

Sermon 1

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# S E R M O N I.

PHILIPPIANS 3. 8.

*Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

**T**HE Creature at best is but finite, so that we may very easily look round about it (and as it is *Psalm 119. 96.*) see an end of all the perfection of it; and withal so empty and defective, that the nearer we come to it; the more we discover the blemishes of it, and oftentimes our own folly also in overvaluing it. *Fuit manē, & ecce fuit Leāb.* But *Infinitum non potest transiri*; the infinite perfection and fulness of Christ is such, that as none knows it, but he that enjoys it; so, he that knows and enjoys it most, sees further cause to account him more than all, and all besides him, nothing. As, the longer the eye looks upon the body of the Sun, the more it's blinded from seeing other things below, whilst it is more and more dazzled with its light and brightness. It was so here with our Blessed Apostle; whilst he by an eye of faith was looking up to the Sun of righteousness, there was *height and depth, length and breadth*, which he could not comprehend. Divine Beauty more ravishing at the second view; a growing excellency and worth (as sometimes of the *Sibylls Books*) at every after prizing, rising to a higher rate; And so *πρὸς ἑκάστην ἡμέραν* latter thoughts proved the better; that, as time was when Christ in himself grew and increased in favour both with God and man. *Luke 2. 52.* So he is a rising Sun still in S. Paul's increasing admiration and love of him, and that even when he had lost all for him. To which purpose in these 7th and 8th Verses (which we may call Paul's Bill of Rates) there are two things very observable.

1. How he doubles his words; *ἡγνούμαι, πάλιν, ζήλωμαι*, all three words twice used, and if you will take in that *ἡγνούμαι* in the 7th verse, and *ζήλωμαι* in the 8th; you have them thrice in two verses: To express as the strength of his affection, so the settledness of his judgment, that what he said, *non excidit imprudenti*, was not a rash inconsiderate brag, which afterward upon better thoughts

B

At St. Maries  
in Cambridge  
July . . . .  
1646.  
Sermon I.

Gen. 29. 25.

*ζήλωμαι*  
*iacturam feci.*  
*C. à lapide si-*  
*militudo est*  
*sumpta à na-*  
*vigatoribus.*  
Galvin. in lo-  
cum.

he ate up again; but what *with his whole heart*, and most deliberate resolution he would stand to. Nor is this all; But, consider, as first how he doubles and trebles his words, so

2. Secondly, *ut crescit, surgit oratio*, how his speech riseth.

1. From an ἀλλὰ in the 7th verse to an ἀλλὰ μὲν ἔν γε ὃ in the 8th. ἀλλὰ. But what was gain I counted loss for Christ. But as though he had said that is not enough, nor spoken strongly enough, I have more to say, and that more confidently ἀλλὰ μὲν ἔν γε ὃ *quin etiam certe*, an asseveration not more unusual than strong, and expressing his stronger resolution upon further deliberation; no fewer than five Greek Particles put together, and yet no *Pleonasm*, nor any of them *expletive*, unless to set forth his fuller certainty and settledness in this particular.

2. From an ἄτινα v. 7. *what things*, or *those things* to a πάντα v. 8. The indefinite is risen up to an universal, to an *All things*, not only his Jewish Priviledges, (in the former Verses,) but even to his best Christian Graces, (in this.) Nor did he think that he *blasphemed in saying it*, though Bellarmine be bold to say, that we do, in so interpreting it.

*De justificat.*  
*lib. 1. cap. 19.*

3. From an ἤνυσται, *I have accounted* in the time past, v. 7. to an ἵσχυμαι, in this 8th verse, *I do account them* so for the present, as not altering his judgment, or repenting of his bargain, as sometimes men do of a formerly over-valued novelty, which afterward they have lower and yet wiser thoughts of. But it was not so with him, as appears from

4. The 4th step from ζήμιον in the beginning of this verse to οὐβλα in the latter end of it. For Christ he accounted all things not only *loss*, (which yet in themselves might be precious, as many things are with the Seamen in a storm, with an unwilling will, cast over-board, then parts with, but afterwards grieves for) but upon his better experience and estimate both of him and them, even *vile dog's meat* in comparison of the *bread of life*.

5. Nay fifthly, from an ἵσχυμαι ζήμιον to an ἱζημιόθην. He did not only account them loss in his judgment, and readiness to lose them, but he had *actually lost* them. And yet,

6. Which is the sixth Emphasis, he accounted himself no loser, but an happy *gainer* by the bargain, as the last words of the verse express it. They are ἵνα χερσὶν κερδήσω. *That I may win*, and his winnings were clear gains: for so according to the Greek it is to be rendred. *That I may gain Christ*.

In which words we have these two particulars.

1. The purchase or thing valued, τὸ ὑπερῖον τῆς γνώσεως, &c. *The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

2. The price that he rated it at, and was willing to come up to, and that was to the loss of all things, ἡγῆμαι πάντα ζημίαν. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

'Tis pitty these two should be parted, that so rich a Pearl should want such a wise Merchant rightly to value it. And therefore, as I find them together in the Text, so I shall put them together in the observation that I shall handle out of it, and it is this.

That there is a surpassing worth and excellency in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, for which all things are to be accounted loss for a Believer.

Doct.

The first branch whereof contains the Doctrinal part, and the latter may serve for the Application.

To begin with the first. There is a surpassing worth and excellency in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

For the subject of which Proposition, by the knowledge of Christ Jesus, we are to understand the knowledge of whole Christ, his Person, God, Man, in Himself and Offices, the Prophet, Priest, and King of his Church. In all which, Faith finds transcendent Soul-ravishing excellencies and mysteries.

1. Subj.

Nor this barely speculative and notional, though even herein it hath an ὑπερῶν above all other learning whatsoever. So that Porphyrie needed not to have pittied Paul's rare parts, as cast away upon the foolishness of preaching. If I would be a Scholar, I would be a Christian, I would read the Scripture, though I were so graceless as to do it only for the excellency of the matter, the strength of the argument, the variety of choicest stile and story, all in it met together, which I so over-prize in other Authors, though asunder. If it were but only for bare learnings sake, I would learn Christ and his Gospel. For what are all your fine-spun abstractions, extractions, subtilties, demonstrations to this great mystery, God manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of Angels, &c. Here is work for a Doctor Angelicus: study for an Angel.

Neg.

If they, who always behold the face of God in Heaven, have yet their face towards the mercy-seat, and ἐπιθυμοῦσι προσεῖν, as S. Peter expresseth it, 1 Pet. 1. 12. even stoop down earnestly, desiring to have a look; what an advancement of learning is it to us (whose Eyes you know what the Philosopher compared to) ἀνακαλυμμένην *Metaphys. l. 1. 1. πρὸς τὴν, with an unveiled face to behold the glory of the Lord in the c. 1.*

1 Tim. 3. 16.

Matth. 18. 10.

Exod. 25. 20.

# The First SERMON

glass of the Gospel; The bare Theory whereof is so noble and transcendent. But this knowledge (I said) is not barely speculative and rational, but

Affirm.  
Fiducial.

*Cam ait prop-  
ter excellen-  
tiam cogniti-  
onis ejus, intel-  
lige excellenti-  
am justitie ejus  
qua nobis dona-  
tur & imputa-  
tur. Zanchy.*

1. *Fiducial.* And so in Scripture we have knowledge put for faith. *Isa. 53. 11. John 17. 3.* the knowledge of Faith whereby we apply Christ to our selves, and know him to be ours, as Paul here did, when he saith, the knowledge of Christ Jesus; but he adds my Lord, And so For Christ, v. 7. and For the knowledge of Christ here in the Text are put for the same. It's a knowledge whereby I gain Christ, v. 8. and have him, and am found in him; v. 9. and not only an ability to conceive and discourse of what is in him, and comes by him; for so the Devilish Renegado may be enlightened. *Hebr.*

6. 4. The Devil himself could say, I know who thou art, the holy one of God, *Luke 4. 34.* The greatest Scholars have not always been Christs best Friends. Time was when the greatest Rabbies were his worst Enemies. *Lucian* and *Porphyrie* acute men, but sharpened against him. He was one of the wits of the World that said, *Ἀντί-  
γρον, Ἐγγον, κατίγγρον;* that took cognisance of the cause but only to condemn the innocent. Unless thou lookest at Christ with Faith's Eye, the more quick thine is, and the more earnestly thou lookest on him, thou wilt either more despise him, or despair, or prove more desperate against him;

*Isa. 53. 2, 3.*

Either more desperately mad, as the man set against the Sun with his Eye-lids cut off. *Balaam* a damned Witch with his Eyes open, *Numb. 24. 3, 15, 16.* None spit more venom on Christ, than they that do it on his face, who look and loath together.

Or more deeply sunk in despair, when thou hast so much of an eye as to see a wrinkle on thine angry Judges brow. In that Case the more good that I know is to be had, and I have it not, the more is my misery, as the famished man's to see food, which he must not taste of, or the condemned man's to behold goodly build-ings, and pleasant Fields and Gardens, which he passeth by, as he is led out to execution. This knowledge therefore is first fiducial,

Experimen-  
tal.

as appears from v. 7, 8, 9. 2. *Experimental,* as Interpreters bring that v. 10, 11, &c. That I may know him, &c. which is explained in those following words, *ἐν τῇ θύρατι, ἐν τῇ κοίτι, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,* such as that woman had that was healed of her bloody issue, *Mark 5.* It is said v. 33. that she knew what was done in her when (as it is v. 30.) virtue had gone out of Christ to her. And so, Then we know Christ indeed, when we feel virtue coming from him, and find that

that we have *fellowship with him*; when whatsoever was in him, was done or suffered by him, is really proved, yea and exemplified by something in us, or done by us, as the fruit or stamp of something that was first in him. As then, in this kind, we know τὴν δύναμιν ἀντιστάσεως, the power, virtue, and energy of Christs Resurrection, as *Pauls* Phrase is, when

In point of *Justification* (as the effect of it, *Rom. 4. 25.*) by this evidence of his Victory our Consciences are assured that he hath satisfied for our Debts, and overcome all the Enemies of our Salvation.

And in point of *sanctification* (as the *intention* of it, *Col. 3. 1.*) our dead hearts are raised up to a life of grace, and to seek those things which are above.

This, This was the lesson which the *Doctōr of the Gentiles* was yet a learning. This *fiducial experimental* knowledge of *Jesus Christ* was that, which he who was caught up to the third Heaven, was all his whole life still further aspiring to; because when he was at the highest, yet it was still above him: which may be one part of the meaning of this τὸ ὑπερέχον, of the Divine Excellency of it.

Which is here predicated of it, an ὑπερῆχον à *Supereminentia*, 2. Predicate. as Interpreters render it, an admirable, superlative, incomparable Excellency. Τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, whether an *Hebraism*, or *Anticism*, I dispute not: but put *substantively* to express its *substantial excellency*, as τὸ σωτήριον *Salutare Tuum*, *Luke 2. 30.* to signify such a saving thing as we want a word to English it. Such is this, τὸ ὑπερέχον, or as *Photius* renders it, ὑπερβάλλον, such an hyperbolical transcendent excellency is there in this knowledge of *Christ Jesus our Lord*.

But (more particularly) this τὸ ὑπερέχον (I conceive) may be *Distinctivum speciei, vel Gradus*, signifying the surpassing worth of it in comparision either of other things, or of some lower degrees of it self.

*Zanchy* thinks this latter, and by this ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως this excellency of the knowledge of *Christ* understands some further and more eminent degree of it, which every Believer had not attained unto, nor *Paul* himself perfectly. For whereas there is a threefold knowledge of *Christ*, *Ex Lege*, *Ex Evangelio*, *Ex visione*, from the shadows of the Law, the light of the Gospel, and the full Vision in Glory; the second of them is more excellent than the first, and the third than the second. The first he had past, and attained some

measure

measure of the second; but the further degrees of it here, and the perfection of it in Heaven he makes account is this, τὸ ὑπερέχον, the top branch of this Tree of knowledge, or life rather, which therefore as he aspired to v. 10, 11, 12. so here in the Text he accounts all as less and dung in comparison of. I may not quarrel to grave an Author: but yet crave leave to express mine own thoughts, viz. that its meant of the whole Gospel-fiducial-experimental saving knowledge of Christ, reaching even to the lowest and least degree of it, and especially in reference to justification, in which sense only some of these πύλα in the Text are to be accounted οὐβάλα: and yet in that sense truly there is a τὸ ὑπερέχον, a matchless excellency in the least degree and measure of the saving knowledge of Christ.

And so taking it as *distinctivum speciei*, in worth and excellency. it far surpasseth. 1. All other things. 2. All other knowledge whatsoever.

Excels all other things.

First, All other things, though otherwise and in themselves of greatest worth and price. Job goeth over all the Lapidaries most precious Jewels, and cannot find its match. Cap. 28. 15. to 20. And should you (without ground) call in question his skill, yet you cannot doubt of Solomon's; whose incomparable ability joined with his long-studied and dear-bought experience rendred him the ablest Priser of whatever was to be found in the worlds Inventory, and yet he brings in the same account, Prov. 3. 13, 14, 15. and 20. 15. where you find that Silver, Gold, Rubies, a multitude of them, nay all that you can desire are not once to be compared with it. And yet this avouched by these two great men, who by reason of their experience and enjoyment could best tell on the one side what the worth of the best things in this World came to. To which if you will add a third (that in the mouth of two or three Witnesses, this truth may be more fully established) let it be our Blessed Apostle, who had on the other side as deep an insight into the unsearchable riches of Christ, as any. And he, if he would

Either wish for others, it's (not that of Austins, that they might have a sight of Christ in the flesh, but) that they might have a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. Ephes. 1. 17.

Or vote for himself. So, as the Beatifical Vision is the top-stone of his happiness in Heaven: to be with Christ is his πολλῶ μᾶλλον κρείσσον there (Chap. 1. of this Epistle v. 23.) so, savingly to know him is his τὸ ὑπερέχον here, that in worth and price infinitely surpasseth all other things. This should have been further pressed

and insisted on, if I had now spoken to them, whose trade lieth in such inferiour Commodities. But seeing that I am especially dealing with you (Reverend and Beloved) whose more noble and honourable negotiation lies in richer Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, Give me leave to apply my self to you, and tell you.

2. That this saving *knowledge of Christ* is *signanter* said to be *All other* *τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως* not only of all other things, but of all knowledge. *learning and knowledge* the most excellent.

Some *knowledge and wisdom* being *Earthly, Sensual, Devilish.* James 3. 15. to which it is as *light to darkness*, which it not only exceeds, but *expells* and scatters, as the Morning-Sun doth the Night-fogs. So of old, when *the Word became Flesh*; the Devils Oracles, even of their wisest *Apollo*, became dumb. *ἡ ἀλογία* --- As, before that, *Moses* his *rod and serpent* ate up those of the Egyptian Sorcerers. *Exod. 7. 12.* Such *wisdom of Egypts.* The *wisdom of the Father* unlearns us. To *touch or taste* of such a *tree of knowledge* is a *forbidden fruit*.

Other knowledge and learning indeed there is, which in these Schools of the Prophets hath long flourished, and long and long yet may and (God grant) more than ever, which we hope Authority will yet countenance and advance, that our Wars may not end in Barbarism, and our Sun be turned into *darkness* whilst our Moon is *AE. 2. 20.* *into blond*, notwithstanding the mad rage of divers brutish men that decry learning because themselves have none, like the Ape in the Fable, would not that others should have what they want, that themselves might cease to be ridiculous. This is but the *Dogs barking at the Moon*, which he cannot reach; or like their curling the rising Suns light, because it discovers their nakedness. The Apostle calls such *Brute-Beasts, that speak evil of the things they understand not.* 2 Pet. 2. 12.

But, to return to my purpose, though such kind of learning is of admirable use in its kind, and next to the *saving knowledge of Christ* the highest perfection under Heaven; yet at this *ὑπερέχον* it strikes top-sail (as *Hugo Cardinalis* noteth upon the Text) knows its place, as an Handmaid to be subject and subservient unto Faith: which, as it illuminates all other learning, and raiseth it up to an higher pitch, so it withal regulates and subordinateth; it self ever retaining the Sovereignty of being *Scientia Scientiarum*.

For this reason, *Prov. 1. 20.* called *חכמות* in the plural number *sapientie*, or *omnimoda sapientia*, all wisdom and knowledge being



being contained and more than summed up in the saving knowledge of one Christ, that as it pleased the Father ἀνακεφαλαιώσας τὰ πάντα, *Ephes. 1. 10.* in him to sum up all things, so in him also to lay up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, *Col. 2. 3.* so that it would prove no hard task to demonstrate that whatever was choice and eminent in the learning of all Philosophers, and their several Sects may be found spiritualized and sublimated and infinitely exceeded in the knowledge of Christ. In Comparison of it *Aristotles intellectual virtues* are but meer fooleries. *Platoes* *vũ* is here overmatched, ὑπερέχουσα πάντα τὸν νũν. *Philip. 4. 7.* Take notice there of the τὸ ὑπερέχον of the Text. It passeth all understanding, though spoken but of one parcel of what we know and have by Christ; He being the learned *Grecians Alpha and Omega. Revel. 1. 8.* Containing more knowledge than all the Letters of their Alphabet put together can express; And His Fear (even to that חַוֵּי וְנָבִין עַם דֵּי חוּפּ *Deut. 4. 6.* that wise and understanding people) both \* חוּלָה and \* ראש not only the first imperfect beginning, but also the chief head, and highest apex and pinnacle of wisdom. Here we meet with that לֵב שֶׁן that substantial knowledge. *Prov. 8. 14.* and that πολυπόικη σοφία, that variegata sapientia, *Ephes. 3. 10.* both the best ground, and the most curious embroidery; that layeth the substantial ground-work of all our happiness and peace, in the hid but holy and unchangeable Counsel of the eternal God; and discovers and displays all the various and glorious manifestations of Gods Wisdom and love in His Son; and to us His Servants, from election to redemption, justification, adoption, sanctification; till it riseth up at last to glorification. And doth this then fall lower than this, τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως in the Text. Doth not the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord (as our Apostle said in another respect) exceed in glory.

\* *Pro. 9. 10.*

\* *Pro. 1. 7.*

2 *Cor. 3. 9.*

More particularly. The surpassing excellency of this knowledge above all other may be considered in respect of

Author.

1. The Author of it, who is God and Christ himself, both *objectum* and *principium intelligendi*. Both Word, and Prophet, as well as Sacrifice and Priest. The Adamant polished with its own dust, and Heaven seen only by its own light. Christ by the illumination of his own spirit, being a spirit both of revelation to unbare the object, and of wisdom to enlighten the eye. *Eph. 1. 17.*

You may know from whence this knowledge comes.

1. By whither it goes, *in tantum ascendit quantum descendit*, it rests not (as the River to the Sea) till it get to Heaven at last, and therefore from thence it came at first.

2. By

2. By whom it instructs τὰ νῦντα. *Matth. 11. 25. τὰ μωρα.*  
*1 Cor. 1. 27. makes Babes learned, and even fools wise to salvation.*  
 And who will wonder that even Saul is among the Prophets, if God be their Father. *1 Sam. 10, 11, 12, 13.* It was no other than the Wonderful Counsellour that could enable a few Fishermen and others whom the learned Greeks would call *Barbarians* \* and \* *Kαὶ τὸν δὲ δὲ Βάρβαρον ἀξιοῖ, &c.* to doth *Amelius Platonius*, stile *John the Evangelist.*  
 Idiots to confute and convert a then learned World, and in after-times the weaker Sex and weaker parts to non-plus greatest Scholars; and to this day poor weak simple-hearted Christians to know that of the *mystery of Christ*, and the *graces and comforts of His Spirit*, which many great Clerks are ignorant of. And all this because they are *Θεοδιδασκoi*, taught of God, and the other *αὐτοδιδασκoi*, that have learnt of themselves: And then, by the better master, you may easily judge who is like to prove the better Scholar.

If you say, But doth not all knowledge agree in this, that all *Obj.*  
*comes down from the Father of light?* *James 1. 17.*

I answer yes: and yet the same Apostle could, *Cap. 3. 17.* speak *Ans.*  
 of a *σοφία ἀνωθεν*, a wisdom from above, and distinguish it from another sort, *v. 15.* whose spring-head lay lower, so that although all lawful knowledge comes from God, yet there are upper and nether springs.

Other knowledge.

Either coming from God as a Creator; this as a Redeemer.

Or that from him as a teacher by way of common illumination; this from him as our head by the grace of union, in which sense he *Mr. Perkins.*  
 is said to be made of God to us wisdom. *1 Cor. 1. 30.*

This immediately infused. That's *donum*, that by ordinary means and our own study and industry is *acquisitum*. Now infused habits exceed them that are acquired: and that knowledge is more full and clear which we have of God's teaching than that which we have of our own learning. Daniel is ten times wiser than all the Magicians, *Cap. 1. 20.* One shower from Heaven will fill our Pools more than many Buckets of our own drawing. So that *Elisus* sets a *Non sicut* upon it. There's none teacheth like God. *Job 36. 22.* Nor is there any learning like that which God thus teacheth, which is the first *ὑπεροχή*, or Excellency namely in regard of the Author of it.

2. In regard of the matter and subject of it, which useth to in- Matter.  
 noble the faculty and science that is conversant about it. And this also is God and Christ again. *John 17. 3.* their Natures, Attributes,

Counsels, Works, not only of Creation, but of Redemption: and which of those two are the greater works? And which therefore the more noble study? The former the Philosopher is taken up and puzzled with שטט טא said *Job. Cap. 26. v. 14.* what poor short broken ends are they of knowledge which the ablest in those faculties attain to; in which *Galileus* with his glass is short-sighted, and *Aristotle* (whom after-ages have despaired to exceed, and not dared to contradict) in his *Problems* chuseth rather to content himself with *Queries* than to venture upon *Resolutions* and *Determinations*. But a greater even in this kind than *Aristotle*, nay than *Solomon* is here: and matters of higher speculation, and more Divine Contemplation. God became man; Man born of a Virgin. Here you may see Life Dying, and yet when dead reviving. I cannot say all that is, nor may I all I can. The great Doctor of the *Gentiles*, when he cannot sound the bottom, stands by the brink and cries, וְאֵלֹהִים. O the depth of the riches both of the knowledge and wisdom of God: how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. *Rom. 11. 33.* Here are judgments unsearchable! nay riches of grace inscrutable. *Ephes. 3. 8.* Peace passing understanding. *Phil. 4. 7. 7.* joy unspeakable. *1 Pet. 1. 8.* glory unutterable. *2 Cor. 12. 4.* light unapproachable. *1 Tim. 6. 16.* here are those רבו ודבר the great things of the law. *Hos. 8. 12.* Here those τα μυστήρια τοῦ Θεοῦ, the wondrous things of God and Jesus Christ, whose Name is Wonderful. *Isa. 9. 6.* all he was, and did, and suffered, a miracle. The Apostle hath summed it all up, and calls it μυστήριον. *1 Tim. 3. 16.* a great mystery. He indeed there saith, that it was believed in the world. But it was by them who were above the World, in whom faith exceeded reason, and humility discovered wisdom in that in which the Greeks proud learning could see nothing but foolishness, so much wiser is the foolishness of God than the wisdom of man: and so much more excellent is the knowledge of Christ than all other learning, by how much he himself, who is the chief lesson learnt by it, excells all other things, who is All in All, and therefore without him all else is just nothing.

Properties,  
Effects, Ends:

3. A third, fourth, and fifth excellency of this knowledge, might be shewn in its properties, and in the effects it produceth, and in the end it leads to, which three, the both positive and comparative goodness of any thing is wont to be judged by, which I have not time distinctly and at large to prosecute, but must cast all these suffrages into one Urn, and read so many of them as the time will permit, and as they come to hand.

1. This is *sound and substantial knowledge*. Prov. 2. 7. as closing with the substantial wisdom of God; whereas our other greatest wisdom is often vain. 1 Cor. 3. 20. and much of our knowledge, חֵן רֵעַת *scientia ventosa*, an airy vapouring wind. Job 15. 2. and many of our studies both in younger and riper years, no better than *Elans* χεῖν ἀναλωμάτων, in which we lose our time, and if at last we find not the way to repent of it, may come to lose our selves too.

2. It's *sure and certain*. In other studies we walk much in the dark, else Job had not been so soon posed, or we so much puzzled as we are sometimes to come to a clear *Demonstration*. What a clashing was there between the *Academicks* and *Stoicks*, about this *Quere*. *Whether all our knowledge were Science or Opinion?* yea, and in *Laſant. l. 3.* many things that we think we know, how oft is a *Pythagorean* *c. 3. 4.* αἰδὸς ἔσθ, the authority of a fallible master rather than the truth of the lesson, that which our knowledge is lastly resolved into? But here, we have Christ the faithful witness. Revel. 1. 5. the holy Ghost a spirit of truth. John 14. 17. the Scripture a most sure word. 2 Pet. 1. 19. that here to be a *Sceptick* is to be an *Atheist*, whilst faith is above Science, and belief above *Demonstration*, fastens on that which Reason cannot reach, believes that which it self cannot prove, and adheres to that which sense contradicts, comes to an ἀναντιρρήτως without contradiction. Heb. 7. 7. to an ἀμολογούμενως without controversy. 1 Tim. 3. 16. nay to a πλεῖσθ τῆς πληροφορίας to a rich full full of assurance, without so much as the least stumbling, scrupling doubt. Col. 2. 2.

3. It's an *experimental knowledge*, following upon pardon (*They shall know; for I will forgive*) Jer. 31. 34. and knowledge by remission. Luke 1. 77. and joined with sense. Philip. 1. 9. so that we see the promised Land, not as in a Map, but as Travelers that have been there with the Samaritans. John 4. 42. we believe not because others have told us (which yet most mens knowledge of Christ is resolved into) but upon our own knowledge, and that knowledge upon our sense and experience, as Job, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Chap. 42. 5. I hear and I see, I see and I feel, and I feel more than I can express or fully understand. I have found God to me what he hath said in his word: and there is that in my heart which contradicts such and such false Doctrines that are contrary to it; so that even when my head is so weak that I cannot sometimes answer the Cavillers argument, yet mine heart from an *intra existens*, denies the

Conclusion; that when I come to read and hear the word, it's like two men reading of two Copies of the same evidence. The original I find in my Bible, and the Counterpane I find in my heart, and therefore dare *sign it and seal it with my blond*. O happy Ministers! if we from our own hearts we could speak to the hearts of our people, could say with the Psalmist, *Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul*, and with Christ, *John 3. 11. we speak what we know*, and with the Apostle, *what we have heard and seen, and our hands have handled of the word of life, that declare we unto you, John 1. 3.* O that we never spake of that which we are least acquainted with, and against that sin which it may be we are notorious for! If so, however we may preach Christ, yet certainly we do not savingly know Christ; for this excellent knowledge is an experimental knowledge.

4. And from all the three former in the 4th place, it comes to be truly delightful and fully satisfactory, and in which the mind doth fully acquiesce, as Aristotle saith, *Intellectus est in quiete*. In other studies the mind is restless, and its disquisitions endless; the vastness of its capacity not being able to be filled up with the fullest view of inferiour objects, but here meeting with an infinite God, and his infinite wisdom, justice and mercy in Christ, the largest Vessel is filled up to the brim in this Ocean; the wavering Needle is fixt, and the Dove hath found a place where to rest the sole of her foot; sits down, (and with Peter when he saw Christ transfigured *Matt. 17. 4.*) saith, *It's good to be here*, is satisfied in all its desires.

*Eccles. 1. 19,*  
*14. Ec. c. 2.*  
*12.*  
*c. 2. 18.*

And, let me add, is more than satisfied for all its pains. *Solomon* in all his other Enquiries, confessed he dealt with folly and madness, and in the close found nothing but vanity and vexation, so that he comes to hate all his labour, and to repent of all his pains; as we shall of all our other studies, if with them we study not savingly to know Christ.

