

honor, that so we may consecrate our selues to set forth his praise, & walke before him in holines & righteousness al the daies of our life, who is our onely Sauour; to whom with the Father and the holy Ghost, be glory for euer. Amen.

The seuenth Lecture, vpon the

1. 2. 3. & 4. verses of the  
2. Chapter.

- 1 **W** Herefore, we ought diligently to giue heed to the things which we haue heard, least at any time we ranne out.
- 2 For if the word spoken by Angels, was stedfast, and euery transgression and disobedience receined a iust recompence reward;
- 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great saluation, which at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed vnto vs by them that heard him?
- 4 God bearing witness thereto, both with signes and wonders, and with diuers miracles, and giftes of the holy Ghost, according to his owne will.



We haue heard before, how that the Apostle, after hee had set it downe, that Christ was the Prophet of the newe Testament, that wee might truely giue him this glorie, streight he magnifieth his person, by many titles, and by comparison with Angels, proouing vnto vs, that he is very God. Now to shew more clearly, for what purpose all those praises of Christ were rehearsed, him selfe maketh his conclusion in the beginning of this 2. Chapter; that therefore wee should most carefully hearken vnto him alone. And this is the first part

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of this Chapter, before the Apostle came, as I tolde you, to prooue that our Sauour Christ is also perfect man. In this exhortation, first the Apostle setteth downe his doctrine: then his reason by which hee will perswade vs vnto it; his doctrine is this. That it behoueth vs now more carefully to hearken to the words of Christ, than afore time it behoued our forefathers to hearken to the lawe of Moses. For where hee saith, *wee ought more diligently*: hee maketh this comparison plainly with the fathers in the old lawe, in the second verse following. And here wee must wisely consider why he saith, we ought to be more carefull then they; not that they might omit any care, for expressely they are charged with all care, to adde nothing, to take away nothing, to chaunge nothing, not to depart neither to the right hand nor yet to the left, but day and night, at home and abroad, to do alway this, to study it continually without intermission, as appeareth in Deut. 4.6. & 5. 32 & 6.6. & 10. 8. & 12. 32. & 28. 14. Ios. 1. 8. & 33. 6. and many other places. Nor it is not said that we be more bound then they, as though the authoritie of GOD were changed: but this is spoken after our sense, because now Christ hath spoken by himselfe, then by Angels; now plainely, then in figures: therefore we ought more carefully to hearken, not that all care ought not to bee in them as well as in vs; but because our punishment shall be more than theirs, euen as wee shal be despisers of the greatest grace.

After this, the Apostle addeth his reason to perswade vs to this especiall carefulnesse aboue all other people, to hearken to the voyce of Christ; and that is, of the perill that ensueth, least (saith he) we runne out. The Apostle vseth a metaphore, taken of old tubbes, which runne out at the joints, and can holde no liquor. In such a phrase of speach one saith of himselfe: I am full of creuisses or little holes, and I flow

flowe out on this side and on that. Meaning thereby, that euery vaine thing which he heard, he would blab it out; so we, if we take into vs the sweet wine of the word of Christ, as into olde bottels and broken vessels, that it runne out againe, we become then altogether vnprofitable; al goodnes falleth away, and we be as water powred vpon the ground. This metaphore the woman of Tekoa vsed to David, when in describing an vtter desolation of the people, she shaid: *we are as water spilt on the ground which cannot bee gathered up againe.* And David himselfe describing the extremitie of all miserie which was come vpon him, he said: *I am like water powred out, and all my bones are out of ioynt.* Likewise, when he praieth; that all the plagues of God may fall vpon the wicked till they be consumed to nothing, he saith thus: *Let them melt like the waters, and let them passe away.* So the Apostle noting the extreame perill, and ineuitable death that is in neglecting the word of Christ, this glorious sonne of God, he saith: *Take heede, least we be powred out:* meaning, as water powred on the ground, and is neuer after profitable any more. And if you will see an example, what this flowing away meaneth; behold the Iewes this day, to whom it is threatned; a despised people; whose very name is as a curse; so they haue flowed out, and are come to ruine; if their example doe make vs wise, then this exhortation of the Apostle is not to vs in vaine.

