this respect, that it delivers us from so miserable a life and so dangerous a state as we are now in. So that I may well say, they are senseless, without understanding, void of love to God, void of all hatred and sense of sin wherewith this life flows, who desire not to depart hence out of all these miseries, rather than still to remain here to their continual grief.

But if these things will not move us, I would yet that we beheld the commodities whereunto death brings us. If we are not moved to leave this life in respect of the miseries whereof it is full, yet we should be moved to leave it in respect of the infinite goodness which the other life, whereto death brings us, has most plentifully. Men, though they love things, yet can be content to forego them for other things which are better; even so we now, for the good things in the life to come, if we consider them, shall and will be content to forego the most commons things in this present life. Here we have great pleasure in the beauty of the world, and of the pleasures, honours, and dignities of the same; also in the company of our friends, parents, wife, children, subjects, also in plenty of riches, cattle, &c.; and yet we know that not one of these is without its discommodity, which God sends, lest we should love them too much, as, if you will weigh things, you shall easily perceive. The sun though it is fair and cheerful, yet it burns sometimes too hot. The air, though it is generally light and pleasant, yet sometimes it is dark and troublous; and so of other things. But be it so, that there were no discommodities mingled with the commodities, yet as I said before, the brevity and short time that we have to use them should assuage their sweetness.

But even if the pleasures of this life were without discommodity, if they were permanent and without peril, whereof they are full, yet are they nothing at all to be compared to the commodities of the life to come. What is this earth, heaven, and shape of the world, wherein beasts have places, and wicked men, God's enemies, have abiding and liberty, in comparison of the new heaven and earth wherein righteousness shall dwell? In comparison of the place where angels and archangels, and all God's people, yea, God himself, has his abiding and dwelling? What is the company of wife children, &c. in comparison to the company of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and all the saints of God? What is the company of any in this world, in comparison to the company of the angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, powers, thrones, dominions, yea, of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? What are the riches and pleasures of this life, in comparison of the felicity of everlasting life, which is without all discommodities, perpetual, without all peril and jeopardy, without all grief and molestation? Oh, the mirth and melody! oh, the honour and glory! oh, the riches and beauty! oh, the power and majesty! oh, the sweetness and dignity of the life to come! The eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, and the heart of man is not able to conceive in any thing, any part of the eternal felicity and happy state of heaven: therefore the saints of God have desired so earnestly and so heartily to be there. "Oh! how amiable are thy tabernacles!" said David. (Ps. lxxxiv.) "My soul has a desire to enter into the courts of the Lord, my heart and my soul rejoice in the living God. Blessed are those that dwell in thy house, that they may always be praising thee; for one day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness; for the Lord God is a light and defence." And again, (Ps. xlii.) "As the hart desires the waterbrooks, so longs my soul after thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God. When shall I come to appear before the presence of God?" And (Ps. lxiii.) "My soul thirsts for thee in a barren and dry land, where no water is." They, God's people I mean, (Rom. viii.) desire the day of their redemption, and they still cry, "Let thy kingdom come;" they cry, (Rev. xxii.) "Come, Lord Jesus, come;" they lift up their heads looking for his appearing, who will make their vile bodies like to his own glorious and immortal body, (Phil. iii.) for when he shall appear, they shall be like unto him; the angels will gather them together, and they shall meet him in the clouds, and be always with him; they shall hear this joyful voice, (Matt. xxv.) "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning." Then shall they be like unto his angels, (Rev. vii. :) then shall they shine like the sun in the kingdom; then shall they have crowns of glory, and be endued (clothed, editor) with white garments of innocence and righteousness, and palms of victory in their hands. Oh! happy, happy is he who may with them see that immortal and incorruptible inheritance, which then we shall enjoy for ever!

Thus you see (I hope) sufficiently, that in respect of heaven and eternal bliss, (whereunto by the haven of death we land,) this life, though there were no evil in it, is not to be loved, but rather, we that are pilgrims in it should desire with Paul and Simeon to be loosed and dissolved that we might be with God. Here our bodies, as before is spoken, are in danger of innumerable evils; but there our bodies shall be, not only free from all danger, but also be like the glorious and immortal body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now our bodies are dark, then shall they be most clear and light, as we see Christ's face did shine in his transfiguration, like to the sun. ([Matt. xvii.](#)) Now our bodies are vile, miserable, mortal, and corruptible; but then shall they be glorious, happy, immortal, and incorruptible. ([1 Cor. xv.](#)) We shall be like unto Christ our Saviour; even as he is, so shall we be. ([1 John iii.](#)) As we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. Here our souls are in great darkness, and in danger of many evils; but there they shall be in great light, safe security, and secure felicity. We shall see God face to face, where now we see him but as in a glass through a dark speaking, there shall we behold him even as he is, and be satisfied with his presence; yea we shall be endued with most perfect knowledge. Where now we know but partly, there shall we know as we are known. Here our commodities are measurable, short, uncertain, and mingled with many incommunities. But there is bliss without measure, all liberty, all light, all joy, rejoicing, pleasure, health, wealth, riches, glory, power, treasure, honour, triumph, comfort, solace, love, unity, peace, concord, wisdom, virtue, melody, meekness, felicity, beatitude, and all that ever can be wished or desired; and that in the greatest security and perpetuity that may be conceived or thought, not only of men, but also of angels; as he witnesses that saw it, (I mean Paul,) who was carried up into the third heaven. The eye has not seen, (says he,) the ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the felicity that God has prepared for them that love him. ([1 Cor. ii.](#)) There the archangels, angels, powers, thrones, dominions, cherubim, seraphim, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, virgins, confessors, and righteous spirits, cease not to sing night and day, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts; honour, majesty, glory, empire, and dominion, be unto thee, O Lord God the Creator, O Lord Jesus the Redeemer, O Holy Spirit the Comforter." ([Rev. iv.](#)) For the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, even as the light of seven days ([Isa. lx.](#)) in his blessed kingdom, where and when he will bind up the wounds of his people, and heal their plagues. Oh! that we might have some lively sight hereof, that we might rejoice over the undefiled and immortal inheritance, whereunto God has called us, and which he keeps for us in heaven; that we might hear the sweet song of his saved people, crying, "Salvation be unto Him that sits on the throne of our God, and unto the Lamb." That we might with the elders and angels sing and say, "Praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be to thee our God for evermore." That we might be covered with a white stole (robe, editor), and have a palm in our hands, to stand before God's throne night and day, to serve him in his temple, and to

have him dwell in us; that we might hear the great voice saying from heaven, "Behold the tabernacle of the Lord is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them, their God." Oh! happy were they that now might have a little glimpse of that holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from heaven, prepared of God as a bride decked for her husband, which he showed to his servant John. (Rev. [xxi.](#)) Truly this should we see, if we were with him in the Spirit; but this cannot be, so long as we are in the flesh. Alas then, and well away, that we love this life as we do! It is a sign that we have little faith, for else how could we fail night and day to desire the messenger of the Lord, death I mean, to deliver us out of all miseries, that we might enter into the enjoyment of eternal felicity.

But here some man will say, " Oh I sir, if I were certain that I should depart from this miserable life into that so great felicity, then could I be right glad and rejoice, as you tell me, and bid death welcome. But I am a sinner, I have grievously transgressed and broken God's will, and therefore I am afraid I shall be sent into eternal woe, perdition, and misery." Here, my brother, thou dost well that thou dost acknowledge thyself a sinner, and to have deserved eternal death; for doubtless, if we say we have no sin, we are liars, and the truth is not in us. (1 John [i.](#)) A child of a night's birth is not pure in God's sight. (Job [xxv.](#)) In sin we were born, and by birth or nature we are the children of wrath, and firebrands of hell; therefore confess ourselves to be sinners we needs must. For if the Lord will observe any man's iniquities, none shall be able to abide it; yea, we must needs all cry, "Enter not into judgment, O Lord; for in thy sight no flesh nor man living can be saved." (Ps. [cxxx.](#) [cxl.iii.](#)) In this point therefore thou hast done well to confess that thou art a sinner.

But now where thou stand in doubt of pardon of thy sins, and thereby art afraid of damnation, my dear brother, I would have thee answer me, whether thou desire pardon or no? Whether thou dost repent or no? Whether thou dost unfeignedly purpose, if thou should live, to amend thy life or no? If thou dost even before God so purpose, and desire his mercy, then hearken, my good brother, to what the Lord says unto thee: "I am he, I am he, that for my own sake will do away thine offences; if thy sins be as red as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; for I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner. (Isa. [xliiii.](#) [l.](#)) As surely as I live, I will not thy death, but rather that thou should live, and be converted. (Ezek. [xxxiii.](#)) I have so loved the world, that I would not spare my dearly beloved Son, (John [iii.](#).) the image of my substance, and brightness of my glory, by whom all things were given; but gave him for thee, not only to be man, but also to take thy nature, and to purge it from mortality, sin, and all corruption, and to adorn and endue it with immortality and eternal glory not only in his own person, but also in thee and for thee, whereof now by faith I would have thee certain, as in very deed thou shalt at length feel and fully enjoy for ever. (Phil. [ii.](#)) This, my Son, I have given to death, and that a most shameful death, even of the cross, for thee, to destroy death, to satisfy my justice for thy sins; therefore believe, and according to thy faith,