I acknowledge indeed that a serious student in other arts takes great content in that very search, and much more in the finding out of some truth, which lay in the dark, and he was much set upon, and this not only in more solid Demonstrations (and then Archimedes as well as paid Cries out with his *Eureka*) but sometimes even in some minim Criticism, as I remember the learned Casaubon in his Annotations upon Athenens hitting (as he thought) upon the true notion of a certain Greek Word, professeth that the content that he found therein, and such like, was a full satisfaction for all his pains in all his studies.

But alas! what is such a word to the Essential *Word* of God! what is *Archimedes* his *Cylinder* to Jesus Christ? or what's his *avenue* to the satisfaction of the Spouse *sick* (not of other *questions*, as 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. but) of *love.* *Cant.* 3. 4. when she had found her lost Saviour! If it be so *pleasant a thing*, to see the *Sun.* *Eccles.* 11. 7. what is it to behold the *sun of Righteousness*? If the top of Heavens joys be from an open-faced Vision, then, even these glimpses, though but *as in a glass*, and through the Lattices, sets the ravished Soul on the highest Pinnacle of content and comfort, which it can be here lifted up to.

5. Which leads me to the last excellency of this Divine Knowledge, and it's the unvaluable benefit and profit of it. The pleasing itch of delight oft-times accompanieth other studies which are most vain and useles, and in the upshot mischievous. But, *Qui miscuit utile dulci*, is an *Artist* indeed. The wise man is profitable to himself (saith *Eliphaz*, *Job* 22. 2.) and here, *Qui fructuosa, non qui multa scit, sapit*, which made *Lactantius* adventure upon a bold comparison between the vulgar Idiot, and the great Scholar, &c. made him bold to conclude, *Plus sapit interdum vulgus, quia tantum quantum opus est sapit*, because the one knows though but little, yet whats profitable to his purpose: the other upon his great studies and readings, or Common-Place-Book like a rich treasury topful of Notions, is a Dictionary of Words, and a *Bibliotheca mathematicarum* (as he called his Book) a whole Library of learning, but sealed up with this Motto on it. *Cui bono?* Neither Prels nor Pulpit, himself or others better'd, but often wronged by it; many a full-stuff Scholar being, a very empty useles man, whilst he studieth more *Sciences* than *Arts*, and so desires only to know, and so *in infinitum*, without end, to no end, knowing more than he either gets, or doth any good with.

But *Solomon* who was the wisest man, and therefore best knew wherein wisdoms greatest excellency lay, saith, *Wisdom is profitable to direct.* *Eccles.* 10. 10. and *Prov.* 14. 8. that *the wisdom of the prudent is to direct his way*; not to be fluttering about every thing, as the Butterfly about every flower, and so be *something in every thing*, and *nothing to purpose in any thing*, but (as *Plato* in his *Theages* well shews) to know my *idiot* *ignor*, and that I may get and do some good by it, as the Bee that sits and sucks the Flower from which she may get Honey to her Hive. I this is properly 2 *Chron.* 30. good knowledge. *Psal.* 119. 66. and in this above all the saving 22. knowledge of Christ excels. The fruit of the tree of knowledge had this

# The First SERMON

this double bait of pleasure and profit. *Gen. 3. 6.* but an *book* withal, that took her who was taken with it. But in this *knowledge of the tree of life*, there's the bait without the book; *Milk and Wine. Isa. 55. 1.* and no poyson in either; greatest pleasure and profit mixt together, *making happy, and adding no sorrow with it.* Let me name a few particulars.

1. By this *knowledge of Christ* we come to the best knowledge both of *God* and *our selves*.

1 Cor. 1. 21.  
Rom. 1.

Of *God*, for his *glory* and *beauty* is most seen in the face of *Jesus Christ*. 2 Cor. 4. 6. The *Father* here is best, is only known by the *Son*. In the *Creatures* we behold his foot-steps, but here *his image*; even the *express image of His Person*. *Hebr. 1. 3.* In the *Law* his *Holiness* and *Justice*, especially looked out. In *Christ* and his *Gospel* shine forth *Holiness*, *Justice*, *Mercy*, all and altogether, and all in their perfection, and of all his *mercy* most, by which he would be most known to his people; the *vail* is nothing to the face *uncovered*. 2 Cor. 3.

Of *our selves*.

Our *sins* by his *sufferings*. No way for the more full searching of our bloudy wound comparable to the considering that *Plaster* of his *blond*, which was shed to *heal* it.

Our *Duty*. We have no stronger inducement, nor fairer Copy of doing and suffering, than to consider what our Lord *Jesus Christ* hath done and suffered before us, and for us. In all which our true *Abimelech* Father-King saith (as that other did. *Judge 9. 48.*) *Look on me, and do likewise.*

2. A second benefit of this *knowledge* is, that it's a *transforming knowledge*. 2 Cor. 3. 18. whilst we are looking into the glass, we are changed into the image. *Intellectus fit idem cum objecto.* The Eye and man is made like that he looks on. Here, as in the story of the *brazen serpent*, a look beals, and the man (with *Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. 4. 34, 36.*) ceaseth to be a beast, when he comes to his understanding. This knowledge and wisdom joins practice with notion, and moral vertues with intellectuall, is not it self only *Heavenly* and *spiritual*. *Col. 1. 9.* pure and peaceable. *Jam. 3. 17.* but (which is more) makes us so. But so doth no other knowledge, I mean the knowledge of no other things, or some other kind of knowledge of *Jesus Christ*.

For the knowledge of other things like the *Glow-worm*, hath more light than heat in it; as he said of the *Philosophers Books*, *animus non dant quia non habent.* *Solomon's* experience in this

kind told him, that ~~what~~ *what was crooked could not this way be made straight*, and Paul tells us. *Rom. 1. 21, 22.* &c. how brutish the most knowing Heathens had then proved; as after-ages and Authors do hold forth their greatest Philosophers defiled with foulest Lusts, *Solen. Apocryph. not Socrates* himself exempted. *Per canem & anserem dejerare*, and *nostris apud gallum Aesculapio* were none of his Beauties, and others matter of his foulest blemishes. The Apostle, *1 Tim. 6. 9.* calls them *foolish lusts*, but yet such as the ablest of those Sons of wisdom were dishonoured and defiled with.

*nostris apud P. ntarcbum. Item Zeno apud Diogenem Laertium. La. Sant. l. 3. c. 20.*

And for others, who by the preaching of the Gospel come to some kind of knowledge of Christ; truly oft-times the *light* they have is so far from *directing* them in *the way*, that by it they take advantage to *run the more out of it*, like them. *2 Pet. 2. 21, 22.* that proved *Dogs* and *Swine* for filth and rage, even *after the knowledge of the ways of righteousness*, none using to be more loathsomely filthy, or desperately mad against Christ than they who have been enlightened to see only so much of Christ as to make their soar eyes smart, and themselves fret and blaspheme. Those *perisidites*, *Hebr. 6. 4.* commit that irrecoverable sin, and the Devil is a Serpent as well for his venom as his subtilty. Very knowing men, yet known for many notorious miscarriages (their Lusts rising up against their Consciences, and their practice quite crossing their light) have been no great strangers, either in the World, or in the Churches of Christ.

*The Gnosticks would be so called from their pretended greater knowledge in the things of God: but so filthy as that they got a more proper name of B. borita, Augustin. de hares. 6.*

3. In particular, this is an *humbling* knowledge, which to be said of any other knowledge would be little less than *contradictio in adjecto*, for Paul saith, *Knowledge puffs up.* *1 Cor. 8. 1.* who himself had a *prick in the flesh* to prick that Bladder, that it might not swell with *abundance of Revelations.* *2 Cor. 12. 7.* Other things, as profits, pleasures and the like, are too low for a wise man to stand on tip-toes upon: He accounts it but childish for any to account himself fine for such gayes and brouches: yea, but knowledge and learning is a more Divine spark, and hath in it (he thinks) that which is worth being *proud* of; and out of that pride oft-times accounts *Christ* and his Ordinances and ways *foolishness.* *1 Cor. 1. 23.*

But the more that thou savingly knowest Christ, the better thou wilt know thy self, and that (I am sure) will ever be with better thoughts of him, and worse of thy self, as *Job* when he *seeth God*, he *abhors himself.* *Cap. 42. 4, 5.* Peter knowing it was the Lord that was present, *casts himself down into the Sea.* *John 21. 7.* and the

Saints



Saints and Angels in Heaven whilst they have nearest access, and fullest view, stand at a most reverential distance.

4. Fourthly, and last of all, (which is the upshot of all) this is a *saving knowledge*, that makes us *wise to salvation*. 2 Tim. 3. 15.

1. That makes us *pleasing to God*. Hebr. 11. 6. and *justifies* us before God. Isa. 53. 11. which other learning and knowledge not sanctified and subdued by this comes cross to, but always falls short of, for (whatever it may to others, yet as our Apostle saith of *meat*, 1 Cor. 8. 8.) *it commendeth us not to God*. *Non enim ab eo peritia, sed fides existitur*. It may indeed make our faces shine *more bright before men*. Eccles. 8. 1. but we are never the more amiable for it in God's Eye, if he do not look upon us in *the face of Jesus Christ*: and therefore it is, that whilst *to babes and children his Son is revealed*. Matth. 11. 25. there are but few of these great wise men that are *called unto this marvellous light*. 1 Cor. 1. 26. But on the contrary rather as they by reason of their pride are usually at odds with him, so he (who useth to *resist the proud*) hath a controversy especially with them (with *the wise men of Edom*. Obad. v. 7, 8.) and accordingly is wont purposely to set himself to *beset such Abitophels in their Counsels*, and to take such Foxes in their own craftiness, that so he may cast down those *λογισμῶν, ἐχυρῶν, ἀνιδυνῶν, ἀνολογῶν, ἀνὸς, ἀνὸς, ἀνὸς*. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. that he may bring *all into Captivity to the obedience of Christ*.

2. But, to end all, seeing God himself. Deut. 32. 29. accounts it the highest point of wisdom to *consider the latter end*, herein above all appears most eminently this *τὸ ὑπερέχον*, the supereminency of this *saving knowledge of Christ*. That it *layeth in for death*, and *provideth for eternity*.

Now in Death all thy other learning, which thou hast spent so much time and pains for, is quite lost. Thy bark is split, in which all thy treasure was stowed; nor is there more treasure sunk in the Sea, than there is learning buried in some great Scholars Graves, which is a great loss to the Church, State, nay it may be to the whole World, and yet may be the greatest to themselves. Whatever their Notes may do to others, such Notions will not then help themselves: so that in case by that time they have got no better learning; the hard Students Candle, which was wont to out-watch the longest night, will grow dim in that Evening, and burn blew in that damp, yea and quite go out in that darkness. And so notwithstanding all those former sparks (more precious than those

those of Diamonds) he may then lie down with sorrow. (Isa. 50. 11.) with this Motto on his Study-Door. *Qualis artifex pereo!* the knowing man not then knowing what will become of his Soul, *Quis nunc abibis in locos?* or if he do, the more is his grief, when with anguish and horror he thinks and saith, *surgunt indocti & rapiunt calum.* I repeat not what followeth in the sentence, as desiring it may never overtake any of us in those straits. But wo to us if it do.

But the more blessed therefore is this more excellent knowledge, that we now speak of which is not so much a tree of knowledge, as a tree of life, and is therefore called *eternal life.* John 17. 3. by which my Soul lives in death, that I can tell what to do, when other far more learned men are at their wits end: that in mine evening I may have light. Zech. 14. 7. whilst others far more sharp-sighted stumble in that dark entry into outer darkness for ever. O give me that sweet Bird that will sing in such a Winter, that lamp of a wise Virgin, that will burn clear at midnight; that torch which will not light my body to the Grave, but my Soul to Heaven. I, this, this is the light of life. John 8. 12. by which, when my bodily eye grows dim, and upon my eyelids sits the gloomy shadow of death. I may then lift up an Eye of faith with Steven. at the very point of Death. Act 7. 56. and then see Christ more clearly, and know much of him more fully than ever before, as it is related of Oecolampadius, upon his Death-Bed, being asked whether the light of the Candle troubled him, laying his hand on his breast said, *Hic abunde lucis est,* or with Laurentius. *At Nox mea tenebras non habet.* The more darkness without, the more light within; when the Curtains are drawn, Christ more unveiled; and when the dying body smells now of the Earth to which it is sinking, the Divine Soul (as in rogo Imperatorum), favours of Heaven, to which it is ascending with a farewell-faith, and welcom-Vision, no more to see Christ, as here, through a glass darkly, but face to face; to know him no more in part, but even as I am known. I close mine eyes to see my Saviour, and like old Simeon lay down my head in my Fathers bosom, with his *Nunc dimittis.* Now Lord let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

*Mylii Apophthegmata morientium.*

THE Text had two parts.

1: The Purchase, τὸ ἀντίχρον τῆς γνώσεως, the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

2: The price that our Apo-

II. Sermon-  
Preacht at St.  
Maries, Oldob.  
18. 1646.

file was chearfully willing to come up to, that he might compass it, *ἡγούμενος πάντα ζημιώταρ, he accounted all things loss, that he might gain it.*

1 King. 10. 7.

In the handling the former part the last time I endeavoured as I was able (though infinitely under its worth) to hold forth and commend to you the supereminent excellency of the saving knowledge of Christ above all other things, and all other knowledge whatsoever. But as (they say) the Jews are now wont, when ever they build an House to leave some part of it imperfect in reference to *Jerusalem's* ruins which they would remember, so in all our largest discourses of Christ and his Excellencies of necessity something, yea much must be left unsaid, because there is infinitely more than we can comprehend: *the half of our Solomons glory will never be told.* Here the most copious and fluent Orator must close his imperfect speech with a *Dicebam* instead of a *Dixi*, and draw the Curtain of silence over those *σιγαλόμενα*, which he cannot draw and set out to the life. And yet it's good digging deeper in such golden Mines, and another hour would be well spent in viewing and admiring that infinite excellency, which in Heaven we shall be adoring to Eternity. Should we lanch out, we may soon be swallowed up in that bottomless Ocean. And therefore for this time let us rather draw the net to the shore, and in the second applicatory part of the Text see what we have taken, or whether our selves rather be so taken with an holy admiration and desire of it, that with our Apostle we can be willing to suffer the loss of all for it. *Ἀλλὰ μὲν ἔργα ἐγώ, yea doubtless, and I count all things as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

And if that be such a transcendent excellent knowledge.

Ulc 1.

Cap. 22. 12.

First, How low should the consideration of it lay even Scholars of the highest form in their thoughts and estimate of all their other knowledge in comparison of it! and of themselves as long as they fall short of it. Behold the height of the Stars, how high they are! said *Eliphaz* to *Job*: But it was that he might have more lowly thoughts of himself. And when we look up and see how high Heaven is above, we cannot but think what poor low things we are in the Ant-hill here beneath. Yea by how much more exactly the Astronomer by his instrument can take the height of Sun or Star, by so much the more fully he apprehends at what a wonderful distance he and the highest Mountain of the whole Earth is under it. O that the consideration of this high transcending excellency of the knowledge of Christ might help us (though

not to low thoughts of learning yet) to more lowly thoughts of our selves notwithstanding all our other knowledge, that the dazzling brightness of the *sun of Righteousness* might at least so far blind us, as to *hide pride from us*: pride, which is the great learned mans greatest and dangerouest snare, in which by reason of his learning and knowledge he is *easiliest taken*, and by which he is most of all hindred from this more *excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ*.

1. *Most easily taken with it*, it being a very hard thing to be a *knowing man*, and not to *know it*, to be *learned* and *humble* together; for the *King of Tyre* to be *as-wise as Daniel*, and not to be as *proud as Lucifer*. *Ἡ γνῶσις πρησὶν*, *knowledge puffs up* saith the Apostle, *1 Cor. 8. 1.* and usually the more airy and empty the knowledge is, it makes the bladder swell the more. The Devil is a very knowing and a very proud Creature. The most learned Philosophers and wisest Statesmen amongst the Heathen, have been noted for pride; vain-glory and an impotent desire of applause being accounted by them a piece of gallantry rather than a vice. And although by Christians it cannot but be accounted a sin, yet even amongst them such as excel others in knowledge are oft known by it. The more able in this kind of old were very ready to *despise the weak*, and to over-look them which were under them. *Rom. 14. 3.* The *supercilium* with which the great Rabbies despised the poor ignorant people that knew not the punctilioes of the law. *John 7. 49.* and the *Typhus* of many of our great Criticks, who account themselves the greatest (if not the only Scholars) plainly shew, that as it was an *band of pride* which was lift up at first to the *tree of knowledge*, so it is a *fruit*, which hath been very ready to grow upon that tree ever since. To have *high parts* and a *lowly heart*, is a rare temper, most excellent, but seldom met with. A man cannot look upward and downward together. Happy were it that even *the man of God* to all his other learning could add this skill, whilst with one eye he is soaring aloft in highest speculations, at the same time he could look so low as to see himself and all other learning *nothing*, but *folly* in comparison of *this more excellent knowledge*, because as pride first is the Scholars special snare, in which he is easiliest taken. So

2. That whereby he is most hindred from this *saving knowledge of Jesus Christ*, whether we consider it on Gods part or our own.

1. *On Gods*, who takes no pleasure to communicate Himself in

*Isa. 29. 15.*

*Rom. 1. 21,*

*22. 1 Cor. 1.*

*19, 20, 21.*

*Grævus.*

to precious a mercy to a proud Creature. The Scripture saith he *beholds such afar off. Psal. 138. 6.* and then they will be as far from beholding Christ in any nearer approach. Nay that he *resists them. James 4. 6.* and what advance can *Balaam* make when an Angel, can these when God *stands to resist them*? The Apostle in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Corinthians*, fully shews, how God blasted all those high-conceited, great learned men of old, *πῦ σφῆς, πῦ γορματῶνς, πῦ συζητήης*, whether Philologists or Philosophers, natural or moral, as some expound those three words, *ἀπολαβδίσσω*, he brought to nought all their wisdom, that as learned and profound as they were, *ἡμαρτάνουσιν, ἡμαρταίνουσιν*, when they professed themselves wise, they became fools, when they proved so proud as to account the Gospel foolishness; and notwithstanding all their depth and solidity they became most vain, vanished quite away into meer emptiness, were swoln empty Bladders.

— *Κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν ἡμῶν ἀσθενεῖ.*

in the wisdom of God, by wisdom could not come to the knowledge of God; but proved most vain and corrupt when they endeavoured to be most accurate, as its observed, that *Aristotle* speaks more wide of God in his *Acroamaticks* than in his *Exotericks*, and in after-times how dull and arid some Schoolmen and other Writers are in the more spiritual truths about *Jesus Christ* and the *Power of Godliness*, who were most subtle and acute in other speculations: the saving knowledge of a crucified Christ futing best with that Christian heart, in which proud conceits of these carnal excellencies are crucified, and God delighting to give grace to the humble, and promising the meek that he will teach them his ways. In some low Vault (they say) they may see Heaven more distinctly than they that are on the upper ground. I am sure the more lowly the heart is, the higher pitch it riseth to of the saving knowledge of him, who bad us learn of him to be meek and lowly, presently after he had thanked his Father that he had hid those things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them to babes. Babes in humility do here prove men in understanding. It was a *Piscatoria simpliciorum*, that at first made the best Preacher, and a like simple-hearted lowliness of spirit is yet and will ever be a great help to make the best Scholar, especially in this piece of learning of the excellent knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, who is ever ready to teach them most, who acknowledge themselves to know least, as he is wont to be *all in all* to them who to themselves and in themselves are nothing. It is *Scultetus* his observation of *Osiander*, and some other like him, that usually

*Jam. 4: 6.*

*Psal. 25. 9.*

*Matth. 11.*

*25. ad 30.*

*Exercit. Evangel.*

*αἱ ὁδοὶ* are wont to be very proud; but all may observe, that they who are *ὁδοὶ* of all, are most humble. *Socrates* did not know the less, because he professed he *knew nothing*, nor was *Agur* any whit the more unlearned, because he acknowledged he was *more brutish than any man*. *Prov.* 30. 2. Some think he was *Ibriel* and *Ucal's* Tutor, who are there mentioned. That I cannot say. But this I may, that a man of his humble temper is the fittest Scholar for *Jesus Christ*, who (as others think) is signified by that *Ibriel* and *Ucal*; so that we have not more need to be studious, if we would be learned, than to be humble if we would be *made wise to salvation*; because pride on the one side makes God unwilling to teach us,

2. And us on the other, as unwilling to learn of him. Pride may possibly prick us on to learn other things, but it's an humble heart only that knowing its own blindness and darkness sends a man to School that he may learn *Jesus Christ*; for selfishness (as an *imms existens*) hinders us from taking in the fulness of *Christ*, as the *Jews* going about to establish their own righteousness did not submit to the righteousness of God. *Rom.* 10. 3. and the thoughts of their own freedom hindered them from accepting true liberty by *Christ*. *John* 8. 33. so conceit of our own learning and wisdom so prepossesseth the heart, that it prejudiceth it against the saving knowledge of *Christ*, so that his Gospel to the learned *Greek* is no better than foolishness. *1 Cor.* 1. 23. and with the great Rabbies they are but the *curst Ideots which know not the law*, who believe in *Christ*. *John* 7. 48, 49. The highest and hardest Lessons in *Christ's* School, as Self-Denial, Taking up the Cross, and the like; being diametrically opposite to the main Principles of that *ἐχθρὰ τῶν σαρκῶν*, which therefore stands out in Enmity against them. *Rom.* 8. 7. and because it looks at them as silly and poor low notions, fit only for mean and low spirits and apprehensions, doth not more bate them than despise them, as *Michael* did *David* for 2 *Sam.* 6. 16. dancing before the Ark, and told him in plain terms that he played 20. but the foolish *Morice-Dancer* in so doing, as the wise men of the World are wont so far to make use of Religion as may countenance their designs, but (they say) they will not follow it too near at the heels, lest it should dash out their brains. And so *P. Martyr* and *Deodate*, expound those searchings of heart about *Reuben*, of *Judg.* 5. 19, their being wise Statesmen, but therefore so wise, as they would 16. not foolishly adventure for God and his people. It's a very bitter Pill, and hardly swallowed, that a man who is in reputation for *Eccles.* 10. 1.

wisdom, should out of zeal to God, and in obedience to his word, do that which the *World* would call him a fool for his labour; or that a very learned and great-read man (as *Paul* even in the judgment of his Enemies, in this kind *usq; ad invidiam*, rarely eminent) for him. 1 Cor. 2. 1. to preach not so loftily as to give *Felix* occasion to say, that *much learning made him mad*: but so plainly, as other learned men might count it *the foolishness of preaching*, here is always a trial, and too often a snare, which he is a happy man, that is not taken in.

For the Devil too well knows how precious and useful a talent knowledge and learning is, and therefore he labours.

As the Dung-hill Cock did the Pearl.

1. Either to bring men to neglect it, as they that dote upon honours, profits and pleasures, that have more of the brute than the man in them. Such fools bate knowledge. Prov. 1. 22.

2. Or to corrupt it, so as God may have no pleasure in it, and no readier way to that than by making them proud of it, as we have it in the instance of *Babylon*, and the *King of Tyre*. Isa. 47. 10, 11. Ezek. 27. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, &c.

But, that when God raiseth up our parts in learning, we do not lift and puff up our hearts with pride, it may be of great use to consider.

1. How frequently the Holy Ghost in Scripture blows upon all our wisdom and learning, that he may blast the beauty of it, and so keep us from being proud of it, cries, *Woe to them that are wise in their own Eyes*. Isa. 5. 21. proclaims it the greatest folly to trust to our own wisdom. Prov. 28. 26. warns us not to lean to our own understanding. Prov. 3. 5. nay chargeth us to be fools that we may be wise. 1 Cor. 3. 18. and the like. And is all this to advance folly? or rather to debase pride. To undervalue learning. No, but to shew of how little worth it is in comparison of the learning of *Christ*; not (as the Devil blasphemously suggested to *Eve*) because God envieth us knowledge, but because he would have us know our selves, and how little able we are of our selves savingly to know him.

1 Cor. 8. 2.

Job 15. 8.

Gen. 3. 5.

Aristot. Meta-

phys. 1. 1. c. 1.

Job 36. 29.

37. 15, 16, 17,

&c. dost thou

know? and

dost thou

know? and so

c. 38. 4. 2.

39. 1.

2. How blind and ignorant we are by nature. One of the most quick-sighted Sons of Nature compares us to Butts. The Scripture to wild Ass-Colts. Job 11. 12. saith it's but a very little that we know of the things of nature. Job 26. 14. and just nothing of things of an higher nature. Job 8. 9. that as natural men we do not, nay we cannot know them. 1 Cor. 2. 14. and when they are so hid from us, should not pride be hid from us to? when God

asks *Job*, where is the place of darkness. *Job* 38. 19. may not every natural man lay his hand upon his heart and say, *here Lord*.

5. For acquiste knowledge and learning. How extreemly ignorant greatest Scholars have been of the things of God? The wise men of the East, (whatever they were called before) began then to be truly wise when they came to seek after Christ. *Cartwright in loc.*

2. 1. for otherwise there were some nearer home that were wise to do evil, who to do good had no understanding. *Jer.* 4. 22. and therefore the Prophet there, and in the following Chapters all to befools them. *Nicodemus* a Doctor of the Law, could not say his *catechism*. *John* 3. 10. The great Philosophers even in the wisdom of God knew not God. *1 Cor.* 1. 21. nay, *Nothus Athenas*. In *Athens* it self was an Altar but to the unknown God, whom ye ignorantly worship, said *Paul*. *Act* 17. 23 But was it not a bold part of him to brand those University-men with Ignorance, who most abounded with knowledge? Or, was it not rather strange that to them that were so studious and inquisitive after news, v. 21. God's Creation of the World, and Christ, and the Resurrection (the three first great Letters in every Christians Primier) should be strange things, v. 20. thinking (as some of ours have observed) that whilst he preached, *Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἀνέστασι* (v. 18.) the former had been a new God, the latter a new strange Goddess, which he had propounded to them to be put into their Calendar. But it's no news that Christ and the true God should be mistaken for a strange God to such as are strangers from God, though never so well acquainted with other literature, of whom is too often verified what *Lucan* said of the *Dryades*. *See Chrysostom in locum.* *Selden de Diis Syris.*

*Solis nōsse Deos & cæli sydera vobis,  
Aut solis nescire datur.*

There were learned men in *England*, when yet *Mr. Fox* said to his friend, Brother, Brother, *Jesus Christ is not known in England*. We think there's more knowledge in *England* now than there was then, I fear (though) Christ is less known, I am sure he is more blasphemed.

4. Nay fourthly, to this purpose consider, that whilst we here carry this dark house of earth about with us; even by grace we know but in part. *1 Cor.* 13. 9. are but tender-eyed Leab's, and therefore have need of Christ's Eye-salve, that we may better discern his beauty and our own deformity. Nay though the Spouse



*Cant. 4. 1.  
Brightman in  
loc.*

hath *Doves Eyes* (and they are bright and clear) yet they are *inter ciucinnos within her locks* : so that neither her beauty is seen by others, nor doth she see the beauty of Christ so fully as might be desired. When nearest, we are far from a full view, and when gotten highest, this *ὑπερέχον τῆς γράσας* is so far above us, that if duly considered would lay us low in thoughts of our own underling lowness, as one that standing alone thinks himself a tall proper man, or by one that's lower than himself overlooks himself; if by a Giant seeth what a dwarf he is.

5. This I only add, that those whom God hath lifted up and advanced to highest abilities and serviceableness in his Church, he hath been wont first to *lay low in their own Eyes*, taken them off from their own Legs, let them see how *brutish*. *Prov. 30. 2.* and how *childish*. *Jer. 1. 6.* they are in themselves, able to know little and to do nothing, that he being acknowledged to be *All*, he may have all the praise; they humbled at the first, and he exalted both then and ever after.