It followeth in the second and third verse: *For if the worde spoken by Angels &c.* In these wordes the Apostle aggrauateth his reason, and forceth it the more to feare the people. Hee vseth to this ende an argumente of the comparison before made betweene Christ and the Angells; that if the Lawe giuen by Angells, were not broken without seuer punishment, because it was giuen by such glorious spirites; how much more shall we be punished,

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nished, if wee dispise this great saluation, preached by the sonne of GOD? That the lawe was giuen by Angels, the  
31. Scripture here is plaine. Moses saith of the deliuerie of it :  
3. the Lord came with tenne thousand of Saints. And S. Paul saith expressely the same, Gal. 3. 19. And S. Stephan likewise, Act. 7. 53. And how can it bee otherwise? for when there was in the mountaine, thunders, lightnings, tempests, fearefull sounds of a trumpet, and the voice of a man heard:  
9. 16. *I am the Lord thy God that brought thee &c.* what could this be but the ministerie of Angels? for it must needs bee true, which our Saviour Christ saith: *No man hath heard the voice of God at any time.* Neither then could the maiestie of God speake, but the voice of his mouth would haue shaken vnto nothing both men and mountaine, & all the elements that were before him. For how can corruption stand in his presence?

If wee doubt because of the words, that the voice saith: *I am the Lord thy God*: And againe, in the third of Exodus, it saith: *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob*: true it is, that our Saviour Christ then spake, who is the God of glory; but he spake not in the voice of his Godhead, but in the likenesse of an Angell, which he tooke vpon him. For though it be true, that he tooke not the nature of Angels, nor was made one of them; yet in his heauenlie wisedome, he tooke vpon him the likenes of an Angell, and according to that nature, so spake words; so that still this is true: The lawe was giuen by Angels.

Where it followeth here, that all transgression of that lawe was punished: no doubt he respecteth the people of Israel in the wilderness; whereof so many hundred thousands, all died in their sinnes, except Caleb and Iosua, who were of another spirit: which feareful example of this people, is likewise alledged by Saint Paule in the first to the  
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Corinthians, the tenth Chapter, to admonish the Corinthians, that by their example they should learne.

And where the Apostle addeth, how shall wee escape, if wee despise so great salutation: how true this is, wee cannot doubt, if wee will open our eyes this day, and looke about vs; what is become of the Churches of Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossos, Thessalonica: all which Paul so highly commendeth? What is become of the Churches of Pontus, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, to which Peter writeth? what is become of Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, the Churches mentioned in the Apocalips? In all Asia, Græcia, Macedonia, Syria, Palestina, and many famous countries els, where are now their Churches? Yea, to come yet neerer home, what is become of the Churches in many Countries and Ilands, which our eyes haue seene to flourish? The famous kingdome of Hungarie, the great countrie of Liuania; how haue barbarous tyrants laid them wast, that scarce one Church of Christ hath peace within them? These are the punishments which God hath executed, for the contempt of his Gospell; and our eyes, and the eyes of our children this day haue seene it.

If we will not be warned, but doe as wee do, despise the Gospell, more than all nations round about vs: suffer mockers and scorers to make their bankets among vs; giue leaue to proude men, to haue their pleasures at home; and come not once to the Church in 14. or 15. yeare; let the wolues loose, whose rauening teeth are yet red, and their bellies full with the bloud of Gods Saints: If wee will doe greater abominations than these; I will not appoint times and seasons, for so God hath not sent me hether as a Prophet: but as the scourge will surely come, so I dare boldly say: *The wise man seeth the plague comming and hideth him, but the foole goeth on forward and is snared.* It followeth in the A-



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postle in the third and fourth verse, which at the first began to be preached. &c.