so be it unto thee. Hearken what my Son himself says unto thee, ([Matt. xi.](#)) Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. ([John iii.](#)) I came not into the world to condemn the world, but to save it. ([Luke v.](#)) I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I pray not (says he) ([John xvii.](#)) for these mine apostles only, but also for all them that by their preaching shall believe in me. Now what prayed he for such? Father, (says he,) I will that where I am they also may be, that they may see and enjoy the glory I have, and always had with thee. Father, save them, and keep them in thy truth. Father, (says he,) I sanctify myself, and offer up myself for them. Lo! thus thou hear how my Son prays for thee. Mark now what my apostle Paul says: We know, says he, ([Heb. v.](#)) that our Saviour Christ's prayers were heard. ([1 Tim. i.](#)) Also this is a true saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Hearken what he said to the jailer, ([Acts, xvi.](#)) Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. ([Heb. ix.](#)) For he by his own self has made purgation for our sins. To him, says Peter, ([Acts, x.](#)) all the prophets bear witness, that whosoever believes in his name shall receive remission of their sins. Believe man; pray, ([Mark, ix.](#)) Lord, help mine unbelief ([Luke xvii.](#)) Lord, increase my faith: ask, and thou shalt have. Hearken what St. John says: If we confess our sins, God is righteous to forgive us all our iniquities, and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ shall wash us from all our sins; for if we sin, we have an Advocate (says he) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. ([1 John i. ii.](#)) Hearken what Christ is called, ([Matt. i.](#)) Call his name Jesus, says the angel, for he shall save his people from their sins; so that where abundance of sin is, there is abundance of grace; say therefore, Who shall lay anything to my charge? It is God that absolves me; who then shall condemn me? It is Christ who is dead for my sins, yea, who is risen for my righteousness, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and prays for me. ([Rom. viii.](#)) Be certain, therefore, and sure of pardon of thy sins; be certain and sure of everlasting life. Do not now say in thy heart, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, doubt not of pardon of thy sins, for that is to fetch up Christ; neither say thou, Who shall ascend up into heaven? that is, doubt not of eternal bliss, for that is to put Christ out of heaven: but mark what the Lord says unto thee, The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, and this is the word of faith which we preach: if thou confess with thy mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord. and believe with thy heart, that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be safe. ([Rom. x.](#)) If thou believe that Jesus Christ died, and rose again, even so shalt thou be assured (says the Lord God) that, dying with Christ, I will bring thee again with him. ([1 Thess. iv.](#))

Thus, dear brother, I thought good to write to thee in the name of the Lord, that thou, fearing death for nothing else but because of thy sins, might be assured of pardon of them, and so embrace death as a dear friend, and insult against his terror, sting, and power, saying, Death, where is thy sting? hell, where is thy victory? ([1 Cor. xv.](#)) Nothing in all the world so displeases the Lord as to doubt of his mercy. In the mouth of two or three witnesses, we

should be content; therefore, since thou hast heard from so many witnesses, how that in deed desiring mercy with the Lord, thou art not sent empty away, give credit thereto, and say with the good virgin Mary, "Behold thy servant, O Lord, be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke i.) Upon which word, see thou set thine eye only and wholly. For here thou see not God thy Father, except in his word, which is the glass wherein now we behold his grace and fatherly love towards us in Christ; and therefore herewith we should be content, and give more credit to it, than to all our senses, and to all the world besides. The word, says our Saviour, (John xii.) shall judge. According to it therefore, and not according to any exterior or interior show, judge both of thyself and of all other things else, concerning thyself, if thou desire indeed God's mercy, and lament that thou hast offended. Lo! it pronounces that there is mercy with the Lord for thee, and plenteous redemption. (Ps. cxxx.) It tells thee who would have mercy at the Lords hand, that the Lord wills the same, and therefore thou art happy, for he would not thy death. It tells thee, that if thou acknowledge thy faults unto the Lord, he will cover them in his mercy. Again, concerning death, it tells thee, that it is but a sleep, that it is but a passing unto thy Father, that it is but a deliverance out of misery, that it is but a putting off mortality and corruption, that it is a putting on immortality and incorruption; that it is a putting away of an earthly tabernacle, that thou may receive a heavenly house or mansion, (2 Cor. v. ;) that this is but a calling of thee home from the watching and standing in the warfare of this miserable life. According to this, (the word I mean,) do thou judge of death, and thou shalt not be afraid of it, but desire it as a most wholesome medicine, and a friendly messenger of the Lord's justice and mercy. Embrace him therefore, make him good cheer, for of all enemies he is the least. An enemy, said I? nay, rather of all friends he is the best; for he brings thee out of all danger of enemies into that most sure and safe place of thy unfeigned Friend for ever.

Let these things be often thought upon. Let death be premeditated, not only because he comes uncertainly, I mean as to the time, for else he is most certain; but also because he helps much to the contempt of this world, out of which, as nothing will go with thee, so can thou take nothing with thee. Because it helps to the mortifying of the flesh, which when thou feed, thou dost nothing else but feed worms. Because it helps to the well disposing and due ordering of the things thou has in this life. Because it helps to repentance, to bring thee unto the knowledge of thyself, that thou art but earth and ashes, and brings thee the better to know God. But who is able to tell the commodities (advantages, editor) that come by the frequent and true consideration of death? Whose time is left unto us uncertain and unknown, (although to God it be certain, and the bounds thereof not only known, but appointed of the Lord, over the which none can passed Job xiv. ;) that we should not prolong and put off frowzy day to day the amendment of our life, as the rich man (Luke xii.) did under hope of long life. And seeing it is the ordinance of God, and comes not but by the will of God, even unto a sparrow; much more then unto us, who are incomparably much more dear than

many sparrows; and since this will of God is not only just, but also good, for he is our Father, let us, if there were no other cause but this, submit ourselves, our senses, and judgments, unto his pleasure, being content to come out of the room (place or appointed station, editor) of our soldiership, whenever he shall send for us by his pursuivant (messenger, editor), death. Let us render to him, that which he has lent us so long, (I mean life,) lest we be counted unthankful. And since death comes not but by sin, forasmuch as we have sinned so often, and yet the Lord has ceased from exacting this tribute and punishment of us until this present time, let us with thankfulness praise his patience, and pay our debt, not doubting but that he, being our Father and our almighty Father, can and will, if death were evil unto us, as God knows it is a chief benefit unto us by Christ, convert and turn it into good. But death being, as I have before showed, not to be dreaded, but to be desired, let us lift up our heads in thinking on it, and know that our redemption draws nigh. (Luke xxi.) Let our minds be occupied in the consideration, or often contemplation of the four last articles of our belief, that is, the communion of saints or holy catholic church; remission of sins, resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

By faith in Christ, be it ever so faint, little, or cold we are members in very deed of the catholic and holy church of Christ, that is, we have communion or fellowship with all the saints of God that ever were, are, or shall be. Whereby we may receive great comfort; for though our faith be feeble, yet the faith of that church, whereof our Saviour Christ is the head, is mighty enough. Though our repentance be little, yet the repentance of the church, wherewith we have communion, is sufficient. Though our love be languishing, yet the love of the church and of the Spouse of the church is ardent, and so of all other things we want. Not that I mean this, as though any man should think that our faith should be in any, or upon any other, than only upon God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; neither that tat any should think I mean thereby any other merits or means to salvation, than only the merits and name of the Lord Jesus. But I would that the poor Christian conscience, which by baptism is brought into God's church, and made a member of the same through faith, should, not for his sin's sake, or for the want of anything he has not, despair; but rather should know, that he is a member of Christ's church and mystical body; and therefore cannot but have communion and fellowship with both; that is, with Christ himself, being the Lord, husband, and head thereof, and of all that ever have been, are, or shall be members of it, in all good things that ever they have had, have, or shall have. Still does the church pray for us by Christ's commandment. Forgive us our sins, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil; yea, Christ himself prays for us, being members of his body, as we are indeed, if we believe, though it is ever so little. God grant this faith unto us all, and increase it in us. Amen. Out of this church no pope nor prelate can cast us, or excommunicate us indeed, although exteriorly they separate us from the society of God's saints. But enough of this.

As I would have us often muse upon the catholic church, or communion of saints, so would I have us to meditate upon the other articles following, that is, remission of sins, resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. It is an article of our faith to believe, that is, to be certain that our sins are pardoned; therefore doubt not thereof, lest thou become an infidel. Though thou hast sinned ever so sorely, yet now despair not, but be certain that God is thy God, that is, that he forgives thee thy sin. Therefore, as I said, doubt not thereof, for in so doing thou put a sallet (a covering, or scull-cap, editor) on the head of thy soul, so that the dew of God's grace cannot drop into it, but slips by as fast as it drops. Therefore be without that sallet or soul-night-cap; be bareheaded; that is, hope still in the mercy of the Lord, and so mercy shall compass thee on every side. ([Psalm v.](#))

In like manner, often have the article of the resurrection of the body in thy mind, being assured thereby that thy body shall be raised up again in the last day, when the Lord shall come to judgment, and that it shall be made incorruptible, immortal, glorious, spiritual, perfect, light, and even like to the glorious body of our Saviour Jesus Christ. ([Phil. iii.](#)) For he is the first-fruit of the dead; and as God is all in all, so shall he be unto thee in Christ. Look therefore upon thine own estate; for as he is, so shalt thou be. As thou hast borne the image of the earthly Adam, so shalt thou bear the image of the heavenly, ([1 Cor. xv.](#)) therefore glorify thou God now, both in soul and body. Wait and look for this day of the Lord with groaning and sighing. Gather together testimonies of this, which I omit for time's sake.