Thus the transcendent height and excellency of *the knowledge of Christ* should lay us all low in our own Eyes.

*Use 2.*

But should withal raise up all our hearts to higher desires and more earnest endeavours after it; to be sure we purchase this wisdom at any rate, for seeing its such supereminent knowledge, we certainly are fools so long as we leave it out of the bargain; According to the Psalmists Prayer, *to apply or (as the word is) to bring our hearts to wisdom. Psal. 90. 12.* and according to Solomon's direction, *above all gettings to get understanding. Prov. 4. 7.* what a greedy but yet holy Covetousness doth St. *Austin* commend to us in that expression of his, *Capiat quisq; quod potest in quantum potest, qui non potest, nutriet cor ut possit, &c.* that every one should take what he can, as much as ever he can, and he that is weak should labour to grow up to more strength, that at last he may carry away more than now he can, was it a *Βραυμία* that the man was sick of; that the more he ate the more he hungred? No, but a spiritual appetite of a divine object, that, (as fire the most spiritual Element, the more its fed the more it burns, so) the more that the Divine Soul tastes of this sweetness, the more it thirsts and longs for greater supplies.

*Treatat. I. in  
Joan.*

1. And this because herein we cannot exceed: for however in some other Cases (whilst we follow our own conceits) we may be *overwise. Eccles. 7. 16.* and too much learning hath made some men *mad*: yet I am sure the more we have learnt of Christ,

the more are we able (with *Paul*) to speak the words of truth and soberness. *Act.* 26. 24, 25. and no fear of being here over-wise, unless we could be over-happy : or of going and getting too fast or too far, when *Paul* who very far advanced, professeth he had not attained. *Philip* 3. 12, 13.

2. But the danger on the contrary is in falling short, and it's just so much of eternal life, as it is of the saving knowledge of *Jesus Christ*. *John* 17. 3. Ignorance being Satan's blind, which he sets up in our way to life; the mother of Popish Devotion, but in truth one of the most dangerous Precipices into irrecoverable destruction; for as there is no hitting upon happiness by a blind peradventure, so there is no right ordering of our steps to it, when we know not, that we are out of the way. What mischief other sins do us by their greater atrocity and more deadly guilt, the same ignorance doth (it may be) by leading of us blindfold into the worst of them; for they that walk in the dark know not at what they stumble. *Prov.* 4. 19. Or at least by cutting off all hope of help, whilst it renders us senseless both of remedy and malady, both of the smart of our wound, and of the way, nay of any need of our Cure. Other sins are like a malignant Fever, this of ignorance like a senseless Lethargy; much different, but both deadly. And so Solomon's Proverb that brings this blind-folded man erring from the way of understanding, leaveth him in the Congregation of the dead (*Prov.* 21. 16.) as in an irrecoverable, hopeless condition. To which purpose is both that of the Prophet, where God compassionately complains, that his people perish for want of knowledge. *Hos.* 4. 6. and that of *Elihu*. *Job* 36. 12. where to die without knowledge is threatned as that which sealeth upon us the bottomless pit, so as never to see or take hold of the paths of light and life, and so this inward, and at last that outward darkness meet and lie down together for ever. I only add that the desperateness of this danger is aggravated, when this ignorance is affected, when we are willingly ignorant. *2 Pet.* 3. 5. as we do not know, so we will not understand. *Psal.* 82. 5. not only simply blind that we cannot, but froward, and so wink with our eyes, and will not see. *Matth.* 13. 15. And this is the rather to be heeded because too often practised; no knowledge and wisdom being so despised and loathed as this of Christ, which the Text calls excellent; all other kind of learning, though not alike fancied by all, yet bated by none but by brutish ignorants that know not the worth of it. That I may use Solomon's Phrase, *Prov.* 1. 9. it's an ornament of

As likewise such other expressions as those. *Psal.* 49. 20. 79. 6. 95. 10, 11.

*Jer.* 9. 6.

grace to the head, makes us fine, and so we are both glad and proud of it. But it's this true knowledge of Christ that works grace in the heart, which a corrupt proud heart cannot brook, and therefore doth hate it. *Prov. 1. 29.* and all the means of it, say unto God, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Job 21. 14.* Now of all others these forward fools having of knowledge the Scripture looks at as a most dangerous, faith that this their peevish turning away will slay them. *Prov. 1. 32.* that whilst they hate wisdom, they love death. *Prov. 8. 36.* and their bidding God depart now will be answered with a *Depart from me ye cursed at the last day.*

And that we may be the more sensible how nearly we are herein concerned; be pleased to consider that Ignorance of Christ is so much willingly and wilfully affected, as the proffers of Christ, and the means and opportunities of the true and saving knowing of him and acquaintance with him are neglected. Now our opportunities in this kind are fair and our advantages great; we had therefore need have our eyes in our head to look about us, that we prove not like Solomon's fool, that hath a price in his hand, but wants a heart to improve it.

1. As men. For a man without knowledge is unmann'd and become a beast. *Psal. 49. 20.* Anaxagoras said he was born *calum & solem intueri, to eye the Sun and heaven.* Poor man! that he was so short-sighted as not to have looked higher to the Sun of righteousness, we are indeed all born to look upward, and it will be too low if it be not as high as God in Jesus Christ, who stooped so low as to become man, that man in and by him might come to know and enjoy God. I confess that humane reason cannot at first discover Christ, but being discovered by faith, it's all reason that we should acknowledge him; nor shall we shew our selves reasonable men, unless we adore him. He is *ὁ λόγος*, *John 1. 1.* and therefore it is the most Divine Reason to believe in him the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. *v. 9.* and therefore let the Prince of darkness shut his eyes to this light. But did he for us men and for our salvation come down from heaven, and become incarnate, &c? O let us that shall at last be caught up into the Clouds, to meet him in the air, be caught up in the Spirit, even now whilst we are on earth, with Steven to see and enjoy him in Heaven, seeing we have such a fair rise for it as we are men.

2. Especially as we are Christian men, in the clear mirror of the Gospel of Christ, it's expected that with open face we at least

should come to a more full view of the beauty and glorious excellency of the knowledge of Christ. *Are ye also yet without understanding?* was our Saviour's sharp check of his dull Disciples. *Matth. 15. 16.* And have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not yet known me Philip? was a quickning Item for his unproficiency. And have not we need of the like Goads in our sides? Hath Christ been so much taught, and so little learnt? *sol mand fenestras*, and are our eyes yet shut? Nay doth the Gospels Noon-day sun shine? and are we yet in darkness? like *Astius. Cæci in sole positi*! what a terrible thunder-clap is that, and which may awaken us out of our deadeft sleep, and make us open our Eyes, and our Ears tingle. *If our Gospel be hid*, its hid in them that are *2 Cor. 4. 3, 4* lost, whose Eyes the God of this World hath blinded. As men, especially as Christian men ours had need to be enlightened.

3. And yet more particularly as University-men if younger, it's the age in which we use to learn other things, and why should we not then begin to learn Christ in this morning of our lives, which, if a friend to the Muses, should not be a Stranger to Christ. *Perge Seneca Ep. 77: & propera, ne tibi accidat ut, senex discas.* It's ill beginning to learn then, but then better than never. At least let the old man when his sight grows dim begin to put on his Spectacles; and if it were no shame to some of the Philosophers in old age to go to School to learn that which they had not before studied, let it not be deemed a disparagement to the gravest, even then to become Scholars to Christ, *with the ancient is wisdom*, saith *Job Cap. 12. 12.* but no saving wisdom unless they truly know Christ, and *Multitude of years should teach wisdom* saith *Elihu. Job 32. 7.* and no shame even then to learn wisdom, especially this we now speak of. But whether young, and so have but few years past, or old and so have but few behind to number, it concerns us all *so to number them*, that both sorts apply our hearts to wisdom. *Psal. 90. 12.* whether young or old, as University men, as learned men it especially concerns us (as such) to learn Christ, that we may be made wise to salvation: for is it not pitty that they who know so much of other things should know so little of Jesus Christ? to be among those great wise men of the world. *Psal. 2. 10.* and yet for want of kissing the Son to perish from the way, *v. 12. periti but perituri*: a thousand pities that such rare polished pieces, such curious carved Mercurial Statues should have their end to be burnt in the fire that never goeth out.

But I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salva-

*Heb. 6. 8.*  
*Mark 9. 43.*

tion; that your other learning will be an introduction to lead you as the *Star* did the *wise men* to *Christ*. *Matth. 2.* an under-step to lift up your desires and endeavours to this *ὑπερέχον*, this eminently transcendent knowledge of *Christ Jesus our Lord*.

St. Maries  
Jan. 2. 1651.  
III. Sermon.

**A**ND for helps hereto.  
1. (From what hath been before said) *Be humble if you would be wise*, and learn to know *your selves*, if indeed you would ever know *Christ*. The *Laodicean Angel*, when he thought and said he was *rich*, was *poor and blind*, and stood in need of *Christ's eye-salve*. *Revel. 3. 17, 18.* By not *knowing the plague of our own heart* we come not acquainted with the *Physician*. But by being sensible of our own darkness we come better to see how marvellous the light of the *Sun of righteousness* is, that can illuminate it. The knowing of our own vast emptiness helps us to know the infinite fulness of *Christ* that can fill it. Thus *the Lord filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich he sends empty away*. *Luke 1. 53.* In a broken glass you cannot so well see your own face, but in a broken heart you may best see the face of *Christ*.

Job 32. 8.

2. Take heed of grieving the spirit of *Christ*; for though there be a spirit in man, yet it's the inspiration of the Almighty that gives understanding in other things. Nor is it any other than the spirit of *Christ*, who is a spirit of wisdom and Revelation in the things of *Christ*. *Eph. 1. 17, 18.* Now whilst thou dealest kindly with thy friend, he will unboast himself to thee. And Turn you at my reproofs, and I will pour out my spirit unto you, and will make known my words unto you saith *Wisdom*. *Pro. 1. 23.* But how can that Spirit breathe which we stifle? If thy friend, when offended with thee will not speak, then wonder not if thy Comforter grieved by thee be silent.

Augustin. Tract.  
2. in Joann.

3. *Solomon* supplies us with a third help. *Prov. 13. 20.* where he saith, *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.* A fruitful conversing with them that are acquainted with *Christ* by what we shall both see of him in them and hear from them is a great advantage to our better knowing of him. As in Universities there is an air of learning, and in them Colledges and Societies founded and erected, that by the Conferences and Lectures of learned men we might gain more knowledge in several Arts and Faculties, or at least with more speed than by our own studies; so in the Church of God where he is so much known. *Psal. 76. 1.* in that School of *Christ* the Com-

Lumen conven-  
tus honestissimi  
as Quintilian  
cels. it. l. 1. c. 3.

*munion of Saints*; if rightly ordered and improved, there is a strong breathing of the spirit, where, by others knowledge and experiences conferred and communicated, we may come to know much more of him than (it may be) we should ever have done by our own. Thus the *wise men of the East*, that they might prove yet *wiser, come to Jerusalem* to enquire of him. *Matth. 2. 1, 2.* and the Spouse asks the *Daughters of Jerusalem* of him when she is at a loss for him. *Cant. 5. 8.* and he himself when his *Parents had lost him*, was found *amongst the Doctors, bearing them and asking them questions.* *Luke 2. 46.* It's not a little that he gains who hears much and asks oft, and that not only of Doctors or others of the highest Form, but even of *Punies* in the School of Christ; for if we be sent to learn of the *Ant. Prov. 6. 6.* and other inferior Creatures. *Job 12. 7, 8.* then a *mighty Apollos* may profit by an *Aquila and Priscillae's* instruction, and the poor Country-mans Conference may help on learned *Junius* his Conversion. You know who \* said it, *אִם הָיָה לְכָל אָדָם לִמּוּן.* *He is a wise man that can learn something of every man:* and there is no such *Idiot* amongst all those that are made *wise to salvation*, but in some thing or other by what he is, faith, or doth, the ablest Christian may learn. *Sapè olitor, &c.* *Agur* saith, *there are four things that are little upon the earth, and yet very wise, and none of so little esteem in the Church, but may teach the best of us wisdom.* *Prov. 30. 24, &c.* The little finger may in some posture reach that which the greatest cannot. If thou wouldst be rich, thou wouldst receive a Jewel from a weak hand, and therefore if either thou beest wise or wouldst be wise, converse with them that *are made wise to salvation*, with them most, of whom we may gain most, even with the poorest and meanest, because there's none, of whom thou maist not learn something.

4. Nay learn by teaching, and get by giving, for that's one way better to see and know Christ and our selves, by shewing and holding him out to others. The Master while he teacheth his Scholar improves himself. It's so in the nature of the thing; but over and besides by reason of Gods Blessing. As the Nurses Breasts grow bigger and fuller by giving suck, and we use to feed them well that our Children might fare the better.

And therefore.

1. In private converse let all Christians be imparting something of their knowledge of Christ, that they may receive it back again with advantage. Here *ὁς τι καὶ λάβῃ τι*, is a Christians *commu-*

tative

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*tative justice.* In this kind to lend, that we may have our own with interest is honest usury. At such meetings when every one brings his Symbol, all are feasted, and he that invites and entertains others is himself a gainer. It's but putting a little water into the Pump that brings up more. When we are most free and communicative, we drive the best trade; are never more helped of God than when we help our Brethren, *מְרִירָה וְהוּא יוֹרָא*. Prov. 11. 25. holds as true in spirituals as temporals. *The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be also watered himself.*

2. In publick administrations let such as God hath fitted and called, as they are more desirous to *know*, be more careful to *preach Jesus Christ*. They have his promise for their encouragement *הַמְשָׁרְרִים יִבְיֹנֻ*. *They that are wise, or (rather) that make others wise, shall (themselves) understand.*

And therefore although I am very far from either countenancing the Lay-Preachers of our days, who pretending most to the knowledge of Christ, are such *Ministers of the spirit* that they have all *good letters* in abomination.

Or, from hastning others that are of themselves too hasty to fly from the University before they be fledg'd, whom not God's call but their own self-conceit and oftentimes penury makes Preachers, and speak Paul's words, but far from his meaning, *Necessity is laid upon me, and wo to me if I preach not the Gospel.*

Or, from the least undervaluing of the Blessed Advantages which by continuance in the University, such as wait for a call from God, do in the mean time enjoy of storing up knowledge as of other things, so especially of Jesus Christ, that when called forth, like good Scribes instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, they may bring out of their treasure things both new and old. *Matth. 13. 52.*

Yet are we not to stand here all the day idle and scarce at the eleventh hour go into Christs Vineyard. Though we should be *Concha*, not *Canalis*, yet not mean while let the water corrupt in the Cistern, and the well-fitted weapon rust for want of using, and all upon pretence of furnishing our selves with a greater measure of knowledge.

But God forbid that we should be able to learn to know Christ only in the University. The Ministers of Christ in this kind have also their advantages in the Country.

1. They there meet with many exercises and afflictions, which whilst here in the nest many of us are not exposed to; and so vex-

*αὐτὸς δὲ τοῦ νοῦ, καθὼς μαθήματα, that some could then say with Ignatius, οὐκ ἔσχαται εἶναι μαθήτης, whatever I learnt before, I began then to be Christs Disciple.*

2. Thereby they are the more driven very near to God in Prayer; and it is the Key of this Treasury: and hence come to more near views in those nearer approaches.

3. They have there much to do with men's Souls and Consciences, which much advantageth their experience, and advanceth their skill in that spiritual Anatomy.

4. They have in that their great work (for *which none is sufficient*) frequent occasions of seeing and acknowledging their great weakness and emptiness, and thereby an advantage of discovering Christs greater strength and fulness. 2 Cor. 12. 9.

5. And lastly (to return to the thing in hand) they are engaged in teaching of others, and thereby Christ is engaged to teach them, as Paul was therefore comforted of God, that with those consolations he might better comfort his people. 2 Cor. 1. 4.

Teach that you may learn.

But study that you may do both, for however now adays every fool will be babbling, yet unstudied men are but bad learners, and worse Teachers. For wisdom must be searched and digged for as silver. Prov. 2. 4. and although our poring, of it self, will not find out such a treasure, yet God is ready to shew it when we are earnest to seek it. Philip was sent to preach Christ to the Eunuch when he was at his Book. Act 8. 26, 28. and when Mary is weeping and seeking, Christ appears to her, John 20. 13, 14, 15. Seek Hebr. 3. 1. therefore if you would find, and study Christ if you would know him, view him as you use to do him whom you would know, and as the stung man did the brazen serpent.

Many have laid down Rules for your better profiting in other studies. Give me leave to point at a few directions for the more sure attaining to this excellent knowledge in your studying of Christ.

1. Lay aside all vain and unlawful studies which do not only take up the time, which should be better spent in the studying of Christ, but do so either intangle or debase the Soul, that they keep out the light of the sun of Righteousness. Such are

1. All black Arts, which the Children of light have no insight into. The sun of Righteousness its beams, when they break out, burn such books. It's no right course by digging in Hell to find the way to Heaven, or to have acquaintance with Christ by having (as you are wont to call it) a Familiar.



2. All *Arts of Love*, all profane and lascivious speculations, and studying of such Books which are incentives of Lust, and by which the Student becomes *ingeniosissime nequam*; a snare which youth is frequently taken with; and it were well if some that were more grown up were wholly freed from. But this is one kind of having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: and which leads off from acquaintance with Christ. For the Books which for the present we read are wont to leave a tincture and impression upon the spirit of the Reader, especially if his judgment be weak, as ours in younger years are not very strong. And of this make this trial, whether when you have been greedy in reading such Books you have thereby any great mind to read the Bible. I am sure that when you have been seriously reading it, you will have as little delight in reading them, as *Paul* had in the thorn in his flesh, when he had before been caught up to Paradise, as *Hierom* saith, *Ama scientiam scripturarum, & vitia carnis non amabis.*

3. All vain and idle studies, such were those sciences falsely so called. 1 Tim. 6. 20. about *Genealogies* and *questions*, and those *old Wives Fables* in the Apostles times, answerable to which are our *Romanza's*, too many of our silly Pamphlets, and (let none be displeased if I add) not a few of our Criticks *minutiae* and *argutiae*, no better than as *Eliau* called some of the great Artists pretty little curious knacks, *χρῆσι ἀναλωματα*, which shallow and light heads take up as Jet doth straws instead of what is more solid and substantial like *Solomon's*, *הַבִּלְבָּל נָדָה*. Prov. 21. 6. *a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death*, very feathers which we break our arm with, by throwing them with our whole might, make our spirits vain if not profane, and so far from helping us to this, *דַּעַת יִישׁ*, this substantial knowledge of Christ, that many of the plainest and strongest Scripture-proofs of the Doctrine of Christ are attempted to be evaded and enervated by these bold Criticisms.

4. All over-bold and curious prying into the Ark of Gods secrets, measuring his Counsels by our thoughts, and his wisdom in them by our reason which instead of studying to know Christ hath stretched many mens wits into wild and tedious disputes, and quite crackt others brains into blasphemy and distraction; as men grow mad having their eyes long-set open against the Sun. This tree of knowledge, a forbidden fruit, which yet we have an itch and licentious appetite after, whilst by being thankfully content with what God in Scripture reveals of Christ and his will, we should be wise to sobriety. Rom. 12. 3. But for Gods secrets, *Eorum fides salu-*

*tem offert, Periculum Inquisitio, as Hesychius speaks. To which let me add that of Scaliger. Nescire velle, quæ magister maximus te scire non vult, erudita inscitia est.*

1. Let this be the first Caveat in our learning to know Christ, that we lay aside these and such like studies that either in their own nature estrange us from him, or at least as we handle the matter hinder us in our search after him.

2. Let the second Caveat be this, that as to this end, we must lay aside all unlawful studies, so we must take heed that we do not overdo in our studies that are lawful. Not that I would have you study them less : but Christ more. Nor them so much as Christ less.

And this.

1. Either for *time*, in spending it so wholly on them that there's none left for those duties in which we should more immediately acquaint our selves with Christ. Many a close student who hath stinted himself to study so many hours a day, hath (it may be) forgotten to put into the account one half hour to pray and read the Scripture, which is such a *leaning to our own understanding, that we acknowledge not God.* Prov. 3. 5, 6. a proud Atheistical self-sufficiency, as though of themselves they could study it out by their own Candle, whilst they shut their window against the light of Heaven. Which therefore God may justly so blast and cross, as that

Either they never come to attain that knowledge they are so eager upon : *they had no knowledge that called not upon God.* Psal.

14. 4. Such hardest Students have not always proved the best Scholars, but have only studied themselves blind, and put out their Eyes by their own Candle light :

Or, if often they prove Scholars, it's as often that of all o'hers they are furthest off from being Christs Disciples. It hath been no news in the World both in present and former times to find greatest Scholars greatest Atheists. The wisest of the World *by their wisdom knew not God.* 1 Cor. 1. 21. The Creature terminated their sight which should have been a transparent glass, in and through which they should have seen God, and so by poring on it they lost him, even there, where he was to be found, when our other studies so wholly take up our time, that our addresses to Christ are either wholly excluded or curtailed, he who is thereby so much undervalued cannot but be very much offended. It's a sad story that you read of *Origen*, who in his *Lamentation* confesseth that

## The Third SERMON

he fell into Satan's Snare by his not saying out his Prayers. Do not therefore so over-study other matters that *Christ be wronged in point of time.*

2. Nor in point of *intention of mind and heart* by being eager on *them*, but remits toward him, wearing out the body, and beating our brains in boulding out some nice subtilty or knotty difficulty in other Arts, and mean while never know what *Paul's insulmatus* in the fourteenth verse of this Chapter means, never acquainted with that *giving all diligence* which the Apostle Peter calls for in clearing up our interest in Christ, and *making our Calling and Election sure.* Solomon indeed would have thee *whatever* (in thy ordinary calling) thy hand finds to do that thou do it, כְּכֹחַ כָּל מְאֹרֶךְ *with thy might*, but כָּל מְאֹרֶךְ *All thy might* Moses would have thee reserve for God as his due. *Deut. 6. 5.* Such *Holocausts* are God's Royalty only. Such an one *David* offered to God. *2 Sam. 6. 14.* where it's said, that מִיָּדָיו בְּכָל יוֹם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה and v. 16. וּמִכָּל כֹּחַ, words that both in their *rise* signify *strength*, and *duplicated* words to express his double diligence and earnestness, *putting out all his strength*, when it is *before the Lord*, according to the Apostles general injunction, though we should *not* be *slothful* in any other *service*, yet we should be then especially *servent in spirit*, when it is in *serving the Lord.* *Rom. 12. 12.* This τὸ ἀντρέχον τῆς γνώσεως, might justly challenge an ἀντιπροσέτατον in our diligence, to be as much more intent in studying of him, as the contemplation and *knowledge* of him exceeds both in its sublime excellency and profitableness all other speculations. However it would be well if we did study Christ but as hard as many a close student doth other Arts and Authors. But to devour them without any hungry appetite after him is a βελυμία, a false appetite, is extream unworthy and ill in it self, and shews that we are very ill affected.

For our better help herein, to these Caveats let me add these 3. directions.

1. Study other Books, but especially the *Scriptures*, for *they are they which testify of me*, saith our Saviour. *John 5. 39.* other Authors may afford thee some light: but it's *the law of God* that issues forth the light of life to *convert the soul.* *Psal. 19. 7.* other Books may help to make us wise for the World, but the *Scriptures* only *wise to salvation.* *2 Tim. 3. 15.* *David* was a very wise man; but he acknowledgeth himself beholden to Gods Testimonies for it. *Psal. 119. 98, 99.* and *Solomon*, who is accounted

ted the wisest, sends us to his Books for it. *Prov. 1. 1.* to 6. he saith, it must be *digged* for. *Prov. 2. 4.* but the *Scripture* is the *field* which you must dig in, if ever you find this *Pearl*. *Matth. 13. 44.* His was too bold a word when he added. *Non in flore Patrum aut Carie Scholasticorum* : for whatever rotten stuff there may be in some of the latter, yet I am sure there is much of Christ to be found in the former. But yet as I would not have *Abulensis* dispute so long as to forget his *Creed*, so nor other greatest Students in their well-furnished Libraries to want a Bible; as (they say) some have; or to study either Fathers or Schoolmen more than the Scriptures as it may be too many do. One said, that *Aristoteles Ethicks* was the *Schoolmans Body of Divinity*. How truly I say not; but it's too true, that time was when skill in a *Romish Missal*, and some old Liturgy was more in request than readiness in the *Scripture* : but sure Christ was less known both then and now too, when by our Anti-Scripturists *their Spirit* (not *Gods*) is so cried up that the Scriptures are decried, and *H. N.* his blasphemy revived, with whom to be *Scripture-learned*, is a *terminus minuens*, or title of disgrace. But for us that would not be so over-wise, but *wise to sobriety and salvation*, as the *wise men* had *their Star*, *Matth. 2.* so let the holy Scriptures be ever ours to *lead us to Christ*.

And for this purpose let us be careful and conscionable in a constant *reading* of them, as also in a diligent *attendance* upon the *Ministry* of them. For *wisdom is by instruction*. *Prov. 1. 3.* *Asaph* was in a mist, till he got into the *Sanctuary* to know his way. *Psal. 73. 16, 17.* and the Spouse is directed to the *Shepherds Tent* if she would find her *beloved*. *Cant. 1. 8.* And this though we be never so able and wise. For wisdoms Proclamation is not only *who so is simple, and he that wanteth understanding, let him turn in hither*, as *Prov. 9. 4.* But *Hear my words, O ye wise, and hearken unto me ye men of understanding*. *Job 34. 2, 10.* The wisest may *hear and increase knowledge*. *Prov. 1. 5. 9. 9.* especially in the knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, the oldest and wisest may yet live and learn, it being the fault of those *foolish women*, not that they were *always learning* but that they never took out their Lesson in *coming to the knowledge of the truth*. *2 Tim. 3. 7.* learn out of *Scripture* though we our selves be never so learned.

And this even of those that are weak and it may be in respect of our selves unlearned, who yet in some things may be better informed and experienced. Thou who in a strange place wilt

Sometimes ask and learn the way of a simple man or a young Child, disdain not to learn more of Christ of the simplest, though thou beest *a man of God*, yet herein according to that in the Prophet, let even a *Child lead thee*. Thus study other things, but the Scriptures most.

Mat. 11. 6.

φιλοσοφῶν τὸν  
δεξιὸν ὀφθαλμὸν.  
Philosophare  
oculum intuens.

v. 12, 13. 64,  
66, 68, 108,  
124, 135. Ps.  
25. 7. 27. 11.  
86. 11. 143.  
10.

2. *Study much but pray more*: for this wisdom must be got by asking, James 1. 5. as it must be *digged for*. Prov. 2. 4. so it must be *cried after* v. 3. קורא קולך. Thou must give, or (as some render it) *consecrate thy voice* in loudest cries and earnestest prayers for such a Boon. Solomon the wisest man that ever was came to it this way, 1 King 3. 9. And David that was little short of him, at least in this part of Divine Learning: (Psal. 119. 98, 99, 100.) yet how often in that and other Psalms doth he pray and beg for *teaching*! Daniel must not lie groveling. Dan. 8. 18, 19. 10. 9. but Zechariah must *look up*. Zech. 1. 18. and Ezekiel must be *lifted up*. Ezek. 8. 3. 40. 2. if he would see a *Vision*, and John must *come up to Heaven* if he would have a *Revelation*. Revel. 4. 1. Brightman prayed much when he commented on that Book, and I believe they that pray most have most of Christ revealed to them. All here is not gotten by poring on a Book, but more by looking upward.