The Apostle continueth yet his reason, added to this exhortation of taking heed to the Gospell: which as he did before, of the excellency of Christ the teacher of it; so repeating that, he addeth also for the more glorie of it, the way & manner in which it was taught, respecting herein the glorious manner how the lawe was giuen, least thereby any should lesse regard the Gospell. And this manner of teaching he magnifieth, first by the author, who was no Angell, but the Lord himselfe: then by the ministers of it, who were not one, but many; and euery one in as honourable and assured a calling, as Moses himselfe. Thirdly, that the preaching of it was with signes, wonders, powers, and sundrie speciall gifts of the holy Ghost, euen as it pleased God to distribute them; so that they shall bee without excuse all the despisers of it. Here some haue thought that this Epistle cannot bee Paules, because he saith: *They which heard this Gospell of Christ himselfe; they haue confirmed it to vs.*: which thing Paul neuer saith, but alwaies standeth vpon this, that he receiued it by Reuelation. This reason is not vnlikelie, neither yet is it necessarie; for S. Iude being an Apostle, yet saith: remember the wordes which before this, you haue heard of the Apostles. And as Paule would not lightly haue spoken it in his owne person, so here his name being concealed, and making himselfe one with those to whom he writeth, he might well speake it. And it is not to be pretermitted, that he saith not, it was taught vs, but it was confirmed vnto vs, which might be said euen of Paul himselfe being confirmed by Ananias, and conferring with Peter, James, Iohn, &c. and many other waies. Therefore this is a thing still doubtfull, and whether it were Paule, or not Paule, wee cannot tell. That he saith here of signes, wonders,

ders, and powers, he calleth miracles, signes, because they were testimonies and seales to vs of the doctrine to be from GOD: hee calleth them wonders, because they were straunge, and shewed an vnwonted worke, not knowne of men: he calleth them powers, because they had an euident prooffe of the power of GOD: the sundrie distributions of the spirit, hee calleth the extraordinarie gifts, which followed those that did beleue; as our Sauour Christ promised, and whereof S. Paul speaketh at large 1. Corin. 12. And thus the Apostle endeth this exhortation, that wee would carefully hearken to the Gospell giuen by Christ, preached by the Apostles, confirmed by the giftes of the holy Ghost, whose contempt God our heauenly father will most assuredly reuenge. Mark.

Now let vs examine againe the words, and applie them to our particular instruction. In the first verse where it is said, *We ought more diligently to hearken to the things that wee haue heard*; wee learne one lesson very necessarie for our times, and with which wee may stop the mouths of a great many Papists, when we reason with them about the studie of the Scriptures, how all men ought to knowe them, if we alledge the most cleare places; as in the 6. of Deuteronomy, *These words shall bee in thine heart: Thou shalt rehearse them to thy children: Thou shalt talke of them at home in thy house: and when thou art in thy way, when thou liest downe, and when thou risest up: Thou shalt binde them for a signe vpon thy hands, and they shall be as a frontlet betweene thine eyes. Thou shalt write them in the doore of thine house, and graue them vpon thy gates.* Deut. 6. 6. These & such like places they haue learned thus to answer; al that, was ment in the old lawe: now Christ hath giuen the holy ghost to the church, & it cannot err, therfore we must heare her: whether this be not wilfully to be blind & see nothing. now indge when you heare the Apostle making cōparison, nanelie,

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namely, betwene our fathers of the old Testament and vs; he saith; that we are more bound to the doctrine taught by Christ in his Gospel, than all our fathers to the law of Moses. But they say G O D hath giuen his holy spirit to the Church, to guide it in all truth: first I answered, this helpeth them nothing; for it is a common argument, which all sectaries and scilmaricks may likewise boast of: but let them prooue first that the Church of Rome is the Church of Christ. Now, touching this gift of Gods spirit powred vpon vs, I say it is a promise to the particular comfort of euery one, that we shall neuer fall from the grace and loue of God: it is not a warrant generally to all, that the Church shall be euer in open rule and gouernment, and no blemish within her; for how els could it bee true that the Scripture saith, there shall be an Apostacie of men from the faith: iniquity shall haue the vpper hand: no man shall haue the libertie of his life, but he that taketh on him the marke of the beast. And I would faine knowe of them, whether the Church vnder the lawe had not also this promise? Saith not God by his Prophet Esay: *My spirit which is vpon thee, and my wordes which I will put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seede, nor out of the mouth of thy seedes seede after thee from hencefoorth for euer more.* What a glorious promise is this? Should now the Scribes and Pharisees rise against Christ, as they did, and say they could not erre, they had the holy Ghost, they were the Church? Nay, they were not the seede of Esay, but the seede of murderers that killed Esay and the Prophets: so these men, they are not the children of GOD, but of the man of sinne, which exalteth himselfe against God; and vnder pretence of the spirit of God, blasphemeth the Gospel, which onely the spirit hath taught vs; and that he blasphemeth the Gospel, I may say it boldly, and let them blame me if they can: for doth not

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Thes. 2.  
2. 24.  
Apo. 13.