Last of all, often have life everlasting in thy mind, whereunto thou art even landing. Death is the haven that carries thee unto this land, where is all that can be wished, yea, above all wishes and desires; for in it we shall see God face to face, which now we can in no wise do, but must cover our faces, with Moses and Elias, till the face or fore-parts of the Lord be gone by. ([Exod. xxxiv.](#)) Now must we look on his back-parts, beholding him in his word, and in his creatures, and in the face of Jesus Christ our Mediator; but then we shall see him face to face, and we shall know, even as we are known. ([1 Cor. xiii.](#)) Therefore let us often think on these things, that we may have faith lustily (heartily, editor) and cheerfully to arrive at the happy haven of death, which you see is to be desired, and not to be dreaded, by all those that are in Christ: that is, by such as believe indeed, who are discerned (distinguished, editor) from those that only say they do believe, by their dying temporally, that is, by labouring to mortify through God's Spirit the affections of the flesh: not that they should not be in them, but that they should not reign in them, that is, in their mortal bodies, to give themselves over to serve sin, whose servants we are not, but are made servants unto righteousness, ([Rom. vi.](#)) being now under grace, and not under the law, and therefore God has mercifully promised that sin shall not reign in us; the which may be continually grant for his truth, power, and mercy's sake. Amen.

An Exhortation to the Patient Suffering of Trouble and Affliction for Christ's Cause

Written to all the unfeigned professors of the gospel throughout the realm of England, by John Bradford, at the beginning of his imprisonment, A. D. 1554.

May the Holy Spirit of God, who is the earnest and pledge of God given to his people for their comfort and consolation, be poured into our hearts by the mighty power and mercies of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.

Because I perceive plainly, that to the evils fallen upon us who profess Christ's gospel, greater are most likely to ensue, and after them greater, till the measure of iniquity is heaped up, except we shrink, and having put our hands to the plough look back, and with Lot's wife, and the Israelites desiring to return into Egypt, fall into God's heavy displeasure incurable, [Gen. xix.](#) [Luke ix.](#); all which God forbid; and because I am persuaded of you, my dearly beloved brethren and sisters, throughout the realm of England, which have professed unfeignedly the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (for unto such do I write this epistle,) that as ye have begun to take part with God's gospel and truth, so through his grace ye will persevere, and go on forwards, notwithstanding the storms which have risen and are to arise; I cannot but write something unto you, to go on forwards with earnestness in the way of the Lord, and not to become as the faint-hearted or fearful, whose place St. John appoints ([Rev. xxi.](#)) with the unbelievers, murderers, and idolaters in eternal perdition, but cheerfully to take the Lord's Cup, and drink of it before it draw towards the dregs and bottom, whereof at length they shall drink with the wicked to eternal destruction, who will not receive it at first with God's children, and with whom God begins his judgment, that as the wicked world rejoices when they lament, so they may rejoice when the wicked world shall mourn, and finds woe intolerable without end. ([Ps. lxxv.](#), [1 Pet. iv.](#), [John xvi.](#))

First therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I beseech you to consider, that though you are in the world, yet you are not of the world. ([John xiv.](#)) You are not of them which look for their portion in this life, ([Psa. xvii.](#)) whose captain is the god of this world, even Satan, who now ruffles it apace, as if he were wood (enraged, distracted, editor), because his time on earth is not long. ([2 Cor. iv.](#), [Rev. xii.](#)) But you are of them that look for a city of God's own blessing. You are of them that know yourselves to be here but pilgrims and strangers; for here you have no dwelling-place. ([Heb xi. xii. xiii.](#), [1 Pet. ii.](#)) You are of them whose portion is the Lord, and which have their hope in heaven whose captain is Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and governor of heaven and earth. Unto him is given all power, yea, he is God Almighty, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, praiseworthy for ever. ([Matt. xxviii.](#), [Rom ix.](#)) You are not of them which receive the beast's mark, which here rejoice, laugh, and have their heart's ease, joy, paradise, and pleasure; but you are of them which have received the angels mark, yea, God's mark, which here lament, mourn, sigh, sob, weep, and have

your wilderness to wander in, your purgatory, and even hell to purge and burn up your sins. (Rev. xiii., Luke vi., Ezek. ix.) You are not of them which cry, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die. You are not of that number which say, they have made a covenant with death and hell not to hurt them. You are not of them which take it for a vain thing to serve the Lord. (Matt. v., 1 Cor. xv., Isaiah xxii. xxviii.) You are not of them which are lulled and rocked asleep in Jezebel's bed a bed of security. (Rev. iii.) You are not of the number of them which say, Tush, God is in heaven, and sees us not, nor cares for what we do. (Ps. lxxiii.) You are not of the number of them which will fall down for the muck of the world to worship the fiend, or for fear of displeasing men worship the golden image. (Matt. iv., Dan. iii.) Finally, you are not of the number of them which set more by your swine than by Christ, (Matt. viii.) which, for ease and rest in this life, say and do as Antiochus bids you do or say, (Maccabees,) and will follow the multitude to do evil, with Zedechias and the three hundred false prophets; yea, Ahab, Jezebel, and the whole court and country. (Matt. viii., 1 Kings xxii.) But you are of the number of them which are dead already, or at least are dying daily to yourselves and to this world. You are of them which have made a covenant with God, to forsake yourselves in this world, and Satan also. You are of them which say, Nay, the Lord has all things written in his memorial book, for such as fear him, and remember his name. (Rom. vi. vii., Col. iii., Luke xii., Mal. iii.) You are of them which have their loins girded about, and their lights burning in their hands, like unto men that wait for their Lord's coming. (Luke xii.) You are in the number of them that say, The Lord looks down from heaven, and beholds the children of men: from the habitation of his dwelling, he considers all them that dwell upon the earth. (Ps. xxxiii. xiv. i.) You are of the number of them which will worship the Lord God only, and will not worship the work at man's hands, though the oven burn never so hot. You are of the number of them to whom Christ is precious and dear, which cry out rather because your habitation is prolonged here, as David did. (1 Pet. ii., Ps. cxx.) You are of them which follow Mattathias and the godly Jews, which knew the way to life to be a strait way, and that few go through it, which will not stick to follow poor Micaiah, although he is racked and cast into prison, having the sun, moon, seven stars, and all against him. (Matt. vii, 1 Kings xxii.)

Thus therefore, dearly beloved, remember, first, that, as I said, you are not of this world; that Satan is not your captain: your joy and paradise is not here; your companions are not the multitude of worldlings, and such as seek to please men, and live here at ease in the service of Satan. But you are of another world; Christ is your captain, your joy is in heaven, where your conversation is; your companions are the fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, virgins, confessors, and the dear saints of God, which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes; dipping their garments in his blood, knowing this life and world to be full of evil, a warfare, a smoke, a shadow, a vapour, replenished and environed with all kinds of miseries. (Heb. xiii., Rev. vii., Job vii. viii. xiv., Ps. ix., James iv.) This is the first thing which I would

have you often and diligently with yourselves consider and muse well upon, namely, what you are, and where you are.

Now, secondly, forget not to call to mind that you ought not to think it a strange thing if misery, trouble, adversity, persecution, and displeasure come upon you. For how can it be otherwise, but that trouble and persecution must come upon you. Can the world love you, which are none of his? Can worldly men, which are your chief enemy's soldiers, regard you? (*1 Pet. iv. v.*, *John xiv.*) Can Satan suffer you to be at rest, who will do no homage unto him? Can this way be chosen by any that account it so narrow and strait as they do? Will you look to travel, and to have no foul way or rain? Will shipmen shrink, or sailors on the sea give over, if storms arise? Do they not look for such? and, dearly beloved, did not we enter into God's ship and ark of baptism at the first? will you then count it strange, if perils come or tempests blots? Are not you travelling to your heavenly city of Jerusalem, were is all joy and felicity, and will you tarry by the way for storms and showers? The mart and fair will then be past; the night will so come upon you, that you cannot travel; the door will be barred, and the bride will be at supper. (*John ix.*, *Matt. xxv.*) Therefore away with dainty niceness. Will you think that the Father of heaven will deal more gently with you in this age than he has done with others, his dearest friends, in other ages? What way, yea, what storms and tempests, what troubles and disquietness Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and good Joseph found! Which of these had so fair a life, and such restful times, as we have had? Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David the king, and all the good kings, priests, and prophets in the Old Testament, at one time or other, if not throughout their lives, felt a thousand times more misery than we have felt hitherto. (*Gen. iv. vi. vii. viii. ix. &c.*, *Exod. ii. iii. iv. v. &c.*)

As for the New Testament, how great was the affliction of Mary, of Joseph, of Zacharias, of Elizabeth, of John the Baptist, of all the apostles and evangelists, yea, of Jesus Christ our Lord, the dear Son and darling of God! And since the time of the apostles, how many and great are the numbers of martyrs, confessors, and such as have suffered the shedding of their blood in this life, rather than they would be stayed in their journey, or lodge in any of Satan's inns, lest the storms or winds which fell in their travellings might have touched them! And, dearly beloved, let us think what we are, and how far unfit to be matched with these, with whom yet we expect we are to be placed in heaven. But with what face can we look for this, who are so fearful and unwilling to leave that, which will we nill we, we must leave, and so shortly that we know not the time when? Where is our renouncing and forsaking of the world and the flesh, which we solemnly took upon us in baptism? Ah! shameless cowards that we are, which will not follow the trace of so many fathers, patriarchs, kings, priests, prophets, apostles, evangelists, and saints of God, yea, even of the very Son of God! (*1 Pet. v.*) How many now go with you heartily, as I and all your brethren in bonds and exile for the gospel! Pray for us, for, God willing, we will not leave you now. We will go before you; ye shall see in us, by God's grace, that we preached no lies nor idle tales, but even the very

true word of God. For the confirmation whereof we by God's grace, and the help of your prayers, willingly and joyfully give our blood to be shed, as already we have given our livings, goods, friends, and natural country. For now we are certain that we are in the highway to heaven's bliss; as St. Paul says, By many tribulations and persecutions we must enter into God's kingdom. (Acts, xiv.) And because we would go thither ourselves and bring you thither also, therefore the devil stirs up the coals. And forasmuch as we all loitered in the way, he has therefore received power of God to overcast the weather, and to stir up storms, that we, God's children, might more speedily go on forwards, and make more haste, ([Matt. vii. xiv.](#)) as the counterfeits and hypocrites will tarry and linger till the storms are past; and so when they come, the market will be done, and the doors barred, as it is to be feared. Read [Matt. xxv](#). This wind will blow God's children forward, and the devil's darlings backward. Therefore, like God's children, let us go on forward apace, the wind is on our backs, hoist up the sails, lift up your hearts and hands unto God in prayer, and keep your anchor of faith to cast out in time of trouble on the rock of God's word and mercy in Christ, by the cable of God's verity, and I warrant your safely. And thus much for you secondly to consider, that affliction, persecution, and trouble are no strange thing to God's children, and therefore it should not dismay, discourage, or discomfort us, for it is no other thing than all God's dear friends have tasted in their journey heavenwards.