God is the *Father of lights*. James 1. 17. Christ the *true light*. John 1. 9. 8. 12. (Ille lux, nos lumina dicimur, ut oculi lumina) and the Holy Ghost is the *spirit of wisdom and Revelation*. Ephef. 1. 17. It's he that sometimes *blinds and hides*, and that can alone *open*. Luke 24. 45. and enlighten. We want it, and it's in his hand alone to give it. And therefore because it can neither be *wrestled*, or *bought*, it must be *prayed out of it*. Study much, but pray more.

Rom. 11. 7, 8.

Job 17. 4.

Psal. 51. 6.

Exod. 36. 2.

2 Chron. 1. 10,

11, 12.

3. Lastly, *Study well, but live better*. And that's the best course to know most of Christ in a saving way. Aristotle could say, τυφλώτης ἡ πορνεία. In foul water you cannot see your own face nor the face of Christ in a foul Conscience. The Sons of Belial knew not God. 1 Sam. 2. 12. nor do they *desire* it. Job 21. 14. nor shall the *wicked understand*. Dan. 12. 10. and so they *leave off to be wise and to do good together*. Psal. 36. 3. but as in one place its said, Nisi credideritis non intelligetis, so in another its added, Nos credidimus, & cognovimus, we know by believing, and as Jonathan did, we see by *tasting* (1 Sam. 14. 29.) Psal. 34. 8. And so knowledge and sense are joined together. Phil. 1. 9. Non enim hæc læticia docet, sed unctio, non litera, sed spiritus, non Eruditio, sed exercitatio,

Augustin in

Jean. Tract. 2.

John 6. 69.

Epist. 108.

*exercitatio*, saith Bernard. The Romans were filled with goodness and knowledge together. Rom. 15. 14. And therefore would we know Christ?

1. First, make sure to *be in Christ* (as in the Text Christ Jesus my Lord) we are *in him*, and then we have understanding, 1 John 5. 20. when *in the light*, then inlightened, when betrothed to him, its then promised that we *shall know him*. Hos. 2. 20.

2. When once in him, endeavour with all Care and Conscience to walk on *in the fear of His Name*, in obedience to his Will, in a course of Holiness and Righteousness before him, and that's the best and nearest way yet further to know him.

*Fear* in Nature is one of the most quick and apprehensive affection; and the Prophet saith of Christ Himself, that he was of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. How oft in Scripture is it called the Beginning of Wisdom? as both having the promise of it. Psal. 25. 12, 14. and being ever careful and solicitous in using and improving all the means of it. And where Gods promise and our endeavour meet, something is ever made of it. *Robinson.*

For Obedience. Keep and do, for this is your wisdom and understanding saith Moses. Dent. 4. 6, 7. and if a man will do, he shall know saith our Saviour. John 7. 17. Here, as in other things, we learn by practising, and come to know by doing. Let not our Scholars be like the Athenians, of whom its said, *Scire quidem quid deceat, sed negligere*. For Theologia vita est; non scientia. They knew righteousness, in whose heart was the Law. Isa. 51. 7. for Lex Patet lux, and therefore where that light is, there will be the less darkness.

For Holiness, Piety, and Purity, you may please to hear what St. Austin saith whatever is in the World, yet for the City of God, *In hac nulla est hominis sapientia, nisi Pietas*. Piety there is the best Policy. I know you will believe our Saviour when he saith, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*. Matth. 5. 8. And so Aquinas, you know, makes the Donum Intellectus to answer to this fifth Beatitude. *De Civit. Dei lib. 14. cap. 28.*

And lastly for righteousness. The secret of the Lord is with the Righteousness. Righteous saith Solomon. Prov. 3. 32. *Seminate justitiam, & illuminare vobis lumen scientia*. So the LXX. would make the Prophet speak. Hos. 10. 12. As light is sown for the Righteous, so the light of this saving knowledge of Christ is sown in a way of righteousness. So David ends his Psalm and I my Sermon. Psal. 17. ult. *As for me I shall behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness* And

II. Part.

And thus the Eminency of this saving Knowledge of Christ should raise up our hearts in the use of these means to endeavour after it.

At St. Maries  
April 3. 1653.

**N**AY to account all else as loss in Comparison of it. Which is the second part of the Text, and the highest pitch of our duty, which our Blessed Apostle had here attained, and as it were standing upon the highest round of this Jacob's Ladder, by this his example he saith to us, *as the voice from heaven did to John. Revel. 4. 1. Come up hither.* And therefore *Sursum Corda*, that our Souls were indeed on the Wing, because it's an high flight that we are to take, above all outward Eminencies, or inward Excellencies. She that is clothed with the sun, bath the Moon under her feet. *Revel. 12. 1.* And if ever we would savingly know Christ, we with our Apostle must account all things loss for this excellent knowledge of Christ: and ex animo, even from the heart say, *ἀλλὰ μὲν ἐν γὰρ ὑποψύματα πάντα ζήλου.* Yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. All of them very great words and *magni animi*. Blest Noble Soul, to which a despised Christ is of so great worth, that in comparison of him all other greatest things are less than nothing! This is a strain above the Grandees of this Worlds greatest Gallantry: which yet *the least in the Kingdom of Heaven* can truly say: and the less he is in his own Eyes, the more truly and affectionately he can say it, as he here in the Text, who accounted so meanly of himself as *the least of the Apostles*, and *less than the least of all Saints*: yet so highly of Christ, that he accounts nothing of worth without him, *nay all loss for him.* And that you may not conceive him herein to brag and vapour, consider a little his particular words and expressions, which I have in part touched before, but must here again take them into further consideration, that by the pregnancy of his words we may see how full his heart was of the love of Christ, and at how high a rate he valued this invaluable transcendent excellent knowledge of him. And to this purpose Consider we.

1 Cor. 15. 9.  
Eph. 3. 8.

1. The Emphatical significancy of his words in themselves.
2. His doubling and multiplying of them.
3. How he riseth in his expressions, when you compare them one with another.

1. The words are Emphatical and strongly significant, as you will see if you will run over them as they lie in the Text.

1. Ἄλλα μὲν ἐν γὰρ ᾧ] *Behold! a troop comes!* Here's such a cluster of words, as we cannot grasp, or the best Grecian well tell how to express in *English*, as *Tully* said the word *σὺν* could not be expressed in *Latin*. No fewer than five Greek Particles crowded together, the more fully to express not so much the strength of the asseveration as of his affection.

2. Ἐγὼμαί *I account*] upon his serious and diligent casting up the account. He sets this down at the foot of it. Ἐγὼμαί. *Non dubito; Duco, Judico.* An Act of his deliberate judgment which he made no doubt of, but was clearly led on to, and was fully settled in. *Certe duco Zanch.*

3. Πάντα, *All things.* That's a great word and contains many particulars, as we shall see hereafter. But doth he not over-lash? as he called his Book *Jesuitica liberalitas* in their full mouthed *Universalis, Omnis, Nullus, Semper, Nunquam, &c.* or is he not a careless inconsiderate Prodigal that will thus venture and lose all at one cast before he had viewed, and weighed, and considered what a great and massy sum this *All* came to? No, he had weighed Christ in the one balance, and *All* things else in the other, and they in comparison proved *lighter than vanity it self*, and therefore he calls them *Jacobus Larentinus.*

4. Ζημίαν *loss* in the very abstract, (in which is no gain, and so *νίκη* and *ζημία* are opposed.) That is: Not only that which he would willingly lose for Christ, but which (some of them in themselves and all of them in point of confidence in them) would be loss with a witness, if to keep them and his trust in them he should lose Christ. The word signifieth a loss, a mulct, a punishment. And by it he tells you it would be the forest mulct and punishment that could befall him for him to lose Christ for them: but none at all to lose them all for Christ. *Grotius H. Stephan.*

5. Nor hath he yet given them a title low enough: and therefore to *ζημίαν* he adds *σκόβαλα*. Not only *loss* but *dung*. Things in a storm though in themselves very precious, may be lost and willingly cast over-board to save our lives. But if it be nothing but *dung* that is so lost and cast away, there will be less fear of repenting of the bargain. And yet such in his esteem are all things in comparison of Christ, *σκόβαλα*. I list not read a Greek Lecture upon the word, or to spend time in telling you what Grammarians say of it. Some rendring it *Quisquilie*, some *Retrimenta*, some *Stercora*, some *νυοβαλα*, fit for those Dogs, v. 2. (as *Zanchy*) suffice it for us to know, that on all hands it signifieth such things. *See Constantini, Hesychii, Suida, Stephan. ni, lexica.*



σκύβαλα of  
οἱ κύνας βάλλ-  
ουσαι, as σκα-  
ρακίζον of οἱ  
κόρακες.

Andr. Downes  
in Chrysostom.

See Piscators  
Analysis loci.

things as are, if not most loathsome, yet most vile and contemptible. And yet such doth the Apostle account all things in comparison of Christ. They are ζῆμια, σκύβαλα, *loss, dung*. To which he opposeth two expressions, in the

6th. Place, holding forth Christ's comparative incomparable worth, and his answerable estimate and valuation of it in his ὑπερέχον Ἰησ. γνώσεως: and ἵνα χερσὶν κερδήσω. An ὑπερέχον to σκύβαλα, and κέρδι to ζῆμια, other things base dung; but there's an ὑπερχῶ, a *supereminent excellency in Christ*, and if they be *loss*, then though he should lose them all and *win Christ*, he accounts himself to be a wonderful *gainer*.

Thus first we see how wonderfully strong and emphatical the words are as they are singly taken by themselves.

2. But secondly, the strength and earnestness of his spirit further appears in his doubling and multiplying of them. I touched before of that *Congeries* or heap of five Particles, ἀλλὰ μὲν ἔν γε ᾧ, which he poured out together. Sure his heart was full that *out of the abundance of it his mouth speaks*, and so runs over, and, besides; all the other three words we have twice in this one verse; and if you will take in the seventh verse, you have them thrice in two, to express that as when the *dreams were doubled, the thing was certain*, Gen. 41. 32. So when his words here are doubled and trebled, and multiplied, you may certainly believe he spake his heart, and hereby expressed no double-dealing, but the singleness and affectionateness of it.

3. To this purpose is likewise further to be observed, *ut crescit; surgit oratio*, how he riseth in his speech by six steps one after another, till he come to the height of both expression and affection together.

1. From an ἀλλὰ, *yea but v. 7.* to an ἀλλὰ μὲν ἔν γε ᾧ, *quoniam etiam certe, yea but verily* in this verse, not *verumtamen*, as the vulgar, which is *corrigentis*, but *qui nimè, quod est amplificantis*; He is risen to a greater certainty and settledness of resolution.

2. From an ἄτινα, *v. 7.* *those things* to a πάντα, the indefinite is proved an Universal. *Those things* are proved *All things*.

3. From an ἤγαμαι (in the 7th verse) in the time past to an ἡγάμαι twice repeated in this verse in the present tense. I did and I do. I do yet so account of them, as not altering my judgment, or repenting of my bargain.

4. From ζῆμια to σκύβαλα. He did account them *loss*, and which is more, he doth *account them dung*, that there is no loss in the losing of things so vile and contemptible.

Lapide.

5. From an ἡμίμας ζῆλος to an ἐξουλόμας. *I did account them loss, yea and I have lost them.* What in our judgment we may undervalue, that by reason of our *lust* we may not be willing to part with. But his judgment and practice, his hand and his heart went together, he had actually *lost* that which his judgment told him in comparison of Christ was not worth keeping.

6. From a ζῆλος to an ἵνα κερδήσω, what sometimes was *gain*, was now become *loss*, v. 7. and on the contrary, Christ who was before accounted *loss* is now become the only *gain*; And that although won with the *loss* of all that was formerly accounted *gain*. *For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I might win,* and these winnings were clear gains; for the words are, ἵνα κερδίσω, *that I may gain Christ.*

So that as our Apostle 2 Cor. 6. when he had before poured out a whole torrent of most Divine and Pathetical Eloquence, and as it were spoken seven or eight verses with one breath, he adds v. 11. *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open to you, our heart is enlarged:* so he here tells you how enlarged it is towards Jesus Lib. 8. c. 4. Christ, that whereas Quintilian reckons up but four kinds of amplification, Incrementum, Comparatio, Ratiocinatio, and Congeries, of these four the Apostle spends at least three in this one verse, in which he expresseth the incomparable excellency of Christ, both in himself and in his esteem above all things that may come in competition with him.

In which he hath set us a very fair Copy to write after him, that we with him in our deliberate judgment and practice, may account *all loss and dung that we may gain Christ.* And that we may do so the better, it will be best for us to consider what particulars are contained under this Universal πάντα, what these *All Things* are which he so undervalues in comparison of Christ Jesus his Lord.

They were.

1. All privileges that accrued to him by his being born in the Church of Godly Parents. *Of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, v. 5.*

2. (Which followed upon the former) the outward enjoyment of God's Ordinances. *Circumcised the eighth day.*

3. All his moral, best works, and legal performances, though with all zeal and accurateness, *as touching the Law, a Pharisee: Concerning zeal persecuting the Church: Concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. v. 6.*

Now, *all this* he had lost, v. 7.

And this *All* came to a great deal. The loss of it would quite have undone an hypocritical Pharisee; who had nothing else to live and subsist on: and therefore if stript of all these would have cried out with *Micah. Judg. 18. 24. Ye have taken away my Gods and my Priest, and what have I more?* But Paul now no longer a Pharisee, but become an Apostle of Jesus Christ hath something more besides all that, which he is willing to lose for Christ.

And that is.

4. *πᾶντα* all things; which includes more than all that was before-mentioned. If you ask what? I answer according to our Divines (whom I am not ashamed of, or of their judgment.)

1. All his own inherent righteousness, and best works after Conversion; his *labouring more abundantly than them all; his Conversion of so many Souls, his most holy and unblameable Conversation. Omnia, quæ & nunc Christianus & Apostolus ago & habeo,* as *Zanchy* upon the Text, which he sufficiently makes out to be here included, both from the universal *πᾶντα*, as being intended to express more than was before expressed in his moral unblameableness and zeal before Conversion, and from the present tense *ἔργους*, now that he is converted he judgeth so of all that he was and is. *τὰ πᾶντα καὶ παρῖνα*, as *Chrysostom*. And he further explains himself on the ninth verse following, that in this *πᾶντα* he contained his own righteousness of the Law, which he rejected for the righteousness of God by Faith. Nor by that righteousness of his own which was of the law, did he mean only his Pharisaical righteousness; that which by the power of the Law, and his free will before Conversion he did attain to, and so might call his own (as our Adversaries contend) but all that even by the power of grace he attained in obedience to the law; and what was inherent in him, and in that sense was *his own*, as our Divines fully prove, and I may have occasion hereafter to shew. . But what? are these to be accounted *ἐνύβρια*? *Bellarmino* here cries out of our blasphemy. And are they to be accounted loss? or are they to be lost, that we may gain Christ? No, not in themselves; but in regard of our confidence in them, as to pardon and acceptance with God: not in point of sanctification, but of justification, which the Apostle is here speaking to. *Non necesse habuit Paulus se abdicasse à tribu suâ, & à genere Abrahamæ, fierique allophylum ut fieret Christianus, non debuit ex casto impudicus, ex sobrie intemperans, &c.* as *Calvin* speaks. He kept the staff in his hand to walk with, but it being crackt he did not lay his whole weight on it. Paul did

*De Justificatione, l. 1. c. 19.*

not quite cast away divers of the other things mentioned which were of less value, much less *inherent righteousness* and good works in a gracious conversation: he did not profanely renounce his Birth-right, or Gods Ordinances: nor instead of his former unblameable carriage proved debauch'd and scandalous, as many of our high pretenders to Gospel-Perfection do now adays. Those things might consist with Christ, and some of them are necessarily required of all that are in Christ. But

Partly in way of comparison, τῇ πρὸς χεῖρσιν συγκρίσει καὶ παρὰ Chrysostom. ἐκείνου (as the Greek Fathers speak) he undervalues them in com- Theodore! Phe- parison with Christ, καταργεῖν τῶν μύθων διὰ τὰ κρείττονα, he as tins. it were contemns the less in comparison of the greater, ἡ γὰρ οὐ πῦλα φέρω, ἀλλὰ περαιρέωμαι τὰ μείζονα, καὶ τὸν εἶπον λαβὼν περιτίθω ἑγώ τὸ σκύβαλον, as Theodore! expresseth it. In compare with Christ the Bread of Life, all else are but σκύβαλα.

And this especially in point of *Justification*, for so to rely upon them for acceptance with God would not only *comparatively* but *positively* be the *greatest loss*, as keeping us from Christ, who is the *greatest gain*, which the Apostles words plainly speak, when he saith, that he had *suffered their loss*, ἵνα χεῖρσιν κερδήσω, that he might gain Christ, intimating that such a loss of them, as to confidence of acceptance by them, is such a means by which he might and without which he could not gain Christ.

2. In this super-additional πάντα he includes (and as Chry- οὐκ ἐστὶ γὰρ περι- sostom thinks, especially) all outward excellencies and advantages κυσμικῶν whatsoever; his ease, credit, profit, and all other worldly great- πραγμάτων τῆτο λέγειν. ness, and conveniencies: which yet he might have bidden as fair for as another, as being born in Tarsus of Cilicia, no mean City, so ΑΒ 21. 39. himself of no mean esteem and accomplishments, κατ' ἀναιρέσειν ἑαυτὸν, one of the most exquisite scd. ΑΒ. 26. 5. and in it a prime Scholar, and of the highest form, περιεκοπὴν ὑπὲρ πολλὰς συνηλικισ- τας. Gal. 1. 14. he had got the start of many of his Schoolfellows, so that his rare abilities occasioned the High Priests before his Con- version to make use of him. ΑΒ. 22. 5. and after his Conversion, made the Heathen his Enemies envy him, and even Porphyrie pity him that such a rare piece should be (as he conceived) cast away in such a foolish way as he thought Christianity was.

So that we see that he had something, nay much to lose, and which actually he had lost and parted with, so that instead of his former ease and liberty, nothing but bonds and imprisonments and all misery abode him. ΑΒ. 20. 23. 2 Cor. 11. 23, 24, &c. and

instead of his former singular esteem, he takes part with the rest of the *Apostles* to be accounted the filth and off-scouring of the World.

1 Cor. 4. 13.

Luke 10. 37.

So that whereas (in the former head of things) only his confidence in them was lost, here both Confidence and the things too were lost, and yet he no loser: for in them all he had lost nothing, but what he accounted *dung*, and either comparative, or positive loss, that he might gain Christ. From whose example our watch-word is, *Go thou and do likewise*; To be alike affected to all these things in comparison of Christ, and *that we may gain Christ, to account them all loss and dung*, and accordingly when God calls, actually to lose some of them, and all confidence in all of them as to our Justification, or Acceptance with God by them: whether they be 1. All outward worldly excellencies and advantages. Or 2. All Birth-right-privileges. Or 3. The outward enjoyment of God's Ordinances. Or 4. All moral virtues and performances. Or 5. Even best good works and inherent graces: All in themselves good and may be enjoyed, divers of them so necessary, as that they must indissolubly be cleaved to and not parted from. But none of them to be relied upon for acceptance with God and Salvation; however good and useful and profitable soever otherwise they are or may be, yet in this case they are (in the sense before explained) to be *accounted loss that we may gain Christ*.

#### 1. All Worldly Excellencies and advantages.

Τὰ βιωτικά; 1 Cor. 6. 3, 4. πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. 1 John 2. 16. such as the Apostle there calls *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, i. e. Pleasure, Profit, Honour, and the repute of great place, learning, wisdom, ease, liberty, health, life it self. Of all which all that I have now to do is to shew.

1. That *Paul* and all the faithful of his spirit ever *de facto* did, and do *esteem them all loss and dung in comparison of Christ*.

2. That *de jure*, there was and is very great reason so to do.

3. For application, that it is our duty to be answerably affected.

1. That *Paul* was so, the Text speaks aloud in the fore-mentioned particulars. Nor was it only for a good mood here once; but his deliberate judgment, and constant frame of spirit at other times in all his writings. For Christ's sake his profit was lost,

2 Cor. 11. 27. whilst he served him in much Poverty, Hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness,

*nakedness*, that he was fain to send from Rome as far as to Ephesus 2 Tim. 4. 13. for a *Cloak* to cover it. His pleasure exchanged for weariness and painfulness, stripes and imprisonments, so that he had had a very unpleasant life of it, but that for Christ's sake he *took pleasure in infirmities*. And as for honour and repute he had learnt in the cause of Christ to digest *evil report as well as good*, to be accounted amongst the *silt and off-scouring of the World*: one, who for his self was a learned Pharisee, and for his personal abilities eminent above his fellows; whilst he desired to *know nothing but Christ Jesus and him Crucified*, he is content that the *Corinthians* shall account him a *fool* and that *Felix* shall call him a *mad man*, such a dunghill was the world to him, whilst Christ was the only Pearl. And although he was herein eminent, yet not so singular as to be alone in this estimate, for Christ was, *The desire of all Nations*. The Apostle speaks indefinitely, but meaneth universally, *ὑμῖν ὅτι ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν*. 1 Pet. 2. 7. *To you, to all you that believe he is precious*, or, as the word *τιμὴ* imports, the price it self, by and in reference to which every true believer prizeth all things, and it above all. Hence even in the time of the *law*, and before, when the Beauty and worth of Christ was seen at a further distance, and through darker shadows nothing in the whole City could prove a Cordial to the Spouse sick of love, as long as she met not with her beloved. Nay *Asaph* had none either in Earth or Heaven but him. *Psal.* 73. 25: so that it seems all besides him was nothing. *Israel* thrice a year left all to come to the Temple a type of Christ, and yet never lost by it. It was by the faith of a *Messiah*, that *Abraham* left all; *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and the other Patriarchs proved Pilgrims, that *Moses* so undervalued the Court, Honour, and the *Treasure of Egypt*. But especially in the times of the Gospel; when the *unsearchable riches of Christ* were more revealed, in the very dawning of the morning this *Phosphorus* shined so bright, that the *Magi* came from a far Country, took a tedious and dangerous journey and ran the hazard of proclaiming him King under the Tyrants Nose. But when this Sun of Righteousness was got more up; how willingly doth the wise Merchant sell all to buy this Pearl. *Matth.* 13. 46. their garments are made his Foot cloth, their hair his Towel; the pretious Box of Spikenard broken, and none but a *Judas* accounted it too costly to anoint even the feet of the anointed *Messiah*. What an honour did they account it to *suffer shame for Christ*? *Matth.* 5. 41. How ambitious of disgrace? How greedy of gain by losing all for him? They

*ἀποβύοντες.*

*Hebr.* 11. 13.

*Gent.* 3. 6. 5.

*Heb.* 11.

*loved*

loved not their lives unto death. (Rev. 12. 11.) is but a *pointe*. He that loves his life accounts nothing more precious than life : and therefore on the contrary, he that is said *not to love it*, is prodigal of it, and so *Beza* there rendreth it.

And this not only with those Apostles and first Disciples, and other Primitive Martyrs and Confessors. Not only with a *Galecius* or *Pizzardus*, or other such more noble *Heroes*, who

When bribed with all the World could promise to be drawn from Christ, could readily return answer and say. *Thy money perish with thee, valeat vita, pereat pecunia, veniat Christus.*

And when threatned and pursued with whatever the malice of man or Devil could invent to drive them from Christ : yet a *Poly-carpus* could not speak an ill word of his Master, *whom he had served so long, and never had hurt from.*

When called upon but to think what they did, an holy *Cyprian* will not take time to deliberate ; and in the midst of the flames to a holy *Lambert*. *None but Christ, None but Christ.* Blest Souls ! we envy them not their *Aureola*, who on those higher stilts could thus easily stride over the highest Mountains in this World to get to their Saviour in that other.

Its our *Crown of Rejoycing* if *band passibus equis*, we can but follow them in this way. And truly the poorest, weakest Infant-Believer, who can but creep, yet can go thus far, as to be able from the heart to say, *Christ is All, and All in Comparison of Him is Nothing.*

1. Its the first word that the infant can speak, and this it can and doth speak at its first renewed Birth and Conversion. This *self-denial* the first Lesson then taught in the School of Christ. *The voice of the Crier in the Wilderness* that first proclaimed Christ, blasted as so much *withering grass* all the *glory of the Creature*. *Jer. 22. 17. Isa. 40. 6.* That eye and heart that (as the Prophet speaks) before was not, but for *Covetousness*, &c. is now so unmoveably fixt on Christ, that then at least it overlooks all else, and eyeth him only.

— *ipsum ipsum cupido tantum spectare vacavit.*

As *Statius* of himself, when invited to *Domitians* Feast. It was not his rich furniture or costly provisions, but himself only that his eye pored on. That was the Poets flattery to a *Domitian* ; but this is a true Converts real respect to Christ.

However it is with any of us now (and I know not why after our more acquaintance with Christ we should less love him) I am

sure if any of us ever savingly knew him, there was once a time, and that was in *the day of our espousals* and Conversion, before we came fully to enjoy him, that we then above all did most highly value him. One drop of his blood; one smile of his Countenance was then worth a thousand Worlds. It was then, that as in the entrance into *Canaan*. *Joshua did hang up all those Kings before the Sun*. *Josh. 10. 26.* so we all Competitors with Christ before him *the sun of righteousness*; lostiest thoughts, pleasingest lusts, choicest contentments were mortified for part in a dying Saviour. And, as *Elisha* when *1. King. 19. 20.* (upon a Call) he followed *Elijah*, and *Matthew*, Christ, *they left all*, its said in both places that they then *made a feast*: but it was a *Luke 5. 27, 28.* Funeral and a Marriage Feast in one: so, as *Sanctius* applieth it, *29.* when we are married to Christ, we are dead to the World.

2. And so much the more it is, or (at least) should be in after more full and glorious enlargements, upon communion with Christ the *new-born babe* that upon hungering and thirsting hath once tasted that God is gracious, more gladly layeth aside all else, and then Christ *to the Believer* is indeed *precious*. *1. Pet. 2. 1. 2, 3, 7.* What are all the *treasures of the World* to those *unsearchable Riches* which we there find in Christ? what dull, insipid, sour stuff are all the Earths sweets to the least taste of the sweetness of Christ in peace of Conscience, and joy of the Holy Ghost? *most glorious and unspeakable*? All the glazing light of the Worlds splendor is meer darkness to the least warm bright beam darted into our Souls from *the sun of righteousness*.

3. Or in case upon our playing the wantons in that Sun-shine, we be before we are aware gotten into the gloomy shade of some uncomfortable *desertion*, Christs worth is most sadly felt and seen in the dark, and our want of sensible enjoyment of it. With what a sad weeping eye doth the poor *Israelite* look on the *brazen Serpent*, when the fiery *Serpent* hath stung him. *Truly light is sweet, and its a pleasant thing to behold the Sun*: but especially to the Prisoner, when now cast into the dark Dungeon; and the sick man (though he then hath but a weak head) can best judge of the worth of ease, sleep, health, when he lieth restless on the *bed of languishing*, and the deserted Spouse when looking besides all else so sadly, asketh, *But saw you him whom my soul loveth?* as plainly tells you at what rates she would again recover her now lost beloveds presence and Company. Now, if ever, with *Paul* in the Text she *accounts all loss, and dung, that she may gain Christ*.



And there's great Reason why a Believer should so account always, if we consider what Christ and all that is in the World are in themselves and to us, and what faith is, and what estimate it makes of both. I must but only name particulars.

John 1. 16.

Col. 1. 19.

1. All the Worlds enjoyments are in themselves (and so the more we experiment them the more we find them to be) *lying*, yea *vexations vanities* (as one said) the *matter* of them Nothing, and the *form* a *lie*. But do you all think, and let them that have had most and longest experience say, *Is there not fulness in Christ?* And is not a *full Fountain* better than a *broken Cistern*.

Pro. 11. 4.