Es. 59.



the Apostle say here : all our care must be to obey the Gospel ; and doo not they say , that the Pope can dispense against the Gospel , against the Apostle , against the Prophet , against the olde and newe Testament , against the law of God and nature ? Only one thing can here possibly be said : that they do grant all this care of the Gospel ought to be had , but the Gospel say they is not onely the written worde , but many other vnwritten verities taught by Christ and his Apostles , and therefore we are bound to hold them . I beseech you ( dearely beloued ) marke these mens sayings a little with me , and iudge then with the Spirit that G O D hath giuen you . They say the word writtē indeed we must keepe , because it is of God : and so likewise Christ and his Apostles preached things neuer written ; which yet preached by them , ought to haue the authority of Christ himselfe . It cannot be denied , but what Christ and his Apostles preached , it was the word of God , equall with all writings of Apostles and Prophets . But tell mee , is it the worde of Christ written , that wee should not worship Angels ; and is Col. 2. it the word of Christ vnwritten , that wee should pray vnto them ? Is it his word written , that we should not be bound to our fathers traditions ; and is it his word vnwritten , that our fathers traditions should bee to vs as his Gospel ? Is it his worde written , that wee should not obserue daies , and times , nor make conscience of meate and drinke ; and is it his word vnwritten that wee should keepe Lent , Aduent , Imber daies , make difference of flesh and fish ? Is it his 1. Tim. 4. word written , that to forbid marriage , which is honorable Heb. 13. in all estates ; it is the doctrine of diuels : and is it his word vnwritten , that Ministers shall be forbidden to marrie ? Is it his word written , that fise words in a knowne tongue are better in the congregation , than fise thousand in a straunge , Cor. 14. language ; & is it his word vnwritten , that in all congrega-  

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tions, they shall haue a straunge language, and speake all in Latine, which the people vnderstand not? Is it his worde written, that the dead are blessed which die in the Lord, and they rest from their labour; and is it his worde vnwritten, that they are tormented in the fire of Purgatorie? And yet to come neerer, is it his word written, that his ministers should be subiects to Kings, should be no Lords, should haue no ciuill gouernment, should attend vpon their owne flock: 26. 13. 1.  
uk. 21.  
Tim. 5.  
Pet. 5. and is it his word vnwritten, that the Pope should displace Kings, that he should haue a triple Crown, that his Bishops, so many should bee secular Princes, that they should haue more Churchies vnder them, than euer they once looked on? Hath GOD written it, that Christ sacrificed himselfe once for all, and made a perfect redemption; and hath hee left it vnwritten, that a shauen Priest must sacrifice him euerie day, and say a Masse propitiatorie for the quicke & the dead? What peruerfnes is this of men of a corrupt minde, thus to imagine traditions, contrarie to the word of God? But I will tell you, Esay prophecied well of these men, saying: Heb. 9. *This people draweth weere vnto mee with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, but their heart is farre from mee, but in vaine they worship me, teaching doctrines, which are precepts of men.* They say, if we belecue no traditions of our fathers, why doo we belecue this is the Scripture? And here euery one obtrudeth S. Augustines saying: I would not belecue the Gospell except the authoritie of the Church mooued me: if this had been Augustines meaning, wee would haue answered him againe: that wee will belecue the Gospell though all the Churches in the world would denie it: but Augustine speaketh in the person of one that yet knoweth not God, as of himselfe when he was a Maniche. To what purpose here would you alledge Paule or Peter, to one that knoweth not whether Paule or Peter were of Christ or no?