As I would in this troublesome time that ye would consider what you are by the goodness of God in Christ even citizens of heaven, though you are at present in the flesh, even in a strange region on every side file of fierce enemies, and what weather and way the dearest friends of God have found; even so would I have you, thirdly, to consider for your further comfort, that if you shrink not, but go on forwards, pressing to the mark appointed, all the power of your enemies shall not overcome you, nor in any point hurt you. ([Phil. iii.](#)) But this you must not consider according to the judgment of reason, and the sense of old Adam, but according to the judgment of God's word and the experience of faith and the new man, for else you mar all. For to reason, and to the experience of our sense, or of the outward man, we poor souls which stick to God's word, to serve him as he requires, are only accounted to be vanquished and to be overcome; for we are cast into prison, lose our livings, friends, goods, country, and life also at length, as concerns this world. But, dearly beloved, God's word teaches otherwise, and faith feels accordingly. Is it not written, Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ([Rom. viii.](#)) As it is written, For thy sake are we killed all the day long, and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain. ([Ps. xlv.](#)) Nevertheless, in all these things we overcome through Him that loved us: for I am sure that neither death, nor life, neither angels, nor rule, nor power, neither things present, nor things to come, neither high nor low, neither any creature, shall be able to part us from that love wherewith God loves us in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus spake one who was in affliction, as I am, for the Lord's gospel

sake; his holy name be praised therefore, and may he grant me grace with the same to continue in like suffering unto the end. This (I say) one spoke who was in affliction for the gospel, but yet so far from being overcome, that he rejoiced rather for the victory which the gospel had. For though he was bound, yet the gospel was not bound ([2 Tim. ii.](#)) and therefore he gives thanks unto God which always gives the victory in Christ, and opens the savour of his knowledge by us, and such as suffer for his truth, although they shut us up nearer so much, and drive us never so far out of our own natural country in every place. ([2 Cor. ii.](#))

The world for a time may deceive itself, thinking it has, the victory, but the end will try the contrary. Did not Cain think he had the victory when Abel was slain? ([Gen. iv.](#)) But how say you now is it not found otherwise? Thought not the old world and men then living, that they were wise and well, and Noah a fool, who would creep into an ark, leaving his house, lands, and possessions, for I think he was in an honest (prosperous, editor) state for the world. But I pray you who was wise when the flood came? Abraham was considered a fool to leave his own country, friends, and kin, because of God's word; but, dearly beloved, we know it proved otherwise. ([Gen. xii.](#)) I will leave all the patriarchs, and come to Moses, and the children of Israel. Tell me, were not they thought to be overcome and stark mad, when for fear of Pharaoh, at God's word, they ran into the Red Sea? ([Exod. xiv.](#)) Did not Pharaoh and the Egyptians think themselves sure of the victory? But it proved clean contrary. Saul was thought to be well, but David in an evil case, and most miserable, because he had no hole to hide him in; yet at length Saul's misery was seen, and David's felicity began to appear. ([1 Sam. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix.](#)) The prophet Micaiah being cast into prison for telling Ahab the truth was thought to be overcome by Zedekiah and the other false prophets; but, my good brethren and sisters, the holy history tells otherwise. ([1 Kings xxii.](#)) Who did not think the prophets happy in their time? For they were slain, prisoned, laughed to scorn, and jested at of every man. ([Jer. xx.](#), [Isa. viii.](#), [2 Kings ii.](#)) And so were all the apostles, ([1 Cor. iv.](#)) yea, the dearly beloved friend of God, than whom among the children of women none arose greater, I mean, John Baptist, who was beheaded, and that in prison, even for a dancing damsel's desire. As all these by the judgment of reason were then counted heretics, runagates, unlearned fools, fishers, publicans, &c., so now were they unhappy and overcome indeed, if God's word and faith did not show the contrary. ([Rom. viii.](#))

But what speak I of these? Look upon Jesus Christ, to whom we must be like fashioned here, if we will be like him elsewhere. Now, say you, was not he taken for a fool, a seditious person, a new fellow, a heretic, and one overcome of every body; yea, even forsaken, both of God and men? But the end told them, and tells us another tale; for now is he in majesty and glory unspeakable. When he was led to Pilate or Herod, or when he was in prison in Caiaphas' house, did not their reason think that he was overcome? When he was beaten, buffeted, scourged, crowned with thorns, banged upon the cross, and utterly left by all his disciples, taunted by the high-priests and elders, cursed by the commons, railed on by the

magistrates, and laughed to scorn by the lewd (ignorant, editor) heathen, would not a man then have thought that he had been out of the way, and that his disciples were fools to follow him, and believe him? Think you, that whilst he lay in his grave, men did not point with their fingers, when they saw any that had followed and loved him, or believed in him and his doctrine, saying, "Where is their master and teacher now? What! is he gone? Forsooth, if they had not been fools, they might have well known that the learning he taught could not long continue." Our doctors and Pharisees are no fools now, they may see." On this sort men either spoke, or might have spoken, against all such as loved Christ or his doctrine; but yet at length they and all such were proved fools and wicked wretches. For our Saviour arose, maugre their beards (in spite of their opposition, editor), and published his gospel plentifully, in spite of their heads, and the heads of all the wicked world, with the great powers of the same; always overcoming, and then most of all, when he and his doctrine were thought to have had the greatest fall. As now, dearly beloved, the wicked world rejoices, the papists are puffed up against Christ and his people after their own kind, now they cry out, Where are these new-found preachers? Are they not in the Tower, Marshalsea, Fleet, and beyond the seas? Who would have thought that our old bishops, doctors, and deans, were fools, as they would have made us to believe, and indeed have persuaded some already, which are not of the wisest, especially if they come not home again to the holy church?

These and such-like words they have, to cast in our teeth, as triumphers and conquerors; but, dearly beloved, short is their joy; they beguile themselves, this is but a lightening before their death. As God, after he had given the Jews a time to repent, visited them by Vespasian and Titus, most horribly to their utter subversion, delivering first all his people from among them, even so, my dear brethren, will he do with this age, when he has tried his children from amongst them, as now he begins to do, and, by suffering, has made us like to his Christ, and, by being overcome, to overcome indeed, to our eternal comfort. Then will he, if not otherwise, come himself in the clouds: ([I Thess. iv.](#)) I mean, our dear Lord, whom we confess, preach, and believe on; he will come (I say) with the blast of a trump, and shout of an archangel, and so shall we be caught up in the clouds to meet him in the air: the angels gathering together the wicked wretches, which now welter and wallow as the world and wind blows, to be tied in bundles and cast into the fire, which burns for ever most painfully. ([Matt. xiii.](#)) There and then shall they see who has the victory, they or we, when they shall see us afar ok in Abraham's bosom. ([Luke xvi.](#)) Then will they say, "Oh! we thought these folks fools, and had them in derision; we thought their life madness, and their end to be without honour: but look how they are counted among the children of God, and their portion is with the saints. (See the book of Wisdom.) Oh! we have gone amiss, and would not hearken." Such words as these shall the wicked say one day in hell, whereas now they triumph as conquerors. And thus much for you, thirdly, to look often upon; namely, that whatsoever is done unto you, yea, even death itself, shall not hurt you, any more than it did Abel, David,

Daniel, John Baptist, Jesus Christ our Lord with other dear saints of God, who suffered for his name's sake. Let not reason therefore be judge in this matter, nor present sense, but faith and God's word, as I have shown; in the which, let us set before our eyes the shortness of this present time wherein we suffer, and consider the eternity to come, when our enemies and persecutors shall be in intolerable pains, helpless; and we, if we persevere to the end, shall be in such felicity and joys, dangerless, as the very heart of man in no point is able to conceive. (1 Cor. ii., Isa. ixiv.) If we consider this, (I say,) we cannot but condemn and set nothing by the sorrows and gresses of (steps towards, editor) the cross, and lustily go through thick and thin with good courage.

Thus have I declared unto you, things necessary to be mused on by every one who will abide by Christ and his gospel in this troublesome time, as I trust you all will. Namely, first to consider that we are not of this world, nor of the number of the worldlings, or retainers to Satan; that we are not at home in our own country, but of another world, of the congregation of the saints, and retainers to Christ, although in a region replete and full of untractable enemies. Secondly, that we may not think it a strange thing to be persecuted for God's gospel, from which the dearest friends of God were in no age free, as indeed it is impossible that they should for any long time be, their enemies being always about them to destroy them if they could. And thirdly, that the assaults of our enemies, be they never so many and fierce, in no point shall be able to prevail against our faith, albeit to reason it seems otherwise, wherethrough we ought to conceive good courage and comfort; for who will be afraid when he knows the enemies cannot prevail? Now I will, for the more encouraging you to the cross, give you a further memorandum, namely, of the commodities (advantages, editor) and profits which come by the trouble and affliction now risen and to arise to us, which are God's children, elect through Jesus Christ. But look not here to have repeated all the commodities which come by the cross to such as are well exercised therein, for that were more than I can do; I will only speak of a few, thereby to occasion you to gather and at the length to feel and perceive more.