2. They cannot supply all our wants and necessities, and least of all our greatest, and never less than when we are in most need. In death they fail us, and in a *day* of anguish and *wrath* instead of relieving they often most vex and wound us. But Christ is *All unto All*. Col. 3. 11. The *Root and Branch*. Isa. 11. 1. 10. Revel. 22. 16. The *morning Star and Sun*. *Murus & antemurale; Prora & Puppis, all in all*; and therefore in Scripture expressed by all things that in all kinds are most desirable and eminent. *As the looking towards the Temple* which was (as I said) a type of Christ, was a remedy against all maladies. 1 King. 8. against *plague, famine, v. 37, 38. war. v. 33, 44*. So Christs Robe is large enough to cover all our nakedness, and the Plaster of his blood able to heal all our wounds: heart wounds and those that are most deadly; and can take the fire of Gods wrath out of them. He is a precious Diamond that shines and sparkles in the darkest night: a Cordial that can fetch us again out of deadliest swoon, and which in death it self can make *our heart live*.

Psal. 17. 14.

3. As they cannot supply all our necessities, which are many and great, so much less all our faculties and appetites which often are far greater. A beast may have a *belly full*. But its he who is *greater than our hearts* that can afford an *heart full* of satisfaction. Its true, that the more the Worldling takes in of the World, and the more a Believer receives from Christ, they both of them still thirst for more. But yet so far as Christ floweth in to the one, so far he filleth and satisfieth, whereas the more the other drinketh in of the World, the more he is filled with *wind and emptiness*; and from thence it is that the *hydropick* thirsts yet the more: when you have shewn a Worldling all that the World can afford, he, as unsatisfied, still, asks, *who will shew us any good?* and so, like the Bee flutters from one flower to another. But let a Christian be shewn the glory of Christ, he sets up his rest, faith with Peter.

Let us here pitch a Tabernacle, nay make it our mansion, for it's good to be here. Christ by being born at Bethlehem Ephrata, in those two words tells you, what fruitfulness is in him, and how good an House he keeps to your full satisfaction.

4. Add hereunto, that whatever poor little faint content it be which they may sometimes afford, or rather we take in them for the present, yet it will *not last long*, (it would loath and weary us if it should, and therefore one half of every four and twenty hours God allots to the night, in which we rest our minds and senses wearied with the cloying surfeit of the most delightful object, wherewith the foregoing day presented us) to be sure it will not last *always*. The Tow lighted and presently extinguished with this said, *sic transit gloria mundi*, at the Popes Inauguration, is a good Memento. *μνησθῆναι τὸ χῆμα*, 1 Cor. 7. 31. are two very diminutive words, but yet do very greatly express what poor sleight and fleeting things this World and all the Contentments thereof are; but a *fashion*, but a *noise*, but a *shadow* whilst they last --- *Stat magni nominis umbra*. *Vanity even when consistent*. *Psal. 39. 5*. But the worst is, the shadow will not stand still, but proveth *שָׁמַיִם וְאֶרֶץ* *Psal. 102. 11. a shadow that declineth; a fashion that passeth away, the noise ceaseth*; the sandy foundation sinketh, the grass of it self withereth, if not before cut down. But Blessed be God that *his word endureth for ever*, that Jesus Christ is that *אֵלֶּיךָ* *Prov. 8. 21. solid and substantial for the present, and over and besides, yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever. Hebr. 13. 8. A Precious tried Corner-stone, יָסוֹד יָסוֹד, founded, founded, a sure foundation. Isa. 28. 16. And it's to be taken notice of* *Psal. 102. 25, 26, 27.* how that sixteenth verse is brought in as it were in a parenthesis, between the fifteenth and seventeenth, in which is threatned the over-flowing and washing away of all other high Towers and *refuges of lies*, to which is opposed this unmoveable foundation of this *rock of ages*, (that stone before whom the *Iron and Brass, Silver and Gold*, the most solid and massy mettals are but as the *light chaff of the Summer*, --- *threshing-floor*, *Dan. 2. 35.*) the Lord Jesus, who insateth us in those *sure mercies of David*, *Isa. 55. 3. invests us with that durable clothing, and riches and righteousness, Isa. 23. 18. Prov. 8. 18. which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and so they do not wax old or decay of themselves, nor can any thief break through or steal, that we may be stript of them by any others violent hand. Πάλαμ' ἡ λαοεργαγὴ τὴν ἀρετὴν*, said *Stilpo. Rom. 8. 38, 39.* For τὴν ἀρετὴν the Christian writes, τὴν χεῖρην, and so makes both

## The Fourth SERMON

Jer. 18. 14.

the sense and sentence more compleat and perfect. And then (as the Prophet querieth) *will a man leave the snow of Lebanon that cometh from the rock of the field, or shall these קרים נורים, these cool flowing (ever-flowing) waters be forsaken?* Let others sit down by their fading Brooks: but let me ever drink in *πνευματικῆς ἀπολύθισης πόλεως* of that ever following Rock, 1 Cor. 10. 4. which (as the Chaldee Paraphrase saith) did climb up the Hills, and run down into the Valleys, and accompanied Israel then, and doth as much for the Israel of God still all along our wilderness-wandering here, till we be at last filled with *Canaans milk and honey* in Heaven.

Psal. 17. 14.  
73. 3, 4, &c.

5. That we should judge to be of more worth than an All-Wise and a most merciful God and Father bestoweth on his best friends, and that as their *portion* to live on. But are all the best of the Worlds enjoyments such? which Scripture and experience frequently teach us are the portion of the greatest Strangers, and his worst Enemies: which a *Cain* and a *Judas* may have with Gods Curse here, and (with the *rich man* in the Gospel) fry in Hell for ever when he and they are gone. But whatever such gifts the *Sons of the Concubines* may have, Christ is the only true *heirs portion*. His *precious elect ones* only have bequeathed unto them this *Corner-stone elect and precious*, as their inheritance and portion, to pay their Debts, to live on, and therefore to be stood for: whilst for this outward trash they either are denied them, or if they enjoy them, have them only cast in as an *auctarium*, or over-weight above the bargain. *Matth. 6. 33.*

Ecclef. 5. 13.

6. That is the best good which makes the possessors of it such. Now although in the Worlds perverse dialect Riches are called *Goods*, and rich men *good men*: yet not only *Solomons*, but even their own experience plainly convinceth them that they are often *the worse for them*, even for the *outward man*, but to be sure never a whit the better for the *inward man*; in point of true worth as base and sordid as any, and for matter of inward peace and satisfaction oftentimes more vexed and unquiet than those that conflict with greatest wants and necessities.

But how good is our God in Christ! who is both *ἀγαθός*; and *Psalm. 119. 68. ἀγαθοποιός*, is good and doth good; and makes all those good whom he bestoweth Christ upon, by him alone quieting their minds, rejoicing their hearts, enriching, ennobling their Souls, as the *Diamond* doth the ring it is set in, making them *wise unto salvation*: (without whom all our wit and learning unmortified is but

but like quick-silver not killed, which poisoneth rather than doth any good) Gracious, spiritual, heavenly; in a word, like himself, holy here, and happy hereafter. And shall Christ and the World then ever come in comparison or competition?

7. Especially, seeing he hath done and indured more for us, than all the whole World either would or could; satisfied Divine Justice, pacified revenging wrath, reconciled God, purchased Heaven: and what could all the wealth of the World have done to any one of these, which in a day of distress cannot ease one pain of body, or pang of Conscience? And shall these then be named the same day with our Saviour?

As he said, will the Son of Jesse give you *etc.*  
1 Sam. 22. 7.

8. He hath valued us more than himself, preferred our ease and peace before his own, *for our sakes became poor, that we by him might be made rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. *that great rock in a weary land*, Isa. 32. 2. that intercepted the scorching Suns beams, that we might with the more refreshment sit in the cool shade. I may not suspect, you will be so unworthily ingrateful. I appeal to your ingenuity. Hath Christ thus valued us above himself? and can we do less than prize him above all?

9. And yet this the rather, because the World generally is so prodigiously unthankful, that Christ, whose *visage once was marr'd more than any man's*, Isa. 52. 14. is to this day slighted more than any thing else. This was *the stone which the builders once rejected*. Psal. 118. 22. And so still, whilst we are building our Babels of Riches, Honour, and Preferment upon the Earth, and find that this stone will not square with those buildings, we chuse rather to reject him than ruine them. Some more moderate deal with Christ, as Boaz his Kinsman with Ruth, would be content to have her, but not upon such terms as to mar their inheritance. Others more profane and malicious, will kill the Son that they may have the inheritance, do not only slight him, but from their souls loath him, as Zeck. 11. 8. 38. as the Jews who out of scorn and despite would not vouchsafe so much as to name him, who yet hath a Name above all Names, and Judas like, will sell him for 30 pieces of silver (Matth. 26. 15.) no more than in the law was the *mulct* or price for the death of a Bond servant, Exod. 21. 32. a goodly price which such base spirits prize Christ at: either simply slighting him, or comparatively undervaluing him. The common mixed multitude (still, as of old) whilst they long for Onions and garlick, account this Heavenly Manna but light food: with those brutish Gadarens, preferring their Swine before their Saviour, thereby expressing them-

*Colloquia men-  
sal.*

themselves more Swinish than their Hogs, as in *Luthers fable*, when the Lion entertain'd the rest of the Beasts with dainties, the *swine* asked for *grains*: and, as he there adds, *what should the Cow do with Nutmegs?* Such husks and draff do such Brutes feed on: and so little do they desire, and so lightly esteem of *the bread of life*. The *Jews, Turks, Arrians, Socinians*, blasphemic Christ: Malicious, Profane, Worldly Sinners, sleight and oppose him, as he is King, Lawgiver, Judge, in his word, wayes, grace and servants.

You will say, this is a strange argument to perswade to prize Christ, who is so generally despised and undervalued; and yet such as with every true Christian heart is very cogent and effectual, whilst they thus argue: Though others sleight him, who know not the worth that is in him, yet this should not hinder me, who am acquainted with it, from honouring him. The *wise merchant* prizeth not the gem less because the Dunghil-cock undervalueth it, or the Scholar learning, because a fool derides it. For all *Michals* scoffs *David* by his *handmaids* was never the less *bad in honour*.  
2 Sam. 6. 22.

Nay because others undervalue Christ, we should the more highly prize him, that so we may vindicate his wrongs from a profane wicked world, that it may appear that Christ hath some *friends in the world* who will and dare appear for him, wherein he hath so many *Enemies* that rise up against him: And that others cannot have so *low*, as they have *high* thoughts of him; unless we mean *again to crucifie* him, if all his followers (as once) shall *forsake* him, and he have none to *plead for him*, before *men*, who alone *makes intercession for us to God*. To come to his own, *John* 1. 11. and for his own not to receive him most unnatural and unworthy. Let others therefore at their peril tread under foot the blood of the Covenant, *Hebr.* 10. 29. But therefore let every true Israelite who desireth the *destroying Angel to pass over*, strike the *Exod.* 12. 22. *Paschal Lambs blood on the side-posts and lintel*, and not on the threshold, so to be trampled on.

10. The last ground of this Doctrine and duty is taken from the Consideration of what Faith is and doth. In the former particulars, *Ex parte objecti* hath been presented Christs merit and worth, the Worlds meanness and baseness: and yet the Worldly mans perverse thought and estimate of both. Now, *Ex parte subiecti*, it's faith that *seeth all this*, that hath an Eye to see Christs beauty, and a tast to relish his sweetness, is a self-emptying grace,

casting out all else to make more room for Christ; hath sadly experimented the Worlds emptiness, and experimentally hath been convinced of Christs fulness. And therefore it cannot be but that to you who believe, and so far as you believe, *Christ is precious*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *Fides ementis est incrementum meritis*. It's faith that *Ambros.* setteth a due price and value on Christ, by reason of the sense it hath of its own want of him, and that worth and beauty which it seeth to be in him, so that when others *hide their face from him, and despise him, and the daughters of Jerusalem* less acquainted *Isa. 53. 3.* with him, ask the Spouse, *what is thy beloved more than another beloved?* She readily answers. -- *Nescis temeraria, nescis*. You *Can. 5. 9.* would not say so if you had mine Eye, for in it he is *white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousands.* It beholds his glory as the *V. 10.* glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth, *John 1. 14.* though besmeared and covered over with blood and spittle. So that with Paul in the Text she can from her heart say. *Yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung that I may win Christ.*

But (for Application) Can we say so and say truly? what Use. meaneth then the *bleating of the sheep?* to allude to 1 Sam. 15. 14.

I shall not here deal with open professed Enemies and despisers of him, as with *Jews*, who in their wretched Devotions, pray that *his name may rot and be blotted out from under heaven*; or with *Turks* that *blaspheme him*, or profane Worldlings who prefer every thing, the meanest outward contentment, yea the basest lust before him; as they who although they *believed*, would for outward respects *not profess him*; and that *Theodosius* which *Suidas* *John 12. 42.* tells the story of *ad vocem* 'Inferi'.

But with many visible Professors, who, though they say they highly prize him, yet when put to it are very hardly perswaded to deny any thing of their profit, ease, or other convenience for him, and stick not daily for the least half-penny gain to lie and cheat and so to dishonour him. Desperate madness! as he said, *Quantum pro quantillo!* Think what it is thou gettest, and what thou partest with, a ctest over again *Adams* sin; for an *apple* lovest thine interest in the *tree of life*. Thou wilt never live and thrive upon such gains: such miserable exchanges at last will certainly undo thee. It's not *χρυσία χαλκίων*, but Gold, and the only *pearl* of price for very *dung*, if thou wilt stand to Paul's estimate. *O fools, Psal. 94. 8.* when will ye be wise?

And when will even those that are *made wise to salvation* prove wiser than in their practice so to undervalue Christ as they do, whom in their deliberate judgment and inward frame of heart they value above all? To say and profess that he is so, and in a notional way so to judge of him, is an easy matter: but to say *Paul's* words of the Text with *Paul's* heart, out of an inward working sense and experience of Christ's incomparable worth; constantly to carry along with us such actual worthy thoughts of it as may have a real directing, over-powering influence into the general course of our lives, and our particular actions; that our lives may proclaim that *God only is exalted*, and *Christ Jesus is with us* indeed *above all*: this is a matter which the best of us may well blush, and our hearts bleed to think how exceedingly we fall short of. When *Peter* and other weak ones in time of persecution, to save their lives or liberties, deny him: when the Spouse so values her ease and rest, that she will not be at the pains to *rise up and open the door*; we, our sloath, so as not to set open the door of our hearts in more busie Meditations and more earnest Prayers to enjoy him: when he so little in our thoughts, raiseth no more Divine flames of love in our hearts, when his glory, and interest, and service is so over-looked and waved, neglected, betrayed in our lives.

*Isa. 2. 17.*

*2 Sam. 16. 17.*

*Isa. 23. 7.*

But (as he said) is *this thy kindness to thy friend*? Or (as they) is *this your joyous City*? Is a Christ so little heeded and thought upon, so much slighted and neglected our *joy and crown*, our *all and more than all*? Is outward ease, liberty, and advantage, *Dung*, that is so overprized? and *do we count all things loss* for that Christ for *whom we will lose nothing*? O sin! O shame! should we not blush at such disingenuity and unworthiness?

*Ulc 2.*

And let it shame us into more high and honourable valuations of Christ; and this really manifested when he and any thing else, though otherwise of never so much worth and esteem, shall come in competition; whilst we ever account it a *Barabbas*, a *Robber*, and a *Murderer*, that murders us and robs us of him by being made choice of and preferred before him. But God the Father hath written us a fairer Copy, who hath *highly exalted him*, and *given him a name above all names*, that in all things he might have the prebeminence. And therefore let him have it in our hearts. It's but reason that he should be advanced infinitely above *all that is on earth*, who himself is *ascended far above all heavens*. We know not what trials in this kind, in these dangerous times we may

*AB. 5. 31.*

*Phil. 2. 9.*

*Col. 1. 18.*

*Ulc 2. 17.*

*Eph. 4. 8.*

possibly be put upon. The Question may be which shall be preferred in our choice, *whether Christ or life?* It certainly will be, *whether Christ or a lust?* Happy therefore it will be, if in a way and practice of holy *Asceticke*, we now hit right in the one, that if God shall please to call us to it, we may not miss or fail in the other : But in both remember, that as it is Gods first Commandment in the Law, that we should have *no other Gods* in Competition with him, so it is the first Lesson in the Gospel that we should *deny our selves*, yea and comparatively *bate father and mother*, and *Luke 9. 23.* whatever is of dearest and highest esteem, yea and *ἀποδοῦναι* *Luke 14. 26.* to bid adieu, and utterly *to forsake all for him*; that whatever straits and losses we may meet with, yet if we can but escape as *Aeneas*, *with his father in his arms*, so we *with our Saviour in our bosoms* and Consciences, our *bulk* will not be *broke*; our portion (which we most prize, as that which we may live on) will remain whole : and so long we shall not be utterly undone. Indeed we shall if with other losses, yea with other greatest gains Christ should be lost. *Dona Dei, sine Deo*, will be *δῶκεν ἀδωκεν*. If we break with Christ for any thing, it will break us; It will at best prove but a dead Contentment, if not a deadly torment. But shall he please to enable us so to *undervalue* as to *lose* all for him; if he do not restore it again in kind, we may be sure in a better kind to find all in him; and this the sweeter because more immediately from the Fountain-head, and never so sweet as then, because we thereby plainly shew, that we in all those losses and sufferings would own and make him our God and Saviour; and therefore his goodness and faithfulness are engaged for him as plainly to shew (if not to all, yet) at least to our selves, that he is so.

O therefore, that our Eyes were enlightened to see his beauty, and our hearts raised up to a more answerable valuation of his unvaluable worth.

A more constant exercise of repentance would much conduce to it; whilst it sees sins ugliness it would help the Soul more to admire Christs beauty, and by feeling of its deadly bitterness, would make it more sensible of his incomparable sweetness.

But more lively and vigorous actings of faith in this kind are most useful; for it hath an eye seriously and busily viewing the vanity of the World, and the excellency of Christ, and so easily discerns the difference.

It's it that *tasts and seeth*, and (as *Jonathan* did) by *tasting seeth that God is good*.



It was an hand of faith that lifted up our Apostles Divine Soul here in the Text far above all earthly enjoyments, as high as Christ in Heaven, and there so fastens. *He believed, and therefore he thus speaks: Yea doubtless, and I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

## II. All Birth-right-Priviledges.

St. Maries,  
Novemb. 28.  
1658.

THE second sort of things which he doth particularly name and insist upon, and yet in compare with Christ, most gladly suffereth the loss of, are all his Birth-right-Priviledges, which (*verse 5.*) he thus expresseth,

*Circumcised the eighth day: of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews.*

And as we have it added 2 Cor. 11. 22.

*Of the seed of Abraham.*

Which let us a little consider in particular.

1. In that he saith he was *Circumcised*, he telleth us he was not born of the *uncircumcised* Gentiles.

2. And because *Circumcised the eighth day*, that he was not a Profelyte; for they were not circumcised the *eighth day*, as the Jews were: but when at any time they took upon them the Jewish Religion.

3. He further addeth, that he was of *the stock of Israel*, which was a further priviledge, and preferred him before the *Ishmaelites* and *Edomites*, who being of *Abrahams* and *Isaacs* Posterity, were *Circumcised*, as also the Sons of the Profelytes, which were *circumcised the eighth day*; yet were not born *Israelites*. And which added much to the *nobleness of his birth*, in which they much gloried; as being so born in *the right and holy line*, and of *the Church*, of which all *Jacobs* Children were, and therein his *blessing exceeded the blessings of his Progenitors*. Gen. 49. 26.

4. He addeth, of *the tribe of Benjamin*: in which he coucheth many Priviledges and Prerogatives, as the certainty of his being a true *Israelite*, when (according to their manner) he could design the particular Tribe he was of, as also the nobleness of his Parentage, in that being a *Benjamite* he was not born a Son of the Hand-maids as some of *Jacobs* Children were, but of *Rachel*, not only the lawful but also the beloved Wife, and of *Benjamin*, who as he was the *beloved of his Father*, Gen. 44. 20. so his Posterity

was *the beloved of God*, *Dent. 33. 12.* Of this Tribe also was *The Jasper*, *Saul* the first King of *Israel*, which that Tribe much gloried of, and *Benjamins* therefore used much to name their Children by his name, as our *stone*, is the first foundation. *Revel. 21.* Apostles Parents did him. 19.

Add to all this as the honour of this Tribe, that in the Schism and Apostasie of the ten Tribes from the House and Kingdom of *David* and from the Temple and Gods true worship, this Tribe was faithful and kept close to both.

Yea both *Jerusalem*, and the Temple, and *τὰ τῶν ἱερῶν*, fell within this Tribes lot (as *Chrysostom* observes) which made it to be *τὸ δακτυλίδιον μέγας* (as he speaks) in both Ecclesiastical and Political consideration more honourable.

And in these five particulars, *Benjamins* Mefs was five times as much as others.

And yet the Apostle stays not here, but adds

5. *An Hebrew of the Hebrews*, to express these yet further pre-eminences.

1. That both his Parents were of *Abrahams* race, and neither *Hammond*. of them of Strangers.

2. That he was not born of the Greek Jews, or Hellenists, that in their dispersions had forgotten their native Hebrew Language, and were unskillful in the Scripture: but that although he was *Estius in locum* born at *Tharshish*, yet that not being far from *Jerusalem*, and his *2 Cor. 11.* Father not having long before removed from *Jerusalem* thither, 22: and being himself a *Pharisee*, was ambitious to retain himself, and train up him his Son in the Hebrew Language: in which we have him preaching to the Jews, *Act. 21 40.* and so he did, *τὸν χαρακτῆρα ὁμῶν*, retain his native Character, as *Theophylact* expresseth it, and in that respect as such an Hebrew was more honoured, as on the contrary the Greek Jews were subject to be neglected. *Act. 6. 1.*

3. But especially this he adds to express the antiquity of descent; whilst he calls himself an *Hebrew of the Hebrews*, he riseth up as high as *Heber*, as some Interpreters conceive, but rather as high as *Abraham*, who in the Scripture is the first that we find called an *Hebrew*, *Gen. 14. 13.* of *עבר* from his passing over *Exbrates* into *Canaan*, and to an *Hebrew of the Hebrews* is much one with the seed of *Abraham*, of whom they most gloried that they were his Children, *John 8. 33, 39.* who was the Father of *Rom. 4. 12.* the faithful, as it were the head of the Covenant to whom it was first solemnly renewed and sealed, and settled in his Seed.

4. Which might be added as a fourth **Prerogative** couched in these words, namely the privilege of the Covenant and Promise, as *Aquinas* noteth not unfitly.

*Aquinas.* Now what a long Bede-roul, or large Charter of privileges and Prerogatives, and Titles of Honour, doth the Apostle here produce to check the proud boasting of the *false Apostles*, and to shew that he did not undervalue them out of envy of them that vaunted themselves of them because he had them not, as many oftentimes condemn those things in others, *quæ ipsi nesciunt vel non habent*, which themselves fall short of; But to shew that although in all these he did equal, or exceed them, yet as to his acceptance with God he had no confidence in them, but in *Christ* and *his righteousness* only.

We have here a large Field, in which in these many forementioned particulars we have scattered as many stalks with full ears, which for our use and benefit we may either gather up in some few maniples, or bind up in one sheaf and bundle thus.

*Dost.*

That it is not, 1. The *Antiquity*, nor 2. The *Nobility*, *Riches*, or *Greatness*, no nor 3. The *Piety* and *Godliness* of our Parents and Progenitors; or (if you will take it in one whole bundle) It's no *Birth-right Privileges* whatsoever, that without *Christ* can commend us to God for acceptance to Salvation.

This one contains the general sum of that whole verse, and those three the chief heads, which all the forementioned particulars may be referred to.

But before I particularly consider them, to prevent mistake, let me premise, that *Paul* did not here play the Leveller, and jumble Kings and Queens, and Peasants all together, as in a Chess-bag. God who *is not the God of confusion*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. would have us observe order: and when he makes a difference, would have us take notice of it. And so according to the three fore-mentioned particulars of the *ancientness*, *honourableness*, and *godliness* of mens Ancestors, his will is that they should be esteemed of accordingly.

So for the first, of *Antiquity*; *Ancient things*, 1 Chron. 4. 22. *ancient people*, Isa. 44. 7. *Nations*, Jer. 9. 15. *Landmarks*, Prov. 22. 28. *Rivers*, Judg. 5. 21. *Paths*, Jer. 18. 15. *Mountains*, Dent. 33. 15. are in Scripture spoken of with honour; as *ancient* and *honourable* are joined together, Isa. 9. 15. And truly if *ancient Monuments* be *venerable*, then to be the *Sons of ancient Kings* in Scripture-Phrase, Isa. 19. 11. may well go for a

Title of Honour, and not to be vilified by upstarts of yesterday.

And for the second, of *Noble and Honourable Parentage*; He that enjoineth Honour to whom Honour, Rom. 13. 7. and saith, that Land is blessed, whose King is the Sons of Nobles, Eccles. 10. 17. and when their Nobles are of themselves, Jer. 30. 21. and threatens it as a judgment when such are pulled down and taken away, Isa. 43. 14. 3. 3. when he makes the ancient and the honourable, the head, Isa. 9. 15. he would not have them rudely kicked and trampled upon by the inferiours foot of pride.

And for the third, of what unvaluable worth and use the godliness not only of our selves but of our Progenitors is, we shall by and by see more distinctly.

But notwithstanding the true estimate that is justly to be had of all these, and the improvement we should make of them, yet in the case of the Text, as to our acceptance with God and assurance of salvation, in comparison with Christ, especially if (as often it falls out) we bear up our selves upon them (as the Jews did, John. 8. 33.) so as not to submit to him, it's not all the privileges that in any kind we can have by our Parents in general, or their either Ancientness, Honourableness, or Godliness in particular that will bear us out; nor did the Apostle offend against the Laws of Heraldry, in this his Emblazonry, when he calls either his own or Parents riches and greatness *ζυγίαν λωσ*, or their Nobility *αὐθάλα*, or *dung*, as the Psalmist speaks of some Nobles, which perished as dung for the earth. Psal. 83. 10, 11.

For the first, The ancientness of his Pedegree, the Apostle expresses it when he saith, he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews. In which words he derives his Pedegree, *à primâ & antiquissimâ usq;* ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑβραίου ἑβραίου, as Beza glosseth it, and carrieth it up to the Spring-head; to Heber say some, at least to Abraham the Father of the faithful, and the fountain of Israel; and yet this his ancientry which the Jews so gloried of, in compare with Christ and his descent in the Golden line from him, he valueth at a very low rate, even as loss and dung. And so should we.

For although Antiquity be venerable, even *amosa querens*, an old fair-spread-Oak, that keeps the sap in it be a goodly sight, and therefore much more an old Disciple, as Mnason, Act 21. 16. especially if of an ancient family that in many descents hath continued in a constant succession of men of worth, and honour, and virtue, and piety, be most honourable in it self, and conveyeth down a greater blessing upon posterity, retaining the same sap

and verdure (as the stone, the higher it cometh down from the Mountain, descendeth with the greater force) yet, notwithstanding the greatest Antiquity of our Ancestors, if we cannot shew our descent from, and interest in the *Ancient of days, the everlasting Father*, and do not walk in the *old Commandments*, and in the *good old way, and ancient paths*, if we do not *put off the old man*, and be not *purged from our old sins, make bags that wax not old*, as the Scripture speaketh: I must tell you,

Dan. 7. 13.

Isa. 9. 6.

1 John 2. 7.

Jer. 6. 16. 18.

15.

Ephes. 4. 22.

Rom. 6. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 9. Luke 12. 33.

See Sir W. Raleigh, 1 Book  
Cap. 9. Sect 4.  
*Quid prodest,*  
*Pontice, longo*  
*sanguine cense*  
*ri?* Juvenal.  
Sat. 8.