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Therefore howsoever Augustine spake in this, either well or ill, his saying is nothing to our purpose. But touching the Scriptures, seeing these men doo cry so loude that they cannot knowe them, but by the Church; I say againe to them, that out of their owne mouthes we may iudge them; for Christ his sheepe know his voyce, and doo follow him, and they doe not know the voyce of a straunger, but flee from him. And touching this question, I will not answere it by S. Augustine, but by a better man. Saint Paule answering the like question, saith thus: Indeed our eye hath not scene, nor our eare heard, nor our heart conceiued; how to iudge this, but the spirit of GOD hath reuealed it vnto vs. Marke (dearely beloued) the Papists say, they know the Scriptures, because their eye doth see where is the sea of Rome, that hath kept them; and so their eares haue heard their fathers say, these are they. But S. Paul saith, their eies are blind, their eares are deafe, their heart is dull: all these can not iudge the scriptures. Will they say now vnto S. Paule, then they will neuer beleue thē, if they cannot know them by the Church? Let them rather be wise & learne of Paule, that GOD hath giuen vs his spirit; by which wee should know the things that are of God: and of this I dare assure them, they cannot so discern the light with their eyes, nor any sound with their eares, as they discern the Scriptures by Gods spirit: for if we be regenerate by his spirit, the law of God is not now hid, nor it is not farre from vs, that wee should say; who shal ascend vp, or who shal descend down: Deut. 30. but the word is nigh vs, euen in our mouth, that wee should speake it, and in our heart, that we should knowe it. With this spirit the Prophet Dauid saith: *I haue knowne long since by thy testimonies, that thou hast established them for ever.* And this spirit maketh vs see in the Scriptures, a doctrine without all earthly thoughtes, the wisdom of man boldlie  
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John. 1.  
27. &

1. Cor.

Deut. 30.  
10.

Psal. 119.  
132.

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troaden downe; more force to moue in plaine speach, than in all the eloquence of Tully and Demosthenes: a doctrine which alone hath stood euer in honour, when all other doctrines haue been worne out with time: a doctrine, which hath been assaulted with tenne thousand imaginations of men, and yet abideth pure without al infection of fallhood: this the spirit of GOD makes vs see in the Scriptures, more cleere (as I said) than wee see the Sunne light with our eyes: and the word of God hath al his credite in it selfe; it needeth not the Church, and it will not haue the Pope to beare witnessse with it. Now dearly beloued, if any of you feelee not this warrant, in reading the word of God, aske of him that giueth, and vpbraideth no bodie, and you shall vnderstand all that I haue said. Set your heart vpon it, loue it with all your soule, chaunge your selues with reading, into those affections, in which you see euery place written, and you shall perceiue Salomon is your good warrant, Seeke after wisdom, as you seeke after silver, and you shall finde it. Thus much I thought good to say vnto you, by occasion of this earnest exhortation of the Apostle, to hearken diligently to the Gospell of Christ.

He saith after: *How shall wee escape, if wee neglect so great saluation.* Let vs note here, that the Apostle calleth all transgression of the word of Christ, the neglecting of so great saluation. We must not looke, till men either speake open blasphemie, or doo all things to the open dishonor of God, as men manifestlie giuen vp to reprobate senses. All sinners did neuer fulfill one measure of iniquitie; but we see in the Gospell, as well he is condemned that hideth his talent in the ground, and doth no good with it, as the other that wa-  
red his masters good, and liued riotously with drunkards and gluttons. Even so it is with vs: a great number of vs will not blaspheme the Gospell, as Papists do, and call them  
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childishnes to thinke we would beleene other. Signes were when doctrine was more obscure : now it is so cleare, the signes are gone. The sonne of GOD once reuenged the transgression of his law, with the earth opening, with waters, with fire, with hurlewinds, that the people might feare: hee doth not so now, because his threatnings haue beene heard of all flesh: go ye cursed into eternall fire; a voyce that pierceth betweene the marrow and the bones, with greater sente than the rage of earth, or water. And Christ once shewed louing signes, to make his people put their trust in him; but now hee hath spoken in our hearts: Come ye blessed of my Father into euerlasting life: a voyce that goeth deeper into the soule and spirit, than the hearing of all the miracles, by which Israell was led into the land of Canaan. And wee shall doe iniury to our Saviour Christ, if now wee will aske, that to these words hee should adde miracles: for if wee bring faith to that which is spoken, it will fill our hearts with all fulnesse, and will sell the sight of all the miracles in the world, to buy but one graine of a constant faith in Christ; wherein whosoener shall stumble, let him accuse himselfe if God giue him ouer to his owne blindnesse, that because he had no loue to beleene the trueth, therefore hee should be led with lyes and deceiueable things. Thus much I thought to speake of miracles, that wee might bee wise to know them as they be, and from henceforth for euer put our onely trust in the worde of our Saviour Christ, which onely in the world is the power of God to saue all that do beleene. Now let vs pray &c.