First, That there is no cross which comes upon any of us without the counsel of our heavenly Father; for as to the fancy about Fortune, it is wicked, as many places of the Scriptures do teach, Amos, iii. [Matt. x.](#) [Isa. xiv.](#) And we must needs, to the commendation of God's justice (for in all his doings he is just,) acknowledge in ourselves that we have deserved at the hands of our heavenly Father this his cross or rod which is fallen upon us, we have deserved it, if not by our unthankfulness, slothfulness, negligence, intemperance, uncleanness, and other sins committed often by us, whereof our consciences can and will accuse us if we call them to counsel, with the examination of our former life, yet at least by our original and birth sin. Also by doubling of the greatness of God's anger and mercy; by self-love, concupiscence, and such-like sins, which as we brought them with us into this world, so the same always abide in us, and even as a spring always bring something forth in act

with us, notwithstanding the continual fight of God's Spirit in us against it. [Ps. 1.](#), [Heb. xii.](#), [Gal. v.](#)

The first advantage therefore that the cross brings is knowledge, and that both of God and of ourselves. Of God, that he is just, pure, and hates sin. Of ourselves, that we are born in sin, and are from top to toe defiled with concupiscence and corruption, out of which have sprung all the evils that ever at any time we have spoken and done. ([Ps. li.](#), [Gen. viii.](#), [Jer. xvii.](#)) The greatest and most special whereof we are occasioned by the cross to call to mind, as the brethren of Joseph did their evil deed against him when the cross once came upon them. ([Gen. xiii.](#)) And so by it we come to the first step to get health for our souls, that is, we are driven to know our sins, original and actual, by God's justice declared in the cross.

Secondly, the end wherefore God declares his justice against our sin both original and actual; and would by his cross have us consider the same, and call to mind our former evil deeds, the end whereof is this, that we might lament, be sorry, sigh, and pray for pardon, that so doing we might obtain the same by means of faith in the merits of Jesus Christ his dear Son. And further, that we, being humbled because of the evil that dwells in us, might become thankful for God's goodness and love, in continual watching and wariness to suppress the evil which lies in us, that it bring not forth fruit to death at any time. ([James i.](#)) This second advantage of the cross therefore we must not count to be a simple knowledge only, but a great gain of God's mercy, with wonderful, rich, and precious virtues of faith, repentance, remission of sins, humility, thankfulness, mortification, and diligence in doing good. Not that properly the cross works these things of itself, but because the cross is the mean and way by which God works the knowledge and feeling of these things in his children; as many, both testimonies and examples in the Scriptures, are easily found of them that diligently weigh what they read therein.

To these two advantages of the cross, join the third of God's singular wisdom that it may be coupled with his justice and mercy. On this sort therefore let us conceive when we see the gospel of God and his church persecuted and troubled, as now it is with us, that because the great, learned, and wise men of the world use not their wisdom to love and serve God, though he opens himself manifestly by his visible creatures to natural wisdom and reason, ([Rom. i.](#)) therefore God both justly infatuates and makes them foolish, giving them up to insensibleness especially herein; for on this manner they reason concerning the affliction which comes for the gospel: "If", say they "this were God's word, if these people were God's children, surely God would then bless and prosper them and their doctrine. But now since there is no doctrine so much hated, no people so much persecuted as they are, therefore it cannot be of God. Rather this is of God which our Queen and old bishops have professed, for how has God preserved them and kept them! What a notable victory has God given unto her, where it seemed impossible that things should have come to pass so as they have done! And did not the great captain confess his fault, that he was out of the way, and not of

the faith which these gospellers profess? (The Duke of Northumberland the father of Lady Jane Grey, who opposed Queen Mary and, being condemned to die, professed to be a papist, editor.) How many are come again, from that which they professed to be God's word? The most part of this realm, notwithstanding the diligence of preachers to persuade them concerning this new learning, which now is persecuted, never consented to it in heart, as experience teaches. And what plagues have come upon this realm since this gospel, as they call it, came in amongst us? Before, we had plenty, but now there is nothing like as it was. Moreover, all the houses of the parliament have overthrown the laws made for the stablishing of this gospel and religion, and new laws are erected for the continuance of the contrary. How miraculously God confounds their doctrine, and confirms ours! For how was Wyatt overthrown! How prosperously came in our King! How has God blessed our Queen with fruit of womb! (It was then supposed that Queen Mary was with child, editor.) How is the Pope's Holiness restored again to his right! All these things teach plainly that this their doctrine is not God's word." Thus reason the worldly wise, which see not God's wisdom; for else, if they considered that there was with us unthankfulness for the gospel, no amendment of life, but all kind of contempt of God, and that all kind of shameless sinning ensued the preaching of the gospel; they must needs see that God could not but chastise and correct; and as he let Satan loose, after he had bound him a certain time for unthankfulness of men, so he let these champions of Satan run abroad, by them to plague us for our unthankfulness. ([Rev. xx.](#)) Great was God's anger against Ahab, because he saved Benhadad, king of Syria, after God had given him into his hands, and afterwards it turned to his own destruction. (1 Kings, xx.) God would that double sorrow should have been repaid to them, because of the sorrow they did to the saints of God. Read the 18th of the Revelation.

As for the victory given to the Queen's Highness, if men had any godly understanding, they might see many things in it. First, God has done it to win her heart to the gospel. Again, he has done it, as well because they that went against her put their trust in horses and power of men, and not in God, as because in their doing they sought not the propagation of God's gospel, which thing is now plainly seen. Therefore no marvel why God fought against them, seeing they were hypocrites, and under the cloak of the gospel would have debarred the Queen's Highness of her right, but God would not so cloak them. (Many of the most sincere followers of the truth assisted Queen Mary against Lady Jane, considering that she was rightful heir to the throne. She also promised that she would not oppose the protestant religion as established by Edward VI. Editor.)

Now for the relenting, returning, and recanting of some, from that which they once professed or preached. Alas! who would wonder at it? for they never came to the gospel, but for commodity and gain's sake, and now for gain they leave it. The multitude, is no good argument to move a wise man; for who knows not how to love this world better than heaven, and themselves better than their neighbours? "Wide is the gate, says Christ, ([Matt. vii.](#)) and

broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; but strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leads unto life, and few there be that find it." All the whole multitude cried out upon Jesus, Crucify him, Crucify him, but they were not to be believed because they were the bigger part. All Chaldea followed still their false gods, Abraham alone followed the true God. ([Gen. xii.](#)) And where they say that greater plagues are fallen upon the realm, in poverty and such other things, than before, it is no argument to move others, except such as love their swine better than Christ, ([Matt. viii.](#);) for the devil chiefly desires his seat to be in religion. If it is there, then he will meddle with nothing we have, all shall be quiet enough; but if he be raised (driven, editor) thence, then will he beg leave to have at our swine. Read [Matt. viii.](#) of the Gergesites. As long as with us he had the ruling of religion, which now he has gotten again, then was he Robin Goodfellow, he would do no hurt: but when he was tumbled out of his throne by preaching of the gospel, then he ranged about as he has done, but secretly. Finally, effectual he has not been, but in the children of unbelief. ([Eph. ii.](#)) Them indeed has he stirred up to be covetous, oppressors, blasphemers, usurers, whoremongers, thieves, murderers, tyrants, and yet perchance he suffers them to profess the gospel, the more thereby to hinder it, and cause it to be slandered. How many now appear to have been true gospellers? As for the parliament and statutes thereof, no man of wisdom can think otherwise, but that, look what the rulers will, the same must there be enacted; for it goes not in those houses by the better part, but by the bigger part. And it is a common saying, and no less true, that the greater part overcomes the better; so they did in condemning Christ, not regarding the counsel of Nicodemus. ([John vii.](#)) So they did also in many general councils; but all wise men know that acts of parliament are not for God's law in respect of God's law, but in respect of the people. Now what we are God knows, and all the world is more pleased a great deal, to have the devil's decrees than God's religion, so great is our contempt of it. And therefore justly for our sins (as Job says) God has set hypocrites to reign over us, which can no more abide God's true religion, than the owl the light, or bleared eyes the bright sun; for it will have them to do their duties, and walk in diligent doing of the works of their vocation. If God's word had place, bishops could not play chancellors and idle prelates as they do; priests should be otherwise known than by their shaven crowns and tippets: but enough of this. As for miracles of success against Wyatt and others, of the king's coming in, &c., I would men would consider there are two kinds of miracles, one to prepare and confirm men in the doctrine which they have received, and another to prove and try men how they have received it, and how they will stick unto it. Of the former kind, these are not miracles; but of the second, by this success given to the queen, God tries whether we will stick to his truth, simply for his truth sake, or no. This is a mighty illusion, which God sends to prove his people, and to deceive the hypocrites, which receive not God's truth simply, but in respect of gain, praise, estimation. Read how Ahab was deceived, [1 Kings xxii.](#), [2 Thess. ii.](#), [Deut. xiii.](#)