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1. That the greatest ancientry, though you be *Atavis edisti Regibus*, is simply and abstractly in it self, as to intrinick value and personal worth, of very little avail. These *fumose imagines* (as Tully calleth them) will not much adorn thy house, much less set thee out of obscurity. And thy boasting of them will be but like disputes about *Evander's mother*, or those *old wives Fables* which the Apostle speaks of, 1 Tim. 4. 7. *ridiculous* in themselves, and will make thee so to every one that will tell thee, that the meanest man as well as Thou had the same *Adam* for his great *Grandfather*.

ἡ δὲ ἱστορία; Menand. Non domus antiqua, &c.

Psal. 49. 12.

Fuller.

2. If thy ancient Progenitors were good, it may be thou and the rest of their Posterity are shamefully degenerated, so long since that all good is forgotten; as often it falleth out, that man being in honour *abides not*. *Ab Augusto in Augustulum*, from the eminency of Ancestors worth, they may be sunk into the depth of all baseness, and then (as he saith) they are *highly descended* indeed, when tumbled down from that height of Progenitors Eminency into such depths of unworthiness, as old Trees use to bring forth, but little, small, and sower fruit, and at last none, and then die and prove an unpleasing sight, till last of all they be made *fuel for the fire*: or the ruins of an ancient Castle, which beget more *pity* than *veneration* in its beholders; and a Robe of honour transmitted from Father to Son, when once worn thread-bare and ragged, looks very poorly on his back that weareth it, whilst a plain home-spun new garment would be more handsome. The Scripture speaks of *retaining of honour*, as well as of gaining it, Prov. 11. 16. If therefore *Ancestors gained it*, their *posterity* must look to *retain it*, if they would be the better for it. For a worthless Son or begger to boast of his ancient extraction which he is a

shame

shame to, is a very ridiculous thing. It's but *veneranda rubigo*, venerable for antiquity, but debased, because now grown rusty. It's not bare *succession* in places and persons, unless also in life and doctrine, that is a mark of honour, to either Churches or particular men. Let not therefore the Papists prove *Veteratores* with the *Gibeonites*, to impose upon us with their *old Shoes*. No. These we now speak of deceive themselves, as though these *old rotten rags* would help to pull them out of the pit of disgrace here, or Hell hereafter, as those *Jer. 38. 11, 12.* did to draw *Jeremiab* out of the *Dungeon*.

3. But it may be those thy so Ancient Progenitors which thou *ἀπολαύεις τὸ* so boastest of were very bad. Thy *blood* of old was tainted: and *γίνος. Με-* then, to make much mention of them were to *take their unsavoury* *nand.* *Carcases* out of their *Graves*, which it would be more for thine and their honour if they were kept buried, and *former things* (as the Scripture speaks, though in another sense) were *not remembered.* *Isa. 43. 18.* And yet they will, if their posterity prove (as very oft they do) *beirs* more of their *sins* than of their *lands*: for some sins are oftentimes hereditary Diseases, entailed on a Family, and *run in a blood*, as amongst the Romans, some Families were prudent, sober, just in constant successions: others on the contrary foolish, proud, luxurious: And all the *Herods* in their several successions were crafty Foxes and Blood-suckers. And the longer such Blood runs, *See Briggins in* the more corrupt it groweth, proves an *old leprosie*, which was *Matth. 2. 1.* more incurable. *Levit. 13. 11.* Of some families as well as persons it may be said that they are *old in adulteries*, *Ezek. 23. 43.* retain the *old hatred* against the people of God, *Ezek. 25. 15.* which is the very venom of the *old serpent*, which the older, the ranker *Revel. 12. 9.* it groweth: and such a *stain* in our *blood* is not to be washed out but by the *blood of Christ*. And therefore when it may be said to such as *Isa. 43. 27.* *Thy first Father hath sinned*, instead of glorying in being born of such ancient Parents, they had need rather to pray with the Psalmist, *O remember not against us, עוֹנוֹת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ* *Psal. 79. 8.* *former iniquities*, or (as it is in the margin, and as *A. Ezra.* and *Kimshi* render it) of those that were before us. For

4. (Which may yet help more to prick this swollen bladder) God may visit the iniquities of forefathers upon their Children to many generations. *Exod. 20. 5. Levit. 26. 39, 40. Numb. 14. 18. Deut. 5. 9. Isa. 14. 21. Jer. 32. 18.* Nor can *Antiquity* prescribe with *Some of old!* God for immunity, who spared not the old world, *2 Pet. 2. 5.* but *ordained to destruction.* prepared *Tophet* of old and that for the King, *Isa. 30. 33.* who *Jude 4.*

*Si quis paterni vitii nascitur haeres, nascitur & pana.* threatens to bring down into the pit the people of old time, *Ezek.* 26. 20. and to measure both theirs and their forefather's former works into their bosoms. *Isa.* 65. 7. And the sore the older it hath been, the more incurable it hath grown, and the Debt the longer it hath been on the score, with the multiplied interest of it, is likely to fall the heavier on them who at last pay for it; as a great old House, the longer it hath stood, cometh down more suddenly, and the fall thereof is great; as it hath been observed, that the ruins of some great ancient families have proved the more eminently deplorable, and according to the Proverb, *they get an old House on their heads*. Thus first the Ancientry of our Progenitors is not to be relied on.

2. Nobility and Greatness. Nor secondly their Nobility, Riches, or any other outward greatness. This the Apostle toucheth upon well-nigh in all the fore-mentioned particulars.

Of Paul's, see *Perer's Discut.*  
1. *1<sup>st</sup> Rom.*

Of the stock of Israel, and so of the right line. Of the Tribe of Benjamin, not of the Handmaid, but of the lawful Wife, and of the Royal Tribe, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and so of the seed of Abraham, who (his servant said) was rich and great, *Gen.* 24. 34. and the Children of Heth acknowledged him to be a Prince of God, or a mighty Prince amongst them. *Gen.* 23. 6.

And yet again all this our Apostle accounts as loss and dung in comparison of Christ. And so again should we. For though this may somewhat difference us amongst men, yet as to Christ and Salvation it giveth us no precedency. One Hill here on Earth may be higher than another; yet as to their nearness to Heaven, there is no considerable difference. All the Saints sit about Christ in circulo. *Revel.* 4. 4. As to this none are nearer to him than another; where there is neither Greek nor Jew, *Gal.* 3. 28. *Col.* 3. 11.

1. Whereas our interest in Christ is amongst those sure mercies of David, of which none can develt us, on his head his Crown flourisheth, and can never be blasted. The Nobility and Greatness which we have by birth from our Ancestors, we hold but by the courtesy of the Times. When they frown and the wheel turns, *טָא דאָו נאַלן*, and you may see Servants on Horseback, and Princes lackinging it on foot. *Eccles.* 10. 7. And the taller such Cedars grow, the more exposed to be storm'd and blown down. How often of Nobles especially do we read that they have been brought down? *Isa.* 43. 14. Nabum 3. 18. bound in chains, *Psal.* 149. 8. Led Captive, *Jer.* 27. 20. Slain, *Jer.* 39. 6. Famished, *Isa.* 5. 13.

*Jer. 14. 3.* Thus we see *man being in honour abideth not*: and *Psal. 49. 12.* therefore seeing this *Glory* (as the Prophet saith) is so ready to *fly away as a Bird*, how much better is *my Christ*, who will be sure *Hof. 9. 11.* to abide with me for ever?

But you will say a Pearl is a Pearl though trod down in the dirt; and a noble spirit or family may hold its own, and continue truly noble under all outward abasement.

True. But then consider,

2. Secondly, That, *Not many mighty, not many noble are called.*  
*1 Cor. 1. 26.* That true worth is not always found in those that in the Worlds ordinary Nomenclature are called *Nobles* and *Gentlemen*. One of this latter rank of ours very lately hath very piously bewailed their debauchery, that they had put off not only the *Gentle*, but the *Man*; for which he feareth in our late Wars the storm hath most heavily and eminently lighted on that rank and order. I like not to play the Critick in God's Judgments on others: but it were well they on whom they fall would observe them. Nor is this the distemper of our times only, for of old we find the Prophet, *Jer. 5. 4, 5.* complaining, that when he found all amiss in the inferiour rank and said, *I will get me to the great men and speak to them*, as hoping something more worthy and noble in them, he found that of all others *they had altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds*, as *Psal. 2. 2, 3.* they were the *Kings and Rulers* that said, *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their Cords from us*; (as some now profanely say, *what is a Gentleman but his pleasure*?) So *Scechem* is said to be more honourable than all the house of his father, *Gen. 34. 19.* and yet guilty of a rape. And they were the *Elders and Nobles of Naboth's City*, who *1 King. 21. 8.* out of fear and base compliance with *Jezabel's* wicked Commands acted his murder; as the *Nobles of Tekoab's* necks were too fine and tender to *put them to the work of the Lord*, *Nehem. 3. 5.* --- Now sin ever debaseth when ever it prevailleth, is a reproach to any people, saith *Solomon*: and so to any family or person how great soever. *Ephraim* the royal Tribe exalteth himself in *Israel*; but *5. 9.* when he offended in *Baal*, he died. *Reuben*, as the first-born, was *Hof. 13. 1.* the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, but because he *Gen. 49. 3, 4.* defiled his Fathers Bed, he must not excel, and so he was devided of his dignity, his primogeniture translated to *Judab*, and in part to *Levi* who was taken into his stead of first-born, and his double portion bestowed upon *Josiph*; and that Tribe set not on the right hand but on the left, not upon *Mount Gerizim* to bless, but on *Ebal*

Mr. Mosely in his *Quæres & Responses*.



for the inferior and less desirable office to *curse*. *Dent.* 27. 13. For *Naaman* to be said that he was a *great man and an honourable*, and yet to have it added, *but he was a Leper*, 2 *King.* 5. 1. that marr'd all. And so still to be in the rank of *Nobles*, and *Gentles*, and yet defiled with a worse *leprosie* of *Pride*, *Cruelty*, *Luxury*, and the like; as it *stains the blood*, so it may well *prick the bladder*. With how much more right might the *Bereans* be said to be *more noble*, *Act.* 17. 11. and *Jabez* to be *more honourable than his Brethren*, 1 *Chron.* 4. 9. who (as the next verse sheweth) was *more devout* and *religious*! and how more noble is it to be a *ves- sel of honour* of Gods making! To be of the *Blood-Royal* of *Heaven*, *Brethren of Christ* the Son of God, the *Lord of glory*, to *have the honour that comes of God*, to be partakers of his righteousness and grace which truly ennobleth the Soul that hath it, as *Hierom* said of *Paula*, that she was *nobilior sanctitate quam genere*! The *Heathen Poet* could say, *Nobilitas sola atq; unica virtus*. *Christ* (I am sure) made *Bethlehem*, that in it self (*Micah* 5. 2.) was amongst the *least*, not to be the *least among the Princes of Judah*, (*Matth.* 2. 6.) because he was *born in it*; and the more he will do to any of us if he be *born in our hearts*. And *such honour have all the Saints*. And therefore saving to all their *Civil Titles* and *Privileges*, we may say (as he did) those that are truly godly are in a *spiritual* and so a *truer sence*, the truly *Right Honourable*. So I find in *Scripture* the *devout* stiled *Honourable*, *Act.* 13. 50. and *holiness* and *righteousness* often joined with *honour*, as making such truly *honourable*; because God hath undertaken it, that *they which honour him shall be honoured*. 1 *Sam.* 2. 30.

3. But thirdly, Though inward worth may be conjoined with outward dignity in Progenitors, yet that is not always entailed on and transmitted to Posterity. However the outward trappings may. Indeed the Sun seeth not a more glorious sight than is Greatness and Goodness continued in a Family from Father to Son to many Generations. When *primo avulso non deficit alter*, *Aureus & simili frondefcit virga metallo*. But the true Nobility of Parents is not *thine* unless thou *imitate* it. And that often doth not hold, that *fortes creantur fortibus*. Children are not always like their Parents, especially in their worth and virtues, but prove wofully degenerate; and then, for them that were *brought up in scarlet* (in this kind) to *embrace Dungbills*; for Children of Parents of greatest worth and honour to betake themselves to base manners and practices, is greatest baseness; which very much dishonours

Rom. 9. 21.

2 Tim. 2. 20.

Epist. 7.

Juvenal. Satyr. 8.

ὁ μὲν γὰρ  
ἰδὼν ἐν γυναικὶ  
ἑμὸν ἀνὴρ.  
Euripid. ἐν δὲ  
τῇ μὲν ἐν γυναικὶ  
ἐμὸν ἀνὴρ.  
Ἰδα. Phaleu.

Deut. 26. 19.

Exod. 28. 2.

Isa. 58. 13.

1 Thess. 4. 4.

Prov. 21. 21.

Aenead. 6.

ἐν γυναικὶ κα-  
λὸν μὲν ἀλλὰ  
περὶ γυναικὶ  
καλὸν. Plut.  
περὶ παιδ.

Lam. 4. 5.

dishonours their Parents, and themselves more : which (were Scripture silent) the light of Nature in Heathens crieth shame of.

*Quam te Iherfite similem.* --- for Achilles his Son to be like *Iherfites*, how unfightly did they account it ! And the Greek Tragedian will call him that is unjust, base, though he had one better than Jupiter for his Grandfather. And when a degenerate Son of a valiant Captain, asked of *Antigonus* his Fathers pay, he returned him this answer, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ἀνδραγαθίας ἢ πατρὸς μισθῶμι, that he rewarded not Parents but personal worth. Thou who challengest thy noble Parents esteem, imitate their virtues, and nobody will grudge or envy it. Otherwise the Poet \* will tell thee that the Horse though of a generous breed, if he prove a Jade, instead of richer trappings must expect the Cart-gear, or Pack-saddle. If thou beest sick and poor, art thou the healthier or wealthier because thy Parents were rich and healthy, and not rather even therefore the more miserable ? And therefore whilst thou art vicious, canst thou think because thy Ancestors were virtuous, that thou art therefore the better man, or not rather the more unworthily degenerate ? Let *Socrates* in this instruct thee, that we judge not of the goodness of Corn from the field in which it groweth, but from its own intrinsic goodness ; nor must thou judge of thy true worth by thy extraction, but thine own personal worth, which only can truly innoble thee.

But this particular of Ancestors Nobility is much akin to the former of their Amiquity, and both of them come in the rank of those *βιωτικά*, or outward worldly excellencies and advantages which in the former head we had largely spoken to.

And therefore I pass on to the third Birth-right-Privilege here specified, and that is being born of Godly Parents. For this also is contained in all the former expressions.

*Circumcised the eighth day*, and therefore not a Proselyte born of a Stranger.

*Of the stock of Israel*, who prevailed with God, was of the holy line, and all his Children of the Church and Children of promise.

*Of the Tribe of Benjamin, beloved of God and of his Father*, and whose posterity kept close to God and his worship, when the ten Tribes fell off to Idolatry.

*An Hebrew of the Hebrews* ; If meant of the Seed of Heber, he also kept close to God, and joined not with others in the attempt to scale Heaven by *Babels* height ; or if *Abraham*, he was the

*Juven. Satyr. 8.*

ὁ δὲ δίκαιος  
καὶ ἀμύμονος  
πατρὸς ἱερὸς  
μισθῶμι, δυσ-  
γυνὸς ἀνὰ  
δοκῆν. Eurip.

Παῖσι γὰρ  
καλῶς τὸ δὸ  
καλλίστον, ὅστις  
ἐκ παλαιοῦ  
χρηστὴ γυνὴς,  
οἷς ταῦτ' ἔλθῃ  
τοῖς τοκῆσι  
τῆς τῆς πύ-  
της. Eurip.

\* *Juvenal. Sa-  
tyr. 8. tritoq;  
trabant epirhe-  
dia collo, &c.*

ἐκ ἐκ τῷ καλ-  
λίῳ πατρὶ,  
ἀλλὰ τὸν ἱε-  
ροῦ πατρὸς  
τῆς πύ-  
της.

3. Godliness  
of Parents.

*head of the Covenant, and the father of the faithful; and so his seed the seed of promise.*

And yet even all this also he *accounts loss and dung* in comparison with *Christ*. — And so should we do, though we could vie it with *Paul* in regard of a long *series* of most *godly Progenitors*.

Not but that this in it self (especially if duly improved) is a great blessing, and highly to be valued, above being born Sons of Kings and Emperours. For *unfeigned faith* to dwell in a *Grand-mother Lois*, and to descend to the mother *Eunice*, and so by descent to come to Child and Grandchild *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. how happy and honourable! Great are the Blessings (if not hindered in the descent) which come down from godly Parents (by means of their Institution, Prayers, and Covenant) to their succeeding posterity.

רשע 17  
רשע 17  
בן צדיק  
See M. Ben.  
Israel Concil. q.  
43. in Gen.

1. Oft-times outward blessings and prosperity. *Ishmael* and *Esaue* came by their greatness, the *fatness of the earth*, and *dew of Heaven* by this Title, *Gen.* 17. 20. 27. 39. as we after find it again and again signally expressed, that both *Abijam*, 1 *King.* 15. 4. and *Jeboram*, 2 *Chron.* 21. 7. had peace and establishment for their Fore-father *David's* sake and Covenant, as the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* escaped the better for *Lots* sake, *Deut.* 2. 9, 37. and *Solomon* for *David's* sake, 1 *Kings* 11. 12, 13, 32, 34. Godly Parents do not usually leave their Children Beggars, if they prove not Prodigals, *Psal.* 37. 25. I have been young, &c.

Ephes. 2. 13.

2. *Right to God's Ordinances*. When the Covenant was once made with *Abraham*, *Ishmael* his Son though by the Bondwoman had the *seal* of it stamp't upon him in *Circumcision*, *Gen.* 17. 4. 23. and *Peter* inferreth the like for *Baptism* from this *promise* made to them and their Children, *Act.* 2. 38, 39. and not only to them *Jews*, but to us *Gentiles* that were *afar off*, but *now are made near by the blood of Christ*, and the *seed of Abraham*, *Gal.* 3. 29. and in their stead *grafted into the same Olive* to partake of the like privileges, *Rom.* 11. 17. and as they were federally *boly* by reason of their *Root*, v. 16. so in the like kind the same Apostle saith, *our Children are boly*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. and (as to this) to have no more privilege than the Children of *Pagans*, is the Anabaptists liberality: But most unworthy is he of this choice blessing that doth not highly value it, and accordingly improve it. For,

3. By this right to the Ordinances and means of grace we come to have a fair advantage, and are set in a nearer proximity. *Christ* said to the young man (probably born of Religious Parents, and

vertuously educated) that he was *not far from the Kingdom of God*, Mark 12. 34. Such (as the impotent people of old) are set in Christs walk, and are thereby in a fair way to gain healing by it, *non indigni qui vocentur ad fidem*, as Ambrose (a little too boldly) in Rom. 11. 16. expresseth it. And if to be *near to a Curse* be so sad, Hebr. 6. 8. then such a nearer probability of grace should be esteemed and improved as a great blessing by all wise men, who even in point of Worldly advantage, usually do highly value their very possibilities.

4. Children of godly Parents, if through Grace themselves also prove Godly, in the improvement of this Birth-right Privilege oft-times prove eminent as in other gifts, so in saving grace. Deum ampliora dona conferre non dubitandum est, saith P. Martyr. in Rom. 11. 16. Jacob upon this advantage saith, *his blessings exceeded the blessings of his Progenitors*. Gen. 49. 26. As the Snow-ball, the further it is rolled, the greater it groweth, and the Child set on his Fathers shoulders is lifted up higher and seeth further. How eminent in holiness did Timothy prove who had the advantage of a godly mother and Grandmother in a continued succession? Observation of what we may find in this kind frequent in our days, would make this good. But the story of the people of Israel, and what the Psalmist saith, Psal. 87. 4, 5. puts it out of question, that whereas of *Rabab, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, and Esbiopia* it was said, *Behold* (as being almost a wonder) that *this man*, i. e. some one single man of note and eminency, *Rara avis in terris*, was born there, as one *Anacharsis* in *Scythia*: yet of *Zion, of Israel* it might be said, *וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׂרָאֵל*, man and man, *this and that man*, i. e. very many men, *multi pietate, doctrinâ, ingenio, rerum bellicarum gloriâ, aliisq; virtutibus insignes* (as Muis glosseth it) were born there: That little spot of ground where then God planted his Church, and so where there was a Godly seed of Godly Parents, affording more eminent men for holiness and many other noble accomplishments for their proportion than all the whole World besides; And that not for the goodness of the air there, (as the Jews Fable, that *Aer terre Israelis sapientem reddit*) for the air of that Country is the same still, but we find it not producing any such thing now: But because the spirit of God breathed there then, and so many Godly men and Parents breathed in their holy Prayers, Conferences, and Counsels, by which (through the blessing of God) their Children and Posterity came to be so nobly and heroically spirited with that *רוּחַ נְרִיבָה*, that *πνεῦμα ἡγεμονικόν*, which

*Spiritus principalis.*

*Spiritus amplior.*

which David prayeth for, *Psal.* 51. 12. and that *רוח רצון*; that *רוח רצון מעשר*, that *singular spirit*, which Daniel was induced with. *Dan.* 5. 12.

5. I do not insist on that which may be added, *viz.* the *salvation* of the Children of godly Parents dying Infants: of whom, (leaving others to God) we piously believe, that they are *wrapped up in the bundle of life* by vertue of Gods Covenant with their Parents to be *their God*, and the *God of their Seed*, till they live to reject that Covenant.

6. Or if they live longer, and very long in a sinful way, yet Godly Parents, Covenant and Prayers may at last reach them and recover them. *Gods Covenant endureth to a thousand generations*; *Psal.* 105. 8. and that is longer than the World will last. He *measur-eth for ever*, as the former part of the verse expresseth it. And this in a constant succession from *Father to Son*. *Exod.* 20. 6.

The Prayers, Faith, and Covenant of a godly Parent recover-eth, and proveth efficacious in two very unlikely Cases.

*Etlic. grad.*

1. When it seemeth (and in part is) interrupted by the inter-vening of some degenerate person in the line, as in *Dauids*; after a *Jehoshaphat*, a *Jehoram*, and after an *Hezekiah*, a *Manasseh*; &c. Then, as *Picolominus* saith of *Honour* in such case of *inter-cision*, it passeth over *per saltum*, so the Covenant *leapeth* over such an *unworthy person*, and recovers it self in those after-*succeed-ing*, as the river dam'd up in some place, either swelleth over, or creeps about, and then runs in its former Channel, and so the *godly Grandfathers Covenant*, though *broken off* in the *ungodly Son*, recovereth it self in the *Grandechild*, as *Hezekiah* in a *Josiah*, and *Rom.* 11. though the Jews have been broken off for many hun-dred years, yet because of God's Covenant, made several 1000. of years since (the Apostle makes account) will recover them to-ward the end of the World. And that leads to the

*Rom.* 11. 28.

2. That this efficacy of recovery it hath a long long while af-ter the Godly Parents are dead and gone, as *Abraham's* before-mentioned some thousands of years after his Death. And so, as I said, *Abijam* and *Jehoram* had the benefit of *Dauids* Covenant, though he long before deceased.

So among  
Heathens, E-  
paminondas

And therefore although it be a great comfort to godly Parents to see their Children *cloathed* with their graces before their death, as *Aaron* did *Elexzer* his Son, *Numb.* 20. 26. yet if not, the case is was wont to say, that he reaped this as a special fruit of his own vertues and praises, *quod earum spectatores haberet parentes*, as *Isa.* 29. 23: as *L. de Dieu* reads it.

not desperate, but there's life at root, as *Job* expresseth it, *Cap.* 14: 7, 8, 9. to which I only allude.

In these and the like particulars very many and great are the Blessings that come to Children from godly Parents, were it their Covenant only if duly improved : and it is the great sin of some Children that it is not improved at all, and of the best, that it is not more than usually it is. God, I am sure, hath much respect to it in his bestowing of mercy. *I will for their sakes remember the Covenant of their Ancestors, Levit. 26. 45.* And they in those former times (who were older and wiser) in all their wants and straits, quickned their Prayers and Faith by it, whilst still and upon all occasions, *The God of their Fathers*, they were still thinking and speaking of, and pleading and having recourse to *Gen. 31. 5, 42, 53. 32. 9. 46. 3. 49. 25.*

But notwithstanding all this (to return to my purpose) as in Gods Covenant with *Abraham* to be a God to him and his seed *Christ* was included, and principally intended, *Gal. 3. 16.* so in the best Parents Covenant conveyed to their Children, if *Christ* be left out the entail is cut off, and all this cometh to nothing. What is it to be the *Sons of the best men*, if we be not also the *Sons of God*, which we are only in and by *Christ*? so that in compare with him, and as to our justification and acceptance with God, we may, nay should with *Paul*, count even this happy privilege also loss and dung. For

1. **T**His being born of most godly Parents doth not free us from *St. Maries* that original guilt and sin which is conveyed to us from *April. 10. 1659.* our first Parents. *David* under the Law, though he could say he was the *Son of Gods Handmaid*, confesseth himself born in sin. *Psal. 51. 5.* And *Paul* under the Gospel saith, *we are by nature born Children of wrath as well as others. Ephes. 2. 3.* Our next best Progenitors cannot cut off this sad old intail of our first great Grandfather. The winnowed Corn brings forth that which springeth from it with the husk, and the circumcised Parent begets his Son with his foreskin, yea and with natural sinful defilement, which was signified by it.

2. Nor doth it infuse or propagate positive holiness. Their begetting of Children is an Act of Nature, but holiness is from Grace. It's *Christ the Everlasting Father*, who in this sense of his own good will begets us, *James 1. 18.* *P. Martyr* conceiveth that for the Godly Parents sake, God may do much to their Children,

*i. Rom. 11. 16.* at least in a tendency hereto, *ut ad fidem adducantur, & donis spiritus sancti instruantur.* And I deny it not: but yet so as that he there confesseth that they do not propagate grace with nature, but *in* rather. Such a propagation of holiness had been by the first Covenant in the first Adam if he had stood; but in the second Covenant it's not so derived by Parents, but infused by Christ (the second Adam) immediately from himself. So that although it be sometimes called the holy seed: yet that's meant of federal holiness, or of the former advantages to true holiness, not of any necessary or constant bestowing; much less of any natural propagating it to their posterity. (Though the mother was an elect Lady, yet it was only *ἐκ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς*, 3 John 1, 4. not all, but well that some of her Children walked in the truth) For,

*Mal. 2. 15.*

*Ija. 6. 13.*

3. Very often good mens Sons prove as bad as others: indeed sometimes very good, and it was Jacob's preeminence above his Progenitors, that all his Children were taken into the Church. But Josiah was a very good man too, and yet whereas he had but four Sons, 1 Chron. 3. 15. they all proved stark naught. A just man begets a robber and shedder of blood, Ezek. 18. 10. as we read Judg. 20. 16. there were seven hundred men left-handed of Benjamin, who had his name from the right hand. Upon which, one not more argutely than truly and piously, *Ita non raro scævole nascuntur à Benjamin dextræ filio*, and imitate them rather in their deformities and sins, than in their graces and beauties.

Of three of them, See 2 Chron. 36. of the fourth, See Jer. 22 Anonym. Annot. Cantabrigiæ.