But I will now return to the third advantage coming by the cross. Here let us see the wisdom of God in making foolish the wisdom of the world, which knows little of man's corruption; how foul it is in the sight of God, and how it displeases him. Which knows little what the portion of God's people is in another world. Which knows little of the Pattern of Christians, Christ Jesus. Which knows little of the general judgment of God, the greater malice of Satan to God's people, and the price and estimation of the gospel; and therefore in the cross it sees not, as God's wisdom would we should see; namely, that God, in punishing them which sin least, would have his anger against sin seen most, and to be better considered and feared. In punishing his people here, he kindles their desire towards their celestial home. In punishing his servants in this life, he conforms and makes them like to Christ, that, as they are like in suffering, so shall they be in reigning. (*Phil. i.*) In punishing his church in the world, he gives a demonstration of his judgment which shall come on all men, when the godless shall there find rest, though now they are afflicted, and the wicked now wallowing in wealth shall be wrapped in woe and smart. In punishing the professors of his gospel in earth, he sets forth the malice of Satan against the gospel and his people; for the more confirming of their faith, and the gospel to be God's word indeed, and that they are God's people, for else the devil would let them alone. (*Acts xvi.*) In punishing the lovers of his truth more than others, which care not for it, he puts them in mind how they have not valued, as they should have done, the jewel of his word and gospel. Before such trial and experience came, perchance they thought they had believed and had faith, which now they see was but a lip-faith, a mock faith, or an opinion; all which things we see are occasions for us to take better heed by means of the cross. Therefore, thirdly, let us consider the cross to be commodious for us to learn God's wisdom, and what is man's foolishness, God's displeasure at sin, and desire to be with God, the conformity with Christ, the general judgment, the malice of Satan, hatred of sin, that the gospel is God's word, and how it is to be esteemed, &c. Thus much for this.

Now will I, fourthly, briefly show you, that the cross or trouble is profitable for us to learn and behold better the providence, presence, and power of God, that all these may be coupled together as in a chain to hang about our necks, I mean God's justice, mercy, wisdom, power, presence, and providence. When all things are at rest, and men are not in trouble, then they commonly are forgetful of God, and attribute too much to their own wisdom, policy, providence, And diligence, as though they were the procurers of their own fortune, and workers of their own weal. But when the cross comes, and that in such sort as their wits, policies, and friends cannot help, though the wicked despair, run from God to saints, and such other unlawful means, yet the godly therein behold the presence, the providence, and power of God. For the Scripture teaches that all things come from God, both weal and woe, and that the same should be looked upon as God's work, although Satan, the devil, be often an instrument by whom God works justly and mercifully; justly to the wicked, and mercifully

to the godly; as by the examples of wicked Saul and godly Job we may easily see God's work by Satan, his instrument in them both. The children of God, therefore, which before forget God in prosperity, now in adversity are awakened to see God in his work, and no more depend on their own forecast, power, friends, wisdom, riches, &c., but learn to cast themselves on God's providence and power, whereby they are so preserved and governed, and very often miraculously delivered, that the very wicked cannot but see God's providence, presence, and power, in the cross and affliction of his children, as they (his children I mean) to their joy do feel, thereby learning to know God to be the governor of all things. He it is that gives peace, he it is that sends war, he gives plenty and poverty, he sets up and casts down, he brings to death and afterwards gives life. His presence is everywhere, his providence is within and without, his power is the pillar whereby the godly stand, and to it they lean, as no less able to set up than to cast down. (*Isa. xiv.*, *Hosea i.*, *Luke i.* *Ps. cxxxix.*, *1 Pet. v.*) Which the apostle saw in his afflictions, find therefore rejoiced greatly in them, that God's power might singularly be seen therein. (*2 Cor. iv.*) Concerning this, I might bring forth innumerable examples of the addiction of God's children, both in the Old and New Testament, wherein we may see how they felt God's presence, providence, and power, plentifully. But I will omit examples, because every one of us, that has been or is in trouble, cannot but by the same remember God's presence, which we feel by his hand upon us; his providence which leaves us not unprovided for, without any of our own provisions, and his power which both preserves us from many other evils, which else would come upon us, and also makes us able to bear more than we thought we could have done. So very often he delivers us by such means, as have been thought most foolish, and to have been little regarded; and therefore we shake off our sleep of security, and forgetting of God, our trust and shift are in our own policies, our hanging on men, or on our own power. So the cross, you see, is advantageous, fourthly, for to see God's presence, providence, and power, and our negligence, forgetfulness of God, security, self-love, trust, and confidence in ourselves, and that the things in this life are to be cast off, as the others are to be taken hold on. And this shall suffice for the commodities which come by the cross, wherethrough we may be in love with it for the commodities' sake, which at length we shall find, though at present in sense we feel them not. No castigation or punishment is sweet for the present instant, says the apostle, but afterward the end and work of the thing is otherwise. (*Heb. xii.*) As we see in medicines, the more wholesome they are, the more unpleasant is the taste thereof, as in pills, potions, and such like bitter stuff, yet we will, on the physician's word, drink them gladly for the benefit which comes of them. And, dearly beloved, although to lose life, and goods, or friends, for God's gospel sake seems a bitter and sour thing, yet in that our Physician, which cannot lie, Jesus Christ I mean, tells us, that it is very wholesome, howsoever it be loathsome, let us with good cheer take the cup at his hand, and drink it cheerfully. If the cup seem unpleasant, and the drink too bitter, let us put some sugar therein, even a piece of that which Moses cast

into the bitter water, and made the same pleasant: ([Exod. xv.](#)) I mean an ounce, yea, a dram of Christ's afflictions and cross, which he suffered for us. ([1 Pet. iv.](#)) If we call this to mind, and cast of them into our cup, considering what he was, what he suffered, of whom, for whom, to what end, and what came thereof, surely we cannot loath our medicine, but we shall wink and drink it lustily (heartily, editor). Lustily, therefore, drink the cup which Christ gives, and will give unto you, my good brethren and sisters; I mean, prepare yourselves to suffer whatever God will lay upon you for the confessing of his holy name. If not, because of these three things, that ye are not of the world, ye suffer not alone, your trouble shall not hurt you, yet for the commodities which come of the cross, I beseech you heartily to embrace it. The fight is but short, the joy is exceeding great. We must pray always; ([Luke xviii.](#)) then shall we undoubtedly be directed in all things by God's Holy Spirit, which Christ has promised to be our doctor, teacher, and comforter; and, therefore, we need not fear what man or devil can do unto us, either by false teaching or cruel persecution; for our Pastor is such a one that none can take his sheep out of his hands. [John xiv.](#) xv. xvi.

Thus much, my dear brethren and sisters in our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I thought good to write unto you for your comfort. From which, if ye, for fear of man, loss of goods, friends, or life, swerve or depart, then you depart and swerve from Christ, and so snare yourselves in Satan's sophistry to your utter subversion. Therefore, as St. Peter says, "Watch, be sober; for as a roaring lion, he seeks to devour you." Be strong in faith; that is, mammer not (hesitate not, editor), waver not in God's promises, but believe certainly that they pertain to you; that God is with you in trouble; that he will deliver you, and glorify you. ([Heb. xiii.](#), [1 Pet. ii. v.](#), [John x.](#), [Acts ii.](#)) But yet see that you call upon him, specially, that you enter not into temptation, as he taught his disciples even at such time as he saw Satan desire to sift them, as now he has done to sift us. ([Ps. xciii](#), [Matt. xxvi.](#), [Luke xxii.](#)) O dear Saviour, prevent him now as thou did then, with thy prayer, I beseech thee, and grant that our faith faint not, but strengthen us to confirm the weak, that they deny not thee and thy gospel, that they return not to their vomit, stumbling on those sins from which there is no recovery, causing thee to deny them before thy Father, making their latter end worse than the beginning, as was the case with Lot's wife, Judas Iscariot, Francis Spira, and many others. But rather strengthen them and us all in thy grace, and in those things which thy word teaches, that we may here hazard our life for thy sake, and so shall we be sure to save it, as if we seek to save it, we cannot but lose it; and that being lost, what profit can we have, if we win the whole world? ([2 Pet. ii.](#), [Matt. x.](#), [Heb. vi. x.](#), [Mark viii.](#), [Luke xi.](#), [Matt. vi.](#)) Oh, set thou always before our eyes, not as reason does, this life, the pleasure of the same, death of the body, imprisonment, &c. but everlasting life, and those unspeakable joys which undoubtedly they shall have, which take up the cross and follow thee; and they must needs at length fall into eternal hell fire and destruction of soul and body for evermore, which are afraid for the hoar frost of adversity that man or the devil stirs up to stop or hinder us from

going forwards our journey to heaven's bliss to which do thou bring us for thy name's sake.
Amen.

Your own in the Lord,
John Bradford.

A Short and Pithy Defence of the Doctrine of the Holy Election and Predestination of God

Gathered out of the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians

Addressed to a dear friend

By John Bradford

And treating briefly but most perfectly, godly, soundly, and pithily, of God's holy election, free grace, and mercy in Jesus Christ

A letter written to a dear friend of his, wherein he treats briefly, but most perfectly, godly, soundly, and pithily, of God's holy election, free grace, and mercy in Jesus Christ.

Dated October 22, 1554.

Faith in God's election, I mean, to believe that we are in very deed the children of God through Christ, and shall be for ever inheritors of everlasting life through the grace alone of God our Father in the same Christ, is of all things which God requires of us, not only the principal, but also the whole sum. So that without this faith there is nothing we do that can please God. And therefore God first requires it by saying, I am the Lord thy God &c., ([Exod. xx.](#)) that is, I remit thy sins, and give thee my Holy Spirit, and I will keep thee for ever. And our Saviour would have us persuaded of this when we come to pray, and therefore teaches, yea, he commands us to call God our Father, whose power were not infinite, as we profess in the first article of our belief, where we expressly call him our Almighty Father, if we doubt his final favour. And therefore I cannot but marvel at some men, who seem to be godly, and yet are in this behalf too malicious both to God and man. For what is more seemly to God than mercy, which is most magnified by the elect children of God? And what is more seemly for man than humility, which is not and cannot be truly, except in the elect of God; for they alone reckon nothing at all due to themselves but damnation, that their whole glory may be in God, only and for ever. But notwithstanding this, there are those who have gone about together, to set abroad enormities from the doctrine of God's most holy and comfortable election and predestination, although that doctrine has more advantages than all the whole world are able to conceive, much less to express. For what destroys enormities so much as it does? It overthrows the most pestilent papistical poison, the doubting of God's favour, which is the very dungeon of despair and contempt of God. It destroys the heathenish opinion of fortune (or chance, editor). It comforts most comfortably under the cross and casts down all cogitations, which would else cover us with sorrow and grief, by telling us that all things shall turn for the best. ([Rom. viii.](#)) It makes us modest, and puts away pride in prosperity, by pulling from men the thought of their meriting or deserving. It forces men to love, and carefully to labour for their brethren, utterly preventing the despising of any. It excites to piety, and is the greatest enemy of ungodliness that can be, by teaching us of what dignity we are, of what value even our bodies are, as temples of the Holy Ghost and

members of Christ. It causes a real desire for our home in heaven, and so leads us to despise this world, and the things which this world values. It makes man wholly and continually be careful not for himself but for others, and for the things which are for God's glory. It helps very much to the true understanding of the scriptures, and preserves from errors, by causing us to know what is to be attributed to the law, to the gospel, to the ministry, to the vocal word (the spoken word, editor), to them Old Testament, to the New Testament, to the sacraments, to faith, to works, to prayer, to penance, to God, to man, &c. For by the Spirit of election we see and know Christ, in whom dwells all the riches and treasures of knowledge. It sets up Christ's kingdom, and entirely overthrows the wisdom, power, choice, and ability of man, that all glory may be given to God alone.

But why do I try to reckon the advantages proceeding from the doctrine of God's election, for they are innumerable? This is the sum, that where a Christian man's life has respect to God, to man, and to himself, to live godly, justly, and soberly, all is grounded upon predestination in Christ. For who lives in a godly manner but he that believes? And who believes but such as are ordained to eternal life? ([Acts xiii.](#)) Who lives justly but such as love their neighbours? And whence springs this love but from God's election before the beginning of the world, that we might be blameless by love? Who lives soberly but such as are holy? And who are they but those alone who are endued with the spirit of sanctification, which is the seal of the election of us who believe? ([Eph. i.](#), [2 Cor. ii.](#))

Wherefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I have undertaken to write something to you and for your sake in this matter, which I have sent you herewith, as well to be a help to you therein, as also to be a pledge of my anxious love and hearty desire which I have for your continuance in the truth, (wherein I trust you stand at present,) when I am dead and burned, as I fully expect as soon as God shall give leave to his enemies, for my benefit and endless joy in Christ. To Him, as to a most faithful Pastor, from the bottom of my heart I commend and bequeath you, beseeching him to watch over you night and day as over one of his poor lambs, and to keep you out of the claws of the lion, and the mouth of the wolves, to his glory and your eternal joy and comfort in him. Amen.

There is neither virtue nor vice to be considered according to any outward action, nor according to the will and wisdom of man, but according to the will of God. Whatsoever is conformable thereto is virtue, and the action that springs thereof is laudable and good, however otherwise it appear to the eyes and reason of man, as was the lifting up of Abraham's hand to have slain his son. ([Gen. xxii.](#)) Whatever is not conformable to the will of God, is vice, and the action springing thereof is to be disallowed and taken for evil; and that so much the more and the greater evil, by how much it is not consonant and agreeing to God's will, although it seems far otherwise to man's wisdom, as was Peter's wish of making three tabernacles, ([Matt. xvii.](#)) and the request of some who would have had fire to have come down from heaven from a zeal to God, &c. ([Luke ix.](#))

Now the will of God is only known as it is set forth in his word; therefore according to it must vice and virtue, good and be judged; and not according to the judgment, wisdom, reason, and collection of any man, or of the whole world, if all the angels in heaven should take their part.

But this word of God, which is written in the canonical books of the Bible, plainly sets forth unto us, that God has of his own mercy and good will, and to the praise of his grace and glory in Christ, elected some and not all, whom he has predestinated unto everlasting life in the same Christ; and in his time calls them, justifies them and glorifies them, so that they shall never perish and err to damnation finally.

Therefore to affirm, teach, and preach this doctrine has in it no hurt, no vice, no evil; much less then has it any enormity (as some affirm) to the eyes and spirit of them which are guided, and will be, by the word of God.

That God, the eternal Father of mercies, before the beginning of the world, has of his own mercy and good will, and to the praise of his grace and glory, elected in Christ some, and not all of the posterity of Adam, whom he has predestinated unto eternal life, and calls them in his time, justifies them, and glorifies them, so that they shall never perish or err to damnation finally; that this proposition is true, and according to God's plain and manifest word, by the help of his Holy Spirit which in the name of Jesus Christ I humbly beseech his mercy plenteously to give to me at this present and for every to the sanctification of his holy name; is what by the help. I say, of his Holy Spirit, I trust so evidently to declare, that no man of God shall be able by the word of God ever to impugn it, much less to confute it.

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the apostle says thus: "Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which has blessed us with all manner of blessings in heavenly things by Christ; according as he has elected or chosen us in him before the foundation of the world was laid, that we should be holy and without blame before him through love; and has predestinated us (or ordained us) through Jesus Christ, to be heirs unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherewith he has made us accepted in the Beloved, by whom we have received redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of our iniquities, according to the riches of his grace. Which grace he has shed on us abundantly in all wisdom and understanding, and has opened unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, to have it declared when the time was full come, that he might gather together all things by (or in) Christ, as well the things that are in heaven, as the things that are on earth, even in (or by) him. By (or in) whom we are made heirs, being thereto predestinated, according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the decree (or counsel) of his own will, that we which hoped before you in Christ, should be unto the praise of his glory; in whom ye also hoped after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; wherein ye also believing, were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest

of our inheritance until the redemption (or full fruition) of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory."

These are the words of Paul, which I have faithfully translated according to the very text in the Greek, as by the judgment of all that are learned, I desire to be tried out of which words of Paul we may well perceive everything affirmed in my proposition, as I will give occasion plainly to them that will to see it.

First, the apostle shows that the cause of God's election is of his good will, in saying, that it is through his love whereby we are holy and without blame, also 'according to the good pleasure of his will, according to his good pleasure purposed in himself, according to his purpose which works all things after the counsel of his own will.'

Secondly, the apostle plainly shows, that election was before the beginning of the world, in saying, that we were 'chosen before the foundation of the world' was laid; and afterwards in calling it 'the mystery of his will purposed with himself in time to be declared.'

Thirdly, the apostle so flatly and plainly sets forth that election is in Christ, that I need not here repeat it. 'We (says he) are chosen in him; we are heirs by him; we are accepted by him; we are gathered together in him,' &c.

Fourthly, that election is of some of Adam's posterity, and not of all; we may plainly see, if we consider, that he makes the true demonstration of it, believing, hoping, and having the earnest of the Spirit. 'In whom ye hoped (says he) after ye heard the word,' &c.; in whom ye believed, were sealed up, &c. Again, in attributing to the elect forgiveness of sins, holiness, blameless living, being in Christ, &c. 'That we should be holy, says he, &c. we have received forgiveness of sin', &c. Who sees not that these are not common to all men? 'All men have not faith,' says Paul, [2 Thess. iii.](#) 'None believed (says Luke) but such as were ordained to eternal life' ([Acts xiii.](#);) none believe but such as 'are born of God;' ([I John v.](#);) none believe truly but such as have good hearts, and keep God's seed, to bring forth fruits by patience. ([Matt. xiii.](#))

So that it is plain (faith being a demonstration of God's election to them that are of years of discretion) that all men are not elect, because all men believe not; for 'he that believes in the Lord, shall be as Mount Sion,' ([Psalm cxxv.](#)) that is, he shall never be removed; for if he be removed, that is, finally perish, surely he never truly believed. But why go I about to light a candle in the clear sun-light, when our Saviour plainly says that all are not chosen, but only few? 'Many are called, (says he, [Matt. xx.](#)) but few are chosen.' And in the second chapter to the Ephesians the apostle plainly says, that the great riches of God's mercies, through his exceeding great love has saved them, before their parents and many other Gentiles, which were excluded from Christ, and strangers from the promise, hopeless, godless, &c. Wherethrough we may be occasioned to cry, Oh! the depths of the judgments of God, ([Rom. ii.](#)) who is just in all his doings, and holy in all his works, extending his mercy after his good pleasure and will over all his works. ([Psalm cxlv.](#))

Fifthly, that God has predestinated these, who are the elect unto everlasting life in Christ, the apostle also declares in the words before written, in saying, 'And has predestinated us through Jesus Christ to be heirs unto himself' Again, 'By him (says he) ye are made heirs, and predestinated to the praise of his glory.' So says the apostle, ([Rom. viii.](#)) 'Whom he has predestinated, them he has predestinated to be like fashioned unto the shape of his Son.' And Christ therefore says, 'Rejoice in this, your names are written in heaven.' ([Luke x.](#))

Sixthly, that the end of election is to the praise of God's glory and grace, the apostle shows in saying, we are predestinated to be holy and without blame before God, &c.; in saying, we are predestinated to the glory of his grace', and in also, 'unto the praise of his glory, so that nothing can be more manifest.