*1 Sam. 2. 12.*

*Matth. 3. 7.*

4. Nay too often best mens Sons prove the very worst. Adam had a Cain, Noah, a Cham, Abraham an Ishmael, Isaac an Esau, Hezekiah a Manasseb, Elies Sons the Sons of Belial. Many of Davids Sons proved notoriously wicked, and the unworthy base Nabal, is 1 Sam. 25. 3. registred to have been of the most noble and generous Caleb's posterity. The Jews who claimed Abraham for their father, John 8. 33, 39. our Saviour calls a generation of vipers, and saith they were of their father the Devil, V. 44. *Nati de amico Dei Abraham, vitio suo facti sunt quasi filii Cham*, as Hierom saith on Jer. 2. 14. A sad truth! so notoriously known, that it came to be a Proverb, both with the Jews, *יין בן חמץ* *Acetum vini proles*, Wine begets Vinegar, and with the Greeks, *Ἡρώων τέκνα σήψαλα*, *Heroum filii noxæ*. And I with that our sad experience here in the University of many promising blossoms cankered in the bud, of very many godly mens Sons if not wofully debauched, yet much degenerated, did not prove this too true, and that the Papists had not such occasion to

condemn our *Ministers marriages* by reason of the frequent, abominable *miscarriages* of their *Children*, as of old the *seven Sons of Sceva* the chief of the Priests, proved *Vagabond Exorcists*, *Acts* 19. 13, 14. Thus *Corruptio optimi est pessima*: and best mens Sons prove oft the worst of Sinners, whilst pinning their faith on their Parents Sleeves, they do not only thereupon not accept of Christ, (as the Jews upon this account rejected him, because they were *Abraham's Seed*, *John* 8. 33.) but also think it will bear them out in their grossest impieties.

5. And as thus they are often most enormously *sinful*, so of all most extremely *miserable*.

1. For a Godly Parents Covenant will not in this secure and exempt their ungodly Children, when by their degenerateness they cut off the entail of those mercies which would otherwise follow upon it.

Not from *temporal* Judgments here. Sad is that word of such, that *they that found them devoured them*: and that, because *they Jer. 50. 7. had sinned against the Lord, the hope of their fathers*. Because God had been the hope of their Godly Fathers, therefore it made their wicked Childrens Case *desperate*. So that (as *Ezekiel* adds) even *Noah, Daniel* and *Job*, three men eminent for piety and for protracting or diverting of God's judgments from others, should not be able to *deliver either Sons or Daughters*. *Ezek. 14. 16, 20.*

Nor from *eternal* at the last day. And here Consider,

1. With what face wilt thou then look upon thy godly Parent, A sad last who wilt remember what Prayers he made for thee, what counsel meeting. and admonitions he gave thee, and what care every way he took about thee to keep thee from that *place of torment*, and all in vain? It was a piercing word of that *man of God* on his Death- *Mr. R. Bolton.* Bed which he charged his Children standing about him, that *they should not dare then to appear before him (much less before Christ) in an unregenerate Condition.*

2. Again, think what sinking over-whelming grief and con- A sadder last fusion it will be then as our Saviour said, to see *Abraham*, and Parting. *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, (and so your godly Parents and Friends) in the *Luke 13. 28. Kingdom of heaven*, and your selves thrust out, and so vast a gulf let between them that were by nature so nearly united. Parting of friends though but for a time, and for necessary and good occasions do now oft-times occasion tears, and at parting at death, or by some heavy outward judgment, very sad ones; when one is taken, and the other left, *Luke 17. 34.* though they be taken away to heaven, whither we have hope to follow after them. But



such a sad parting as this is, when we shall *go away into everlasting punishment*, and our godly Parents *into life eternal*, never, never, never to enjoy or see them more, unless it should be, as the *Rich man that saw Abraham afar off*, he himself being in torment. The thoughts of this should sink into our hearts now, else it will sink us into the very lowest depths of despair and Hell then. Unless,

And the close of all, saddest of all.

Prov. 1. 26.

2 Sam. 18. 33.

Use. 1.

3. This prove yet a lower, that those Godly Parents of thine, who whilst they did not *know whether God would have mercy on thee*, as *David* for his sick Child, 2 Sam. 12. 22. *fasted and prayed, and wept over thee*: when they see the issue, and the good will of God accomplished upon thee, they will then quietly acquiesce in it. Nay as then God will *laugh at thy destruction, and mock when thy fears then are come*; so that godly Woman when she had used all means to reclaim her rebellious Son, out of anguish of spirit broke out into this deep expression, *sinful wretch, I have used all means for thy good in vain: but look to it, I that have done all this sorrowing, if thou dost not amend, shall rejoice one day to see thee frying in hell*. A harsh word you will say, and it may be, not so safely imitable: but yet (they say) was blessed to bring home that Prodigal; and it may be to do as much to thee. This only I will say, that as *David's* fear of *Absalom's* sad Estate made him so sad at his death; so it was something yet that he *died lamented*, and that he had a Father to say, *O my Son Absalom, my Son, my Son Absalom*. But this is yet more sad, that if thou beest once lodged in Hell, thou must not then expect from most tender-hearted Godly Parents their Prayers, no not so much as their pity for thee in that everlasting undoing misery. I dare not say they will or can rejoice in it: but their wills being wholly melted into Gods, I am sure they will fully acquiesce in it, yea and rejoice in that glory which he shall gain by thy misery, from which not their Covenant, but Christ and the free mercy of God in him only can deliver thee. And therefore even that (as the Apostle here doth) is to be *accounted loss and dung* in comparison of him.

For Application. From what hath been spoken on this argument, Let such as are born of Godly Parents, and so have the excellent advantage of this Birth-right-Privilege, First, very much bless God for it, as having thereby an interest in those many fore-named Blessings wrapped up in it. And if *Plato* thanked *Nature* that he was born an *Athenian* and not a *Ibeban*, how much more cause have we to bless the God of Nature and Grace too, that we are born *Christians*, not *Pagans*, especially if of *true and godly*

*Christian Parents*, from whose Covenant we have right to and interest in so many happy privileges; that the Patent was granted not only to our Parents persons, but to descend to their posterity, *for a great while to come*; which David speaks of as an unparalleled mercy, 2 Sam. 7. 18, 19.

First, I say, *Bless God for it.*

2. Take heed of *neglecting, rejecting, and so forfeiting it*, as it's said of them, 2 King. 17. 15. that they *rejected the Covenant which God made with their fathers*, as Esau sold his birth-right for Gen. 25. 33, *a mess of pottage*, which the Holy Ghost calls a *despising* of it; and 34. the Apostle counts him a *profane person* for doing it, Hebr. 12. 16. and we shall be as *profane* if upon less straits than he was then in, for the satisfying of our vainer sinful lusts we part with such a *blessing*, for he that *sold the birth-right lost also the blessing*. But Naboth was more natural, who upon no terms, no not to gratifie a King, would *give away the inheritance of his fathers*. And Solomon would have us more ingenuous when he gives this in charge, 1 King. 21. 3. *Thy own friend, and thy fathers friend forsake not*, Prov. 27. 10. much less *our own God, and the God of our Fathers, and our Fathers Covenant forsake not, reject not.*

3. But as a very precious talent let us make much use of it and improve it, as a portion and stock left us by our Parents, which, if we be good husbands with, we may grow rich of.

The Ordinances which by their Covenant we have right to, should not fail to be improved to our greater edification, which it's expected we that have the advantage of godly Parents, private Catechising, instruction and Prayers should the more thrive by.

And the more (as we shewed) it *setteth us in Christ's walk*, the nearer we should be to the *saving touch of Christ's garment*; and therefore even whilst we are not as yet converted, we should be less disorderly, nor so far run away from Christ in sinful courses, as others are, but *nearer to the Kingdom of God*.

And when brought home and converted, God expects such should be more eminent in grace and serviceableness, as having besides their own care and endeavour, and the immediate workings of Gods Spirit upon their own hearts, the happy advantage of their godly Parents Faith, Prayer, direction, encouragement and Covenant; as the Boat or Vessel, which besides the wind filling its sail, is helped on with the Rowers Oars, useth to go much the faster. Godly Eunice her Son, and Lois her Grand-Child,

should prove a *Timothy*, a grown man when young. If thy *Father* were good, thou shouldst be better: but if thy *Grandfather* too, it's expected that thou shouldst be eminently godly. He that can say not only, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant*, but also the *Son of thy Hand-maid*, should more fully pay his vows, and the vows of his Parents, *Psal.* 116. 16, 18. and ever, when tempted to sin, should think he beareth his godly Mother saying to him, as *Bathsheba* to her Son *Solomon*; *what my Son, and what the Son of my vows! Give not thou thy strength unto women, &c.* *Prov.* 31. 2, 3. *It is not for Kings, O Lemuel, to drink Wine, &c.* *What thou, a Son of such a Parent, a son of so many Vows and Prayers, for thee to devote thy self to sin and destruction? Sure whatever others may do, or will do, it's not for thee to be wicked and profane, nay it's not for thee to come lagging behind, but to outgo others who hast such helps and furtherances to make greater speed and progress in the ways of godliness. It's not for thee to make it thy aim and pitch, only to be and do as others, which would be not only ungracious, but even unnatural, to desire rather to be like your neighbours, than your Parents, whose examples and other helps should advance you to a more eminent degree of holiness. In these and the like kinds our godly Parents Covenant should be improved. But*

Fourthly, (Which is more to my present purpose.) This Covenant is not wholly and only to be relied on, and rested in. Indeed *Israel* was brought low, because they relied not on the Lord God of their Fathers, 2 *Chron.* 13. 18. We are to rely on the God of our Fathers, but not only on our fathers, and their Covenant (to think, that because our Parents were good, therefore we shall do well) for this without further care of our selves will fail us; as the Jews who built upon this, that they had *Abraham* to their father, notwithstanding they were sunk into the depths of sin, whilst our Saviour said, they were of their father the Devil; as the rich man was sunk into the depths of Hell, though he had *Father Abraham* much in his mouth, as you have him thrice repeating it. *Luke* 16. 24, 27, 30. And therefore it was that our Saviour (to prevent or meet with this fallacy and delusion) expressly saith, *Matth.* 3. 9. *Think not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our Father, as though that would be able to bear them out, for he adds, that God even of these stones could raise up children unto Abraham: so that he had no need of them to maintain an holy seed or Church upon the Earth, as was afterward made evident in the Jews rejection, God taking the out-cast Gentiles into their room, as God*

*John* 8. 39.

*V.* 44.

to this day upon their rejecting of him, casts off the posterity of many godly Parents, and yet proves not Childless, adopting other Families into that relation which otherwise were most unlikely. Indeed the Child whilst an infant is carried in the Parents or Nurses Arms, but yet when grown up must go on its own legs : and so whatever the *faith* of *Parents* may do for the benefit and salvation of their Children that die *infants*, yet if they live to ripen Age, every one must *live by his own faith*, *Hab. 2. 4.* Otherwise to live, and to be Children of disobedience, and yet for our justification to say, *we have Abraham to our father*, is but a piece of ridiculous and blasphemous non-sense : which foolish Plea, when the Jews made use of to our Saviour, he fully answers and refutes by replying, *if ye were Abraham's Children, you would do the works of Abraham : but now you seek to kill me; this did not Abraham*, *John 8. 39, 40.* and the like may be still said to such vain pretenders, *you bear your selves much upon this, that you are such godly Parents Children : but if you be their right-born Children, where are their graces ?* as he said, --- *אַל' אַתָּה אֶבְרָהָם*, *Sophoc.* *τίμῳ ἔστ' ἂν ἔσθ' ἄνθρωπος*, if you are of the holy seed, shew so much by your holy lives. You drink and drab, live vainly and scandalously, and even hate the ways of God (for such often prove bitterest Enemies of Godliness.) But this did not Abraham; this did not your godly Father or Mother, as God said to *Jebojakim*, *Jer. 22. 15, 16, 17.* *thy Father Josiah did judgment and justice, he judged the cause of the poor and needy : but thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy Covetousness, &c.*

*At non ille satum quo te mentiris Achilles,  
Talis in hoste fuit Priamo, &c.*

You that bear the Name, and plead the Covenant of such a Father, are proud, and filthy, and profane ; but remember, he your Father whom you so boast of, and rely on, was not so : he loved those ways and people which you hate, and abhorred those courses which you delight in. And then as the Prophet *Ezekiel* said, *Cap. 33. 25, 26.* *ye lift up your eyes to your Idols, and shed blood, and shall ye possess the land ? ye stand upon your sword and work abomination, and shall ye possess the land ?* so here. You profane and reject the Covenant of your Fathers, and shall you possess and enjoy the benefit and blessing of it ? No, as the same Prophet said to the same degenerated people, that God would bring the

worst of the heathen, and they should possess their Houses, *Exek. 7. 24.* so even the worst of other Families and Kinreds shall rather be brought into the bond and blessing of the Covenant, than you that have so wickedly and perversly broken it.

And therefore take and follow these few other directions if ever you would come to have the benefit and blessing of it.

1. Labour to follow them in all their holy walkings, and to be more like them in their *graces*, than in *faces* and *persons*. If you would have their  *blessings*, walk in their  *blessed ways*; that as they survive in you, so their  *grace* may in yours, and stand up in their  *steads* to do their  *deeds*, as to enjoy their  *estates and inheritances*, as God promised to David,  *There shall not fail thee a*

*Si tamen, Jun.*  
*ita tamen, Vulg.*

*Cap. 9. 4, 6.*

*man to sit on the throne*, but it is  *Only if*, or  *So that thy Children take heed to their way, and walk before me, as thou hast walked before me*, *1 King. 8. 25.* It is with an  *If* and an  *Only, If*, as it was said to Solomon also in the following Chapter. And therefore, as David in his solemn-blessing and charge given to Solomon, said,  *And thou Solomon my Son, know the God of thy Fathers and serve him*, *1 Chron. 28. 9.* so let it be said to the Children of all Godly Parents,  *Ob know and serve the God of your Fathers* as they did, as ever you would enjoy the blessing that they had.

Indeed to imitate our Parents we are naturally prone, and in some Cases, especially in their sins, perversly set upon.  *As is the mother, so is the daughter*, *Exek. 16. 44.* and if  *Uzziab will go into the Temple*, *2 Chron. 26. 16.*  *Abaz his Grand-child will shut up the doors of it*, *Chap. 28. 24.* Here we account it a piece of our piety to our Parents to imitate their impieties; as they  *Jer. 44. 17.* resolvedly said,  *we will certainly do as we have done, we and our fathers*; and how foolish soever Ancestors have been, the Psalmist saith,  *their posterity will approve their sayings*, *Psal. 49. 13.*

\* *Ezra. 9. 7.*

*Jer. 44. 9.*

Which continuing, \* and repeating, and perpetuating of their sins, is but  *Cham-like* to uncover their nakedness, to deface our Ancestors Statues, and  *mingere in patrios cineres*; and dishonours them whom the law of God commands us to  *honour*.

But withall is the readiest way to bring down the heaviest judgment on our selves, whilst we stand up in their steads to fill up the  *measure of their sins*, and so to augment the fierce anger of the Lord,  *Numb. 32. 14.* whilst he visits on us both  *our own and our fathers sins together*, as our Saviour said,  *that on you may come all the*

*Jer. 3. 25.*

*righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zecbarias, Matth. 23. 35. or as Nehemiah said to the Nobles of Judah, Did not your Fathers thus? and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this City, and yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel, Cap. 13. 18.*

And therefore as in this worle kind of imitation, the Scripture forbids us to be like them (*be not like your fathers, 2 Chron. 30. Psal. 78. 8. 7, 8. Zecbar. 1. 4. Ezek. 20. 18.*) and reproveth and condemneth us when we be, *Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredoms after their abominations? Ezek. 20. 30.* and therefore if we would not add fewel to the fire, and more enkindle and increase the heat of Gods wrath, we should imitate their graces, but not their sins, (as it's signanter said of *Jotham, 2 Chron. 27. 2. that he did right in the sight of the Lord according as his father Uziah did: Howbeit he entred not into the Temple of the Lord, as he did. He followed him in a fair way, but baulk'd him in a foul.*) we should what we can (as it were) revoke and reform their sins, by a quite other, yea contrary course, as the *son that shall surely live, seeth all his fathers sins, and considereth, and doeth not the like, Ezek. 18. 14, 17.* So good *Asa removed all the Idols that his father had made; and Nehemiah could say, that his Predecessors the former Governours, had done evil so and so; But he adds, But so did not I because of the fear of God, Nehem. 5. 15.* It's not in their sins that we should imitate them; as the *Sons of Korah*, not joining with their father in his sin, escaped that woful pit-fall (*Numb. 16. 32, 33. with Numb. 26. 10, 11.*) and were *Levites* in Gods service. But in their Graces and well-doings, and herein labour to expresse them *to the life*, that when they are *dead*, they may yet *live in thee*. Here above all things, take heed of degenerating. That the *Heathens* should complain,

*Ætas Parentum peior avis tulit nos nequiores, &c.* that of the *Egyptians* it should be said, *another King arose, that knew not Joseph, Exod. 1. 8.* is a less wonder: but that of the *people of God* it should be said, *Judg. 2. 10, 17. their fathers obey'd the Commandments of the Lord, but their Children did not so; how sad!* if after godly Parents and Ancestors (it may be) in some successions are gone to their rest, such prodigals should arise as not only to waste all that estate which they had gathered, but also quite extinguish all that lustre of holiness which they had so long continued; to have *the head of gold*, and *the feet of clay*, although it expresse what degenerous successions there are in the World,

and

and as at this day we may see in many, both greater and meaner families amongst us, yet we must needs judge that they are very sad changes; when posterity proves so degenerate, that God may justly disinherit them, and Godly Parents not own them; as the Prophet speaks of *Abrahams not knowing* his degenerate posterity, *Isa. 63. 16.* as *Augustus* would not acknowledge *Julia* for his daughter, but accounted her rather as an *Imposthume* broken out of him; as on the contrary we read the effect of *John Baptist's Ministry* was to *turn the hearts of the fathers* (to whom he yet preached not) unto the Children (so as to own them as *γνήσιον*, legitimate and not spurious) when it was withall to *turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, viz.* in following them in their godly ways; *dum in id quod senserunt illi, consentiunt & isti.* Which therefore *Luke* rendreth by *turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, Luke 1. 17.*

Thus Godly Parents and Children should mutually reflect a lustre upon one another, as *Abner's* name may be taken both ways, either *Pater Lucerna*, or *Lucerna Patris*, either the father was the lamp or brightness of the Son, or the Son the brightness of the Father. Indeed both should be mutually according to that of *Solomon*, *Prov. 17. 6.* *Childrens Children are the Crown of old men, and the glory of Children are their Fathers:* but that is, if both be virtuous and gracious, for else Blessed *Hezekiah* was in no sort dignified by his wicked father *Ahaz*, nor *Ahaz* any whit graced by his godly Son *Hezekiah*. But therefore it (in part) was (as some observe) that *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, are usually named together as mutually reflecting a lustre on each other, the Root giving life and sap and verdure to the branches, and the flourishing branches back again, commending the lively root, that it may be said *they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their off-spring with them*, or, as it is *Isa. 59. 21.* *the word and spirit of God may not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed from henceforth and for ever.* What a glorious resplendency is it when such bright beams from Father to Son, (as of *Basil's* Parents, that they were such, that if they had not had such blessed Children of themselves, they had been renowned, and their Children such, that if their Parents had not of themselves been so famous, yet they would have been most happy in so blessed an off-spring) what a glorious resplendency, I say, is it, when such bright beams from Father to Son and back again are thus mutually reflected! and when both are

conspicuous and eminent. How comely and glorious a sight is it to see *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, hand in hand, going up to the *Mount of God*, striving which should be foremost!

At least when there is a failure on the one part, greater care should be taken that the supply may be made up of the other, as that when the *Child is bad*, the *Parents* may be good, *ut ramorum sterilitatem radice fecunda compenset*, as *Hierom ad Demetriadem*, or as he elsewhere expresseth it, *ut quod in virgâ non poterat in radicibus demonstraret*: as in some plants in which the branches are useleſs, the root is of Sovereign uſe.

Or (which is nearer to my present purpose) when *Parents* are bad, the *Children* need be good to keep up the Family, *ut radicis amaritudinem dulcedo fructuum compenset*, as the same *Hierom* speaks in his Epistle to *Leta*, as in some plants, when the root is good for nothing, the fruit is admirable, both for Meat and Medicine, and as he there shews of *Albinus Leta's* Father, that by reason of his Childrens and Kinreds Piety, was himself a Candidate of Heaven, and adds, that he thought even *Jupiter* (the father of all Idolatries and impieties) might have believed in *Christ* if he had *ipsum Jovem* bad such Children and relations; as our happy experience hath sometimes found sinful Parents brought home to God by the Prayers and helps of their godly Children, and so they proved means of their spiritual birth, which were causes of their natural, at least have been a means to keep off judgment from them, and so bring honour to them, though they continued bad.

But if good, didadouble, yea multiply it, whilst they were multiplied Copies and Portraiture of their Parents Beauties, as *Tully* said of *Seneca Sulpicius*: *Nullum unquam monumentum Philippi. 9. clarius S. Sulpitius relinquere potuit quam effigiem morum suorum, virtutis, constantia, pietatis, ingenii filium*, the happiness of the Son being one great part of the blessedness of the Father, they being a part of their Parents, and as dear, nay often dearer to them than themselves. And therefore it is, that in Scripture as we find God cursed *Cham* in cursing his Son *Canaan*, *Gen. 9. 25.* so he is said to bless *Joseph* in blessing his Sons *Manasseh*, and *Ephraim*, *Gen. 48. 15, 16.* as elsewhere he is said to promise to give that to the Fathers, which he promised the Fathers should be received only by their Children, *Deut. 19. 9.* as *Gen. 46. 4.* God promiseth to bring up *Jacob* again into *Canaan* from *Egypt*, which he never was alive, and only when he was dead, but fully made good to his Posterity. And thus Children may bless their Parents, who



are wont to *ask their blessing*, and though I do not say *fully requite them* who were authors of their beings, yet they may pay this *tribute of honour* to them in imitating, and expressing, and equaling their virtues and goodness.

2. Nay they should labour, not only to *imitate and equal them*, but if it may be to *exceed them*.

Not in *sin*, as it's not only said of *Antiochus*, that he should do *that which his fathers had not done*, *Dan. 11. 24.* but also of *Israel*, that they did *worse than their fathers*, *Jer. 7. 26.* *corrupted themselves more than their fathers*, *Judg. 2. 19.* and above all that their fathers had done, as in the story both of *Israel* and *Judah*, and their Kings, as *Omri*, *worse than all that were before him*, *1 King. 16. 25.* and yet *Abah* that came after *worse than he*, *v. 30, 33.* as drawing down more to the dregs and like winter-ways growing deeper and deeper.

But thus to *add more sin* is only to *increase more wrath*, *Nebem. 13. 18.*

But I mean *exceeding them in grace and goodness*, as *Nazianzen* (*Orat. 20.*) saith of *St. Basil's father*, *παιὶς γὰρ πατρὶν ἀγατῆ παρὰ τῷ πατρὶς καλεῖσθαι μὲν τὸ πατρὶν ἔχειν*, *that however he exceeded all others, his Son only hindred him from being chief of all.* Nor is this *precedency* and going before the father contrary to the duty and *subjection* of a *Child*. We are not wont to be angry with our selves or others for desiring that *our Son may be a better man than his father*, as when *David's Servants* in his presence prayed that God would make *Solomon's Name better than his Name, and his throne greater than his*, we do not find he was displeased at the Prayer, but (it's said) he *bowed himself upon the bed*, *1 King. 1. 37, 47.* as saying *Amen* to it. Indeed *Elijah* (whether in humility I cannot say but I am sure he was in a passion when he said it) *Non sum melior patribus, I am not better than my fathers*, *1 King. 19. 4.* But I remember too that *Bernard* saith, *Recedant à me & à vobis qui dicunt, Nolumus esse meliores quàm patres.* It's but a profane modesty and slothful humility, more neglect of God than respect to our Parents, that when we have greater advantages we make not greater progresses, and being *set on their shoulders we do not see and reach further*, if we labour not to be more godly, that we may be more blessed, as *Jacob* saith, *his blessings exceeded the blessings of his Progenitors*, *Gen. 49. 26.* and as God promised his posterity, that in case they obeyed him he would do them good, and multiply them above their fathers, *Deut.*

Epist. 93.

30. 5. Your Parents that lay up and get Estates for you, and envy you not if you prove *richer* than they, will not take it as any *undutifulness* in you, nor *dishonour*, but a *glory* to them, if you *prove better than they*; and therefore in this at least labour to *exceed* them.

3. However make sure of Christ and interest in him, which the Text tells you is a *τὸ ὑπερέχον*, infinitely better in it self, and far more advantageous to you than all the relations you can bear to them; for if Children have this benefit by Godly Parents, that in a federal way, *if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so also are the branches*, Rom. 11. 16. then how much rather, and that in a saving way, if Christ be to us (by our implanting into him) both *First fruits* and *Root*, as he is said to be, 1 Cor. 15. 20, 23. and Revel. 22. 16. and the whole *Covenant*, Isa. 42. 6. And therefore if we must *leave father and mother to come to Christ*, then who or what should keep us from Christ when *we may with advantage enjoy both him and them*, the benefit both of his *Covenant* and theirs too, as the Prophet speaks, of *receiving their sisters*, Ezek. 16. 61. if they be godly, or in Case they be not, yet Christ will be able to supply that defect, that *when father and mother in this respect fail thee and cast thee off, yet then God in Christ may take thee up*, as David speaks, Psal. 27. 10. And so either ways, every way there is a blessing and matter of comfort to godly Children, whatever their Parents are.

If *godly*, they have all the former blessings of their *Covenant*, and Christ above all to sweeten and heighten them, without whom the Text tells us such birth-right-privileges as to *Salvation* profit nothing.

Or in Case Parents should be *ungodly*, yet if their Children be godly, one Christ may be more than all Parents, and prove *all* when they are or do *nothing*, but it may be what rather might *binder* than *further* them, as when the *father was an Amorite, and mother an Hittite*, when in our birth-bloud, he may say unto us *live*, Ezek. 16. 3, 4, 5, 6.

And when thou art deprived of any benefit by *their Covenant*, thou maist take hold of *Gods Covenant*, as upon this ground God comforteth the *Sons of the strangers* that feared they were utterly *separated from his people*, Isa. 56. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. And this may further comfort such; that (as the very Heathens have observed) It is more praise-worthy to be good when born of bad Parents,

ἀάδασι πάντοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ὑμῖν ἐπαινεῖν καὶ τυχεῖν τὸς ἐκ τῶν κα-

*Isocrat. Epist.  
ad Tim.*

Ἦσαν εὐδοκίμωνων γεγονότας ὡς τὰς ἐκ τῶν δυσκόλων καὶ χαλεπῶν, ἢ παρ' αὐτῶν μὴδὲν ὅμοιοι τοῖς γενομένοις ὄντες, and that although they want the benefit of a godly Parents Covenant, yet if they be the first godly of that line, they may in some sense be the *head of the Covenant*; and although they fall short of that happiness of *continuing the holy line* from their *Ancestors*, yet they may have the both happiness and honour to *begin it* to their *posterity*, as *Sostratus* and *Iphicrates* when upbraided by their mean descent and obscure Parentage, they return'd answer, they should rather be honoured and admired that they were the *first raisers of their Houses*, *ὅτι ἀπ' αὐτῶν τὸ γένος ἀρξεται*, as one of them said, and *ἀρξῶ τὸ γένος*, as the other, that they should first begin to ennoble their Kinred and Families, as *Abraham born of idolatrous Parents*, should himself prove the *father of the faithful*.

And indeed what matter both of honour, comfort, and thanksgiving is it to such! that

*Egregia est  
foles scelera  
nata parente.*

Not only for themselves they should first be so good when *Parents* before them were so bad, so beautiful when Children of such black Moors.

*Job 39. 14, 15,  
16.*

Thou (sure) hadst a watchful Eye, and a blessed helping-hand of an Heavenly Father, when thy natural Parents dealt with thee as the *Ostrich* with her young ones, (against which she is hardened as though they were not hers, leaving her Eggs in the Earth, and forgetting that the foot may crush them, and the wild beast break them :) did nothing to help thee, but (it may be) much to hinder thee: If thou thrive'st, Heaven sent thee a good Nurse and Benefactor, when Father or Mother did not bear thee up in their arms, but it may be did what they could to cast thee down to Hell.