Seventhly, that predestination is not without vocation in God's time, and justification, the apostle here teaches in bringing us to the consideration of hearing the word of truth, believing and receiving the Holy Spirit, remission of sins, &c. "In whom" (says he) "ye have hoped, after that ye heard the word of truth," &c. Again, "By whom ye have redemption, that is, remission of sins, through the shedding of his blood," &c. also "He has in his full time declared the mystery of his will," &c. Unto the Romans the apostle shows it most manifestly, in saying, 'whom he has predestinated, them he calls, whom he calls, them he justifies;' whereby we may see that predestination or election is not universal or of all, for all are not justified.

Eighthly, and last of all, the apostle here also very plainly shows, that election is so certain, that the elect and predestinate to eternal life shall never finally perish or err to damnation, in saying, that they are predestinate to the praise of God's grace. He says not, to the praise of his justice, to the praise of his wisdom, to the praise of his power, although he might most truly say so; but he says, 'to the praise of his grace,' which were not grace, if there were any respect at all of works on our behalf; for then were grace not grace. ([Rom. xii.](#)) If there should be any condemnation of the elect and predestinate to eternal life, it must needs be because of their sins; but where would be the praise of God's grace then, which is the end of God's election? Shall we not by this means make God's election without an end, and so without a head, and so no election at all, as some would have it further than they elect themselves? Let such fear they shall not find the benefit of God's election, because they seek it as the Israelites did, and not as the elect, which not only find it, but also obtain it. ([Rom. xi.](#)) The others are blinded, as it is written, God has given them the spirit of unquietness, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, even to this day, &c. ([Psalm lxix.](#)) Again, he shows the certainly of salvation to them that are elected in saying, that they are accepted in the Beloved, once accepted and beloved in Christ, and ever beloved; for whom he loves, he loves to the end. ([John xiii.](#)) And God's gifts are such that he cannot repent him of them, ([Rom. xi.](#);) and therefore, says Christ, "I know whom I have chosen," attributing to election the cause of final perseverance. By which Judas was seen not to be elected to

eternal life, although he was elected to the office of an apostle, as Saul was elected to the office of a king; which kind of election is to be discerned (distinguished, editor) in reading the scriptures, from this kind of election which I speak of now, that is, from election to eternal life in Christ. Thirdly, he shows the certainty of the salvation of the elect, by calling them heirs. For if we are heirs of God, then are we fellow-heirs with Christ, to be afflicted and glorified with Christ, ([Rom. viii.](#);) and therefore says he, 'according to the decree of his own will.' Lo! he calls it a decree or counsel, Which shall stand; as Isaiah says, 'the counsel of the Lord shall stand.' ([Isa. xlvi.](#)) Fourthly, he shows this certainty, by saying, that 'they are elect and predestinated to the praise of God's glory, which we should more care for, than for the salvation of all the world.' This glory of the Lord is set forth, as well in them that perish, and are reprobates, as in the elect: and therefore St. John, bringing in the place of Isaiah, speaking of the reprobate, says, ([John xli.](#)) that Isaiah spoke that when he saw the glory of the Lord. This glory of the Lord to be set forth by us, is a great mercy and benefit of God: I am assured, that if the very devils and reprobates did not repine hereat, but were thankful that they might be ministers in any point to set forth God's glory; I am assured (I say) that they should find no hell nor torments: their hell and torments come of the love they have to themselves, and of the malice, envy, and hatred they have against God and his glory. Let them tremble and fear, that may not away with (who cannot endure, editor) the glory of the Lord, in election and reprobation.

Let not their eyes be evil, because God is good, and does good to whom it pleases him. ([Rom. ix.](#)) He does wrong to no man, nor can do, for then he were not righteous, and so no God. He cannot condemn the just, for then were he untrue, because his word is contrary; he cannot condemn the penitent and believer, for that were against his promise. Let us, therefore, labour, study, cry, and pray for repentance and faith; and then we cannot be damned, because we are the blessed of the Father before all worlds; and therefore we believe, therefore we repent. ([Matt. xxv.](#)) And forasmuch as it pertains to us who are within, to see and to speak of those things which are given unto us of God in Christ, ([1 Cor. ii.](#);) let us labour hereabouts, and leave them that are without to the Lord, who will judge them in his time. ([1 Cor. v.](#)) The apostle prayed for the Ephesians, for no other wisdom and revelation from God than that whereby they might know God, ([Eph. i.](#)) and have their minds illuminated to see what they should hope for by their vocation, and how rich the glory of his inheritance is in his saints. Further than this I think it unseemly for us to search, until we have sought out how rich God's goodness is, and will be to us his children which we can never do fully; but the more we go thereabout, and the more we taste his goodness, the more we shall love him, and loath all things that displease him. This, I say, let us do, and not be too busy in searching the majesty and glory of God, or in nourishing in anywise the doubting of our salvation, whereunto we are ready enough, and the devil goes about nothing else so much as that; for by it we are dull to do good to others, we are so careful for ourselves. By it we

are more dull to do good to ourselves, because we stand in doubt whether it profits us or not; by it we dishonour God, either in making him as though he were not true, or else as though our salvation came not only and altogether from him, but hanged partly on ourselves; by it the devil will bring men at length to despair and hatred of God. Doubt once of the salvation, and continue to do so, and surely he will ask no more. It was the first thing wherewith he tempted Christ: "If thou be the Son of God, &c. ([Matt. iv.](#)) It is the first and principal dart that he casts at God's elect; but as he prevailed not against Christ, no more shall he prevail against any of his members, for they have the shield of faith, which quenches his fiery darts. ([Eph. vi.](#)) They praise God night and day, ([Luke xviii.](#);) how then should they perish? The angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about them, ([Ps. xxxiv.](#);) how then should Satan prevail. They are borne in the hands of the angels, lest they should hurt their feet at any stone; God has given commandment to his angels over them, ([Ps. xci.](#);) the angels are ministers unto them, ([Heb. i.](#);) their names are written in the book of life, and therefore Christ bade them rejoice, ([Luke x.](#);) as Paul does the Philippians, in the fourth chapter, for nothing shall separate them from the love wherewith God loves them in Christ Jesus, ([Rom. viii.](#);) who says, that it is impossible for them to err finally to damnation, ([Matt. xxiv.](#);) for he is their light to illumine their darkness, ([Ps. xviii.](#);) they are given to him to keep, and he is faithful over all God's children. He says he will keep them so that they shall never perish. ([John vi. x.](#)) After they believe, they are entered already into everlasting life, ([Heb. iii.](#);) Christ has set them there already, ([John v. vi.](#);) he has committed them into his Father's hand by prayer, which we know is sure, ([John xvii. Heb. v.](#);) and therefore neither death, hell, devils, nor all power, sins, nor mischief, shall ever pull us out of our Head's hands, ([Rom. viii.](#), [John x.](#);) whose members we are; and therefore receiving of his Spirit, as we do, we cannot but bring forth the fruits thereof, though now and then the flesh fail us. But the Lord, even our Lord, be praised, who is stronger in us than he which is in the world. ([1 John iv.](#)) He always puts under his hand, that we lie not still as the reprobates, whose piety is as the morning dew, ([Hosea vi.](#);) soon come, and soon gone, and therefore they cannot continue to the end. Cannot! no, they will not if they could, because they hate God and his glory, and therefore hate all them that seek it and set it forth; whereas the elect love all men, and seek to do all men good in God, suspending their judgments of others, that they may stand or fall to the Lord, and not to them, ([Rom. xiv.](#))

If the matter of election and predestination be so fully set forth to God's glory, and to the comfort of his church out of this one place of Paul to the Ephesians, how may we suppose this matter is set forth in the whole body and books of the canonical Scripture, whereto I had rather send thee, good reader, with this candle-light which I have now given thee, than in a matter so manifest make more ado than needs,

John Bradford.

A Brief Summary of the Doctrine of Election and Predestination

God's foresight is not the cause of sin, or excusable necessity to him that sins; the damned therefore have not nor shall have any excuse, because God foreseeing their condemnation, or through their own sin, did not draw them, as he does his elect, unto Christ. But as the elect have cause to thank God for ever for his great mercies in Christ, so the others have cause to lament their own wilfulness, sin, and contemning of Christ, which is the cause of their reprobation, and wherein we should look upon reprobation as the goodness of God in Christ is the cause of our election and salvation, wherein we should look upon God's election. He that will look upon God or any thing in God, simply and barely as it is in God, the same shall be stark blind. Who can see God's goodness, as it is in God? Who can see his justice, as it is in him? If therefore thou wilt look upon his goodness, not only look upon his world, but also upon his word; even so if thou wilt look upon his justice, do the like. Then shalt thou see that election is not to be looked on but in Christ nor reprobation but in sin. When the second cause is sufficient, should not we think that they are too curious that will run to search the first cause, further than God gives them leave by his word? which first cause, because they cannot comprehend, therefore they deny it. God be merciful to us for his name's sake, and give us to love and to live his truth, to seek peace and pursue it; because God of his goodness, for the comfort of his children and certainty of their salvation, opens unto them in some degree the first cause of their salvation, that is, his goodness before the beginning of the world to be looked upon in Christ; a man may not therefore be so bold as to wade so in condemnation further than God reveals it. And forasmuch as he has not revealed condemnation except in sin, therefore let us not look on it otherwise. Seek to be delivered from sin, and fear not reprobation; but if thou wilt not, thou shalt find no excuse in the last day. Say not that thou art not warned.

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