But secondly matter of further comfort and praise, that it's not only so well with themselves, but that also by their means it may be better for others, even all their ensuing posterity: that God should of all their Lineage first own them, and then wrap up their posterity in their Covenant, and so an *Isaac* be bewed out of *Abraham*, as an *hard rock*, *Isa. 51. 1, 2.* and a *David* spring up out of *Jesse's* dry root, *Isa. 11. 1, 10.* especially if a *Christ* arise from both; that they who of themselves were so unworthy should be so accepted as to convey their Covenant-blessing to their Issue, and *Christ* be formed in their and their Childrens hearts, without whom (as we have now at large shewn) all birth-right-privileges signify and effect little as to salvation.

And thus much of this second sort of things which the Apostle

compares Christ with, and prefers him before them, viz. All Birth-right-Advantages.

**T**HE Third sort is, *All outward Church Privileges and enjoyment of Ordinances.* This the Apostle couched in that he said he was St. Maries, Septemb. 25. 1659.

*Of the stock of Israel who was a wrestler and prevailer with God in prayer.* And this was the Jews *πλεονεξία*, or advantage, that to them were committed the Oracles of God. Rom. 3. 1, 2. And

*Of the Tribe of Benjamin,* in which the Temple and Ark stood, where God's worship was solemnized, and in that he was

*An Hebrew of the Hebrews, or of the seed of Abraham,* who was a Prophet, Gen. 20. 7. and taught his family, Gen. 18. 19. and so they wanted not that Ordinance. This may be possibly couched in these expressions. But however it is plainly expressed in that of his being

*Circumcised the eighth day.* Now Circumcision was an Ordinance, their initiating Ordinance, from which therefore the rest of their pedagogy is, and they themselves are denominated, when they are called *the Circumcision*, by which they were distinguished from others, and which they very much gloried in (*An uncircumcised Philistine*, a term of reproach, but *Circumcision* a title of honour.) So that it was a choice, and chief, and prime Ordinance, and therefore here set in the head of all his excellencies, as being the prime; and being to him administred *on the eighth day*, so it was administred in the most regular and purest way; and so it holds out and signifieth chiefest and choicest Ordinances, and them most regularly and purely administred and enjoyed. And yet even this in point of justification and acceptance with God to Salvation, to Paul was but *loss and dung*; and so in the like case should be to us also.

Chiefest, choicest Ordinances, and most purely and regularly administred and enjoyed, however in themselves of eminent holiness and worth, and in their due improvement and use to us of unspeakable advantage, yet for our acceptance with God they are not to be relied on, or rested in, but Christ and his Righteousness only. Paul counts them *loss and dung* for any Confidence in them, and so willingly suffers their loss that he may gain Christ.

A truth (may some perhaps think) in it felt *wholsome* but scarce *Obj.* *seasonable* now to be urged, when Ordinances are by so many so much vilified, when the *Socinian* so much blancheth both the

*Ministry and Sacraments*, and so many *Enthusiasts* think themselves above *Ordinances*. Are they now at least to be lower'd by us when so unworthily trampled upon by others? Is not this on the one hand to *help the ungodly*? which was reprov'd in *Jehoshaphat*, and on the other, to *add affliction to the afflicted*; which God expresseth himself so highly displeased with, *Psal. 69. 26, 27.*

Sol.

I answer, God forbid that I should undervalue them at any time, especially when others so much slight them: But I take it to be no disparagement to the best persons or things to be placed in their own rank, or for best *Ordinances* to be set under Christ. And for the *time*, although some now pull them down too low, yet others wind them up too high; as the *Socinian* doctrinally takes too much from them, so the *Papist*, (whom at present we are as much in danger of) in his *opus operatum* gives too much to them: Nor doth the *Enthusiast* more vilify them, than the *ignorant carnal*, both *Protestant* and *Papist*, rest in them, and the outward enjoyment of them. All I shall here add, is, that this Truth (by Providence) lieth in my way, and therefore I may not well balk it, especially seeing the Text gives me occasion to treat as well of their positive worth in themselves and to us, as of their undervalue in comparison with Christ; for it being the Apostles intention to advance the worth and esteem of Christ by preferring him before other things, it was congruous to that design to compare him with, and prefer him before such as were of some, nay of greatest worth. For else, for him to have said that Christ was better than some of the meanest things, had been a very mean and low commendation, indeed a disparagement rather than a commendation; for that which is but a little bigger than the least, is almost next to nothing. They are therefore great things and greatly esteemed, which Christ is here preferred to, and amongst the rest before the best *Ordinances*; and therefore according to the true sense and series of the Apostles arguing here, if we would make it to be rational, and honourable for Christ.

I have two things incumbent on me.

1. To shew the true worth of *Ordinances*, and what answerable esteem we should have of them.
2. How much Christ exceeds them in true value, and should so much in our valuation, as that however otherwise we ought to value them, yet so as to *account them lost and dung* in point of justification, *in compare with him.*

1. The first, because they are here made but as a soil, the better

to set off the transcending beauty of Christ; I shall the less insist on.

However Ordinances are here supposed to be in themselves of great worth, and therefore by us to be highly valued, and that deservedly.

1. Because they are Gods Institutions, and therefore called *Ordinances*, as ordained by him: and therefore also it was that when our Saviour had instituted them, *Matth. 28. 19. go and teach and baptize*, he addeth, *v. 20. that he would, and that to the end of the world, have all observed that he had commanded, &c.* because he had commanded them. And if the *Rebabiters* did so adhere to their *fathers commands*, the several *Sects* of Philosophers to their *Masters Dictates*, and others to their *Institutes*, should it not shame us Christians to slight our Fathers, Our Lord God and Saviours Institutions? If he *who resisteth a civil Ordinance of God receiveth damnation, Rom. 13. 2.* then he who slights a *spiritual* and more *Divine Ordinance* will not go scot-free. Were we not too proud in over-valuing our own fancies and conceits, and too disingenuous and undutiful to slight that which we ought most highly to reverence; This only, that they are the *Institutions and Ordinances of our Sovereign Lord and dear Saviour*, might make way for their best esteem and welcome without any *Letters of recommendation*, because *his Ordinances*.

2. Because *ordained for all*, for the best, to be brought on and to be carried on to everlasting life by. No, saith the *Enthusiast*, either only for the Non-Age of the Law, in which they were to be taken heed to as *1. a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts, 2 Pet. 1. 19. then they shall no more teach every one his neighbour, &c. Jer. 31. 34. nor need they that any man should teach them, when they have an anointing which teacheth them all things, &c. 1 John 2. 27.* Or, if for any under the Gospel, only for Babes and Pronics who *have need of milk*, of such festukes in their hands, that *live by faith*, which must have the hand-hold of a word, or for darker times, or at most (as \* *Swenkfield* and \* *Saltmarsh* say) for the flesh, \* *Epist. Anno the outward and old man of a Christian*; which is to be dealt with *1529. by Preaching and Symbols*: But to the inward and new man, all \* *Free Grace, means and ordinances are annihilated, and he seeth God without* *pag. 150. Bright-Star, Cap. 11. 12.* whatever faith may require, yet under the Regimen of the Spirit no such need, as no need of Star-light when the Sun is up; as in the *New Jerusalem no Temple found, Rev. 21. 22. nor need of*

Sun

*Sun or Moon to shine in it, when the Glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, v. 23.*

In Comitibus  
1659.

This in a more full audience lately hath been discussed and determined, and therefore needeth less now to be said to it. Only (if you please) this

1. As to the difference between the time of the Law and the Gospel: It was indeed then darker than when under the Gospel the *day star was risen*: But, I pray, Remember, It *arose* in the *Ministry of the Gospel*, and therefore did not disannul it. And although not so great *need of teaching* now as they then had, and so in that comparative sense only the Prophet said *they should not teach one another*; yet (I hope) Christ under the Gospel appointed *Pastors and Teachers*, and them to continue teaching to the *end of the world*, till *we all come to a perfect man*, *Matth. 28. 20. Ephes. 4. 11, 12.*

2. Although some Gospel Times may be more illuminate and perfect than others, yet the Scripture Word and Ordinances are for the most perfect; as long as we *live by faith*, it must be by a *word*; and the Apostle intimates to us we shall *live here by faith* till in *heaven* we do by *vision*, *2 Cor. 5. 7.* And if by the *new Jerusalem* be meant Heaven, it's true *there* will be as *no Temple*, so *no Ordinances*. But if a more glorious Constitution of the Church upon Earth, *No Temple* signifieth no humane Constitutions, nor legal Ceremonies, no *Jewish Temple*, which they yet expect, but pure Divine Worship and Ordinances, which *Ezekiel* (according to the times he prophesied in) foretold and expressed by Temple-worship and Ordinances.

Chapters 40,  
41, &c.

3. And for Persons. Although in Gospel-times some may attain to a greater comparative perfection than others, yet when I read that the *Scriptures are able to make even the Man of God perfect*, I shall not aspire here to any higher perfection, I hope the most sublimare and perfect here will not (I am sure they should not) *be wise above what is written*, *1 Cor. 4. 6.* And whatever men talk of the *Regimen of the spirit*, the spirit of God himself hath fore-told and fore-prophesied (and that of best Gospel-Times) that *the Word and Spirit shall go together*, *Isa. 59. 21.* and although they that have received the Spirits Unction, need

2 *Tim. 3. 16.*

1 *John 2. 27.* *not that any should teach them, all's as, but as that anointing teacheth* (that is) they by the Spirit being enlightened and established in the Gospel-Truth (which they had heard from the beginning, v. 24.) that had been preached to them, they were antidoted

against the poisonous Doctrines of *Anti-Christ*s and *Seducers*, of which the Apostle there speaks (v. 18, 19, 22, 26.) So that they needed not theirs (no more than we that are by the Spirit rooted in written and preached Gospel-Truths, stand in need of *Enthusiasts*) contrary Doctrines or inspirations, yet not but that they still needed further illumination and confirmation by the Gospels dispensations. Else why should the Apostle in that very Epistle still further preach to them and instruct them? And (as *Beza* well observeth) He is so far from by those words annulling either Ministry or Ministers, that he could not well more highly commend them; in that he shews by the assistance of the Spirit and the Blessing of God upon them, their hearers were secured against all the Stratagems of Seducers, which we also might be if we kept close to such Ordinances.

So Bellarmin  
de verbo Dei  
lib. 3. cap. 30.

4. Which have their operation not only on the *outward and old man of a Christian*, but (as the Apostle saith, and Gods people by frequent and happy experience feel) reach the *Soul and Spirit*, *Hebr.* 4. 12. and *build the whole man up to an everlasting inheritance*, *Act.* 20. 32. It's well they will acknowledge an *old man* in them, so it seems there is some *flesh*, and they are not *all spirit*. But however it's by the *word* that we are *sanctified*, *John* 17. 17. and sanctification reacheth *soul and spirit* as well as *body*, *1 Thess.* 5. 23. This is and hath been the *good old way* in which the most eminent sober-hearted Christians have gone before us to heaven, far exceeding our high-flown sublimates in real godliness, who ever acknowledged *Gods Word and Ordinances*, not only *milk for Babes*, but *strong meat for strongest Christians*, and therefore should be highly prized, as being first of Gods own appointment, and that secondly for all, for the best, and

3. Thirdly, for *their good* and bettering. This God said of his *Commandments*, *Deut.* 10. 12. and it's true of all His Ordinances: whatever our sins make them, yet in themselves and Gods primary intention, they are Sovereignly useful for our good every way, whether as to all temporal or *spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus*, conveyed to us in the right use and improvement of them.

1. First as to temporal prosperity and security. The Ark going before led *Israel* into *Canaan* at first, *Josh.* 3. 6, 13. and it brought a blessing with it to *Obed Edoms House* afterward, *2 Sam.* 6. 11. and *David* hearing of such a blessing by it, rested not till by bringing it nearer to him he might have a part in it, v. 12. which he failed



failed not of; for *Psal. 132.* speaking of it, after the setting of it (in the beginning of the Psalm) you find all blessed and settled in the State (in the latter part of it) which telleth us that the right settlement of Gods Worship and Ordinances, is both first in-let into and after-establishment of our outward peace and security: as on the contrary, the unsettlement or removal of them sets open the Sluce, and pierceth the Bank that all outward judgments may come flowing in upon us, as *Jordans waters* did as soon as the *Priests feet were lifted up out of it, Josh. 4. 8.* so when Gods House lay wast, *וַיִּהְיֶה הַבַּיִת בְּרֵקֶה*, the word is, *Hagg. 1. 9.* it presently followeth in a conjugate word of the same root, *וַיִּקְרָא ה' אֶת הַדָּבָר*, that God called for a drought and desolation upon the land, *v. 11.* David considered this well, and therefore to prevent it you read thus of him, *2 Sam. 6. 1, 2.* Again David gathered Israel together to bring up the Ark of God to its place. That word *Again* relates to a former first gathering of them in the former Chapter to make him King, and so to settle the State, and thereby to fasten his Scaffold; but you see the very next meeting was to settle the Ark that he might be at his work, as it was afterward the very first work both of *Hezekiah* and *Josiah* to order the Temple, as the best means to settle the Kingdom. And therefore *Senacherib* took a very unfit time for his purpose to invade Judah in the days of *Hezekiah*, when it was (as it's remarkably expressed, *2 Chron. 32. 1.*) after the establishment of Gods house, for that so fastened the State, that he could not unsettle it. I confess it's very sad that we read of a quite contrary event of the like care of *Josiah*, *2 Chron. 35. 20.* that after he had prepared the Temple, *Pharaoh Necho* came up, and when *Josiah* would needs fight with him, he was slain by him: But this weakneth not the Truth I am now upon, for that was from his own wilfulness, and if a man will frowardly poison his wound, it nothing impairs the healing efficacy of the plaister, so that, That instance only holds forth this to us, that Gods Ordinances will not secure us from the danger of our own sins and frowardness, though they will from other mens malice: and therefore although a bloody *Joab* may be slain whilst he takes hold of the horns of the Altar, yet a more innocent David, even when Hosts of Enemies encamp against him, *Psal. 27. 2, 3.* takes Sanctuary in Gods Temple, *v. 4.* and there you find him as in a secret and safe Pavilion, *v. 5.* And if legal Ordinances proved so beneficial, it would be strange if Gospel-Ordinances should come behind them, and prove a less blessing when the Apostle

וַיִּסַּף עִיר.

2 Chron. 29. 3.  
and 34. 3.1 King. 2. 28.  
34.

Exod. 21. 14.

calls it *πλήρωμα βουλογίας*, the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, Rom. 15. 29. He could appeal to his Corinthians, that they had received damage by him in nothing. But when he com-<sup>a Cor. 7. 9.</sup> eth to the Romans with a full blessing, he makes account that he should be beneficial to them in all things, in temporals as well as spirituals. For although it suits best with the adult age of the Gospel to have our chief portion by it in spirituals; yet such is the bounty of our Saviour as to encourage and reward the kind entertainment of it with temporals: so that although very heavy outward judgments have often followed the preaching of it, which Heathens have observed and were wont to object against it, yet both *Austin* himself and *Orosius* his Scholar (whom he set on <sup>De Civit. l. 1.</sup> work to answer that Cavil and Blasphemy) have fully shewn that those outward judgments came not by mens having and enjoying, but their neglecting and abusing of such mercies; for otherwise it was an experienced truth, that *valles florent cum Evangelio*, and the Gospel of Peace, which holds forth the riches of Gods grace and bounty, were it but answerably received, would bring along with it (if we would but try God in this as *Mal. 3. 10.*) the increase and continuance of outward peace and plenty. But that is but wisdoms left-hand largesse in outward mercies.

2. But her Right Hand reacheth out better, even spiritual and eternal Blessings. And how should the Word and other Ordinances upon this account be valued, when they are the Golden Pipes that convey the Golden Oyl of light and life to the Church, the sancti-<sup>Zech. 4. 12.</sup> fied ordinary means and instruments of grace and salvation, the immortal seed that begets us, 1 Pet. 1. 23. James 1. 18. and faith in us, Rom. 10. 17. the milk and bread of life which seeds and strengthens us, Hebr. 5. 12. the highest cordial to revive us, Psal. 119. 92, 111, 143. in our first conversion, as God works in us in a moral way, the active instrument by which he persuades us, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and as a Physical agent he infuseth a principle of grace into us, a passive instrument (if I may so call it) *ad presentiam cuius*, he puts a new life into us, as he quickned *Lazarus* whilest he had him come out of his grave, John 11. 43, 44. as in the beginning there was light when God said, Let their be light, Gen. 1. 3. or as whilst Peter was speaking, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word, Act. 10. 44. and afterward it proves the word of his grace, which is able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, Act. 20. 32. in a word, the power of God to salvation, Rom. 1. 16.

Quest.

And must then *the Childrens bread* (these dainties) be *cast to Dogs*, whilst they are here called *σκύβαλα*? Must we, nay *May we* account these Ordinances as *lofs and dung*, which we have seen are so sovereignly and every way useful and beneficial?

Ans.

Not as in themselves; not, as they are the happy means of so much good to us, or the rich gifts of Gods distinguishing bounty, *Non fecit taliter omni Nationi, Psal. 147. 20.* It was the Πρώτος of that Πολύ καὶ πάντα τρόπον πλεονέχων, *the chief of that much every way advantage which the Jew had*, that to them were committed the Oracles of God, *Rom. 3. 1, 2.* a prime sign of Gods love, and therefore set first, *Dent. 33. 3. he loved his people*, and then it follows, *they sat (as Scholars) at his feet to receive of his word and his law was their inheritance, v. 4.* and therefore they

Numb. 21. 5.

1 Cor. 1. 21, 23.

are heavily distempered Souls which call this Heavenly *Manna* *light food*: right out mad that judicially account and call it *the foolishness of preaching*. Were these Ordinances of so little worth, ungodly men should not pay so dear for their neglect and abuse of them, as the *Asian* and other Eastern Churches in their present desolation, and *Capernaum* of whom Christ upon this account said, that *it will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for them, Matth. 11. 24.* Now it doth not consist with the Justice, at least with the sweetness of God, to take great forfeitures, or to inflict great punishments for small offences.

And were *Preaching* such *Foolishness*, why then are they who so much declaim against it such *fools* as so frequently after their fashion to *practise* it? By that it seemeth they have so much wit as to understand the usefulness of it, at least to uphold and increase their party, as the *Seekers* for that purpose will have their *Ecclesiam Conviventia*, as they call it. It's not *preaching* therefore, but *the preachers* that they are so much against, whom they would have to be none but themselves, who in this further most foully mistake, that they take their Cursing and railing to be the only Gospel-Preaching, than which nothing is more contrary to the spirit of the Gospel-Ordinances, therefore are not to be slighted, even *our Enemies being Judges*.

Moornbech in  
summa Controv.  
lib. 6. p. 429,  
430. &c. &  
in Apologia pro  
Ecclesia Chri-  
stiana, &c.

But on the contrary, to be desired, loved, attended upon, delighted in, improved and profited by. It will be a very guilty *taking of Gods Name in vain*, if when there is so much in them we gain nothing by them, carry away *empty vessels* from these *full wells of salvation*; as I might shew at large.

But that which suits most with my present purpose, and which Use. I shall make the Application of this part of my Discourse is, that they should be highly valued and honoured: First, Both in our esteem of them; And secondly, In our expectation of much blessing and benefit from them in our due use of them.

The first is our very high esteem and valuation of them, next under Christ and his Grace, (which these are means to interest us in) to be set in the highest rank of blessings.

1. For the enjoying of which we should part with the choicest outward Conveniencies (the hunger-starved man will give gold for bread) as the Priests and Levites, and others, who set their hearts to seek God, left all they had to come to the Temple at Jerusalem, like him that selleth all to buy the field, in which was the treasure, Matib. 13. 44. *2 Chron. 11. 14, 16.*

2. The enjoyment of which should counter-vail the greatest wants and losses, as the keeping of my treasure may bear out the casting-over-board my timber in a tempest, as bread of adversity and water of affliction was good fare as long as their eyes saw their teachers, Isa. 30. 20. *brown bread and the Gospel good cheer.*

3. The loss of which should be the greatest and most punishing loss, as starving, hunger, the greatest torment. This of the Soul more than that of the body. It was not only an Idolatrous Micah that cried he was undone when he had lost his Priest, and his Teraphim, Judg. 18. 24. but an holy David, that when in a barren wilderness cried out of a dry and thirsty land, especially in regard of his spiritual thirst, because he could not there see the power and glory of God as he had seen him in the sanctuary, Psal. 63. 1, 2. and there envieth the sparrow and the swallow for having a nearer approach than he could have to Gods Altar, Psal. 84. 3.

In other respects it was very sad with Israel: but amongst and above all, the taking of the Ark brake Elies neck, and his good daughter in law's heart, 1 Sam. 4. 17, 18, &c.

4. The want of which should imbitter our sweetest other contentments, as David though he had a Palace, yet whilst he had no Temple to go to, he had no heart to come into his house, nor go up into his bed, Psal. 132. 3, 4, 5. *Haud grata unquam futura mansio in domo, vel dormitatio in lecto,* his Palace could not content him, nor his Couch ease him; as they story it of R. Joseph, when for his great advantage he was urged to go to a place where there was no Synagogue, refused and excused himself, returning that of the Psalmist, *The Law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.* Psal. 119. 72.

5. For so (in the last place) the enjoyment of them should like Oil swim aloft, be accounted the highest and sweetest of all our other enjoyments, as the Psalmist expresseth it. For proffer and advantage, more to be desired than *gold*, than *fine gold*, and much of it; and so with the Apostle he saith, *Σύμμεναι*, he gives his vote for the value of it, *sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb*. Two words, and either of them singly in the Proverbs are used to express the Honey-comb, but both here put together by the Psalmist to express a double sweetness as of the live-honey flowing from the dropping Honey-comb, which of all is the sweetest; And so with the same Apostle he adds to his *σύμμεναι*, his *συνηδοναι*, whilst he accounts it his choicest pleasure and delight as well as his greatest profit and advantage, even the very end why he desired to live, that he might *vacare Deo*, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple, *Psal. 27. 4.* and therefore it was that he accounted a day in his Courts better than a thousand, *Psal. 84. 10.* *Etiā eā lege ut postridie moriar*, as *Mais* very well noteth upon the place, to be the Psalmists meaning, that but one days enjoying Communion with God in his Ordinances, though it were but one day and he should die the next, was more to him than a whole life without such a blessing. So highly should and do Gods people value Gods Ordinances in the enjoying of them and other mercies together. Especially upon the restoring of them after that their sins had deprived them of them. *The men of Beth-shemesh* were at their *Wheat-harvest*, and that of it self was a merry time: but it was their chief Harvest-joy when they saw the ark of God brought back to them, *1 Sam. 6. 13.* though through their undue entertainment of it (as I shall shew hereafter) their mirth was turned into mourning, and their harvest (as the Prophet speaketh) became a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow. And so afterward you may observe, how the Jews having in their Captivity learnt to know the worth of Ordinances by the want of them, as several Nations make their account of years from some high prized matter and occurrence, as the *Israelites* from *Abraham*, or their deliverance from *Egypt*, the *Greeks* from their *Olympiads*, the *Romans* *ab urbe condita*: So they from the restoring of Gods Ordinances. And so *Ezekiel* begins his Prophecy, *Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year*, &c. which very good *Junius Grotius*. Interpreters expound of the thirtieth year since the book of the law was found, and the Covenant thereupon renewed, and Gods worship restored by *Josiah* after the sad vastation, which had been

made by fore-going Kings, and especially by his Father *Manasseh*. Such a price did they then set on such a prime mercy; as afterward in *Judas Maccabens* his time, upon the dedication of the altar, which *Antiochus* had profaned they instituted their *synodus* [which *Castellio* (*qui ex Scriptura Ciceronem facit*, as \* *Matt. 10. 22.* *donat* faith of him) affectually translates *Removalia*] and which our Saviour seems not to dislike but by his presence to approve of. <sup>1 Mac 4 § 9.</sup>  
It was an anniversary feast kept eight days with great gladness, as <sup>John 10. 22.</sup> in the feast of *Tabernacles* (and of the solemnities of that feast, <sup>\* In John 10. 22.</sup> Authors write great matters.) The Author of the second of the *Maccabees* tells us of this, that (as in the feast of *Tabernacles*) they bare branches and fair boughs and palms also, and sang Psalms, &c. which feast (as *Josephus* tells us) they called *phōta light*, because of their burning lights all those whole eighth days to express their greater joy; and so he saith of *Judas*, *ἐὺσταζε μὲν τῶν πολιτῶν, μὲν δὲ ἀπολιπὼν ἡδονῆς ἑαδῶ, ἀλλὰ πολυτελέσει μὲν καὶ λαμπροῦς ταῖς θυγατρὶς καὶ πατρὶς αὐτῶν, ὅμοιους τε καὶ ψαλμοῖς τὸν θεὸν μὲν τιμῶν, αὐτοὺς δὲ τίττον*; that in this festival entertainment of his Citizens he omitted no kind of pleasing delight, but with joyful Hymns and Psalms and costly Sacrifices he honoured God, and delighted them. So highly did they esteem of the restoring and enjoying such a mercy: and oh that once we of this Nation might upon the purging of the Temple and reforming of Gods now wofully profaned Ordinances, have the occasion and opportunity of such *Excensis*, of such a joyful thanksgiving-festival! Meanwhile in our want of it let us be learning to take out this first part of our lesson and duty: which is *highly to value and esteem of Gods Ordinances.*

2. And the second is, when and while we enjoy them, in our due use of them to expect much good and blessing in and by the enjoying of them; By faith in obedience to Gods command and confidence in his promise of *being with his Ministers to the end of the world* to apply our selves to him in his Ordinances is, as our duty, so a promising pledge and effectual means of a blessing by them. Here, as well as in other Cases, *according to thy faith be it unto thee.* <sup>Math. 28. 20.</sup> In an humble dependance on God, and good thoughts of him hope much and have much. *Open thy mouth wide, and God will fill it.* Thou canst not out-think Gods infinite goodness, or the power of his good word, which hath done very great things: whereas on the contrary like them, *Mark 6. 5.* we *weaken* (as it were) Christs *power* and hinder the efficacy of his Ordinances by.

our *unbelief*. Because we have but little faith, we receive little, and if none, we get nothing. But the Patients good hopes and perswasions help much to his Cure. It would certainly do very much to ours if we had better thoughts and perswasions of God and his Ordinances when we apply our selves to either, whilst infidelity applieth the Medicine cool, and so rendreth it less useful; and it's but just that whilst through despondency or neglect we cannot or will not give God the praise of his being able or willing to help us, he should be as unwilling to make them able to bless us. But therefore as it's said of *Jehoshaphat*, that his *heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord*, and accordingly he prospered, 2 Chron. 17. 6. so in our use of Ordinances, we should labour by faith to get our hearts raised up to high expectations of blessing by them; for great expectations are great obligations with God as well as with *ingenuous men*; as when the Creeple gave earnest heed and looked on Peter as expecting to receive something from him, though he had not silver or gold for him, yet he got an Alms much more precious and useful. When therefore we go to hear, think and say in faith with them, *Isa. 2. 3. "Let us go up to the house of the Lord, and he will teach us his ways :* and so in Prayer say with them, *Micah 7. 7. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me.* I will go to the Sacrament and hope, that I (as well as other hungry Souls have) shall find there *a feast of fat things and of wine on the lees*, at least some *Crumbs*, *some drops*, as God shall see it best for me to refresh me. And this is the both easiest and surest way to come by them.

*Psal. 147. 11.* God delighting, not to discourage by disappointing the faith and expectation of his people, but to honour them that honour him; and therefore it is that (upon this ground) he honours *faith* above all other *graces*, and *believers* above all other *men*. And thus as they are institutions of God, and means of our best good in subordination to Christ, it is our advantage and duty highly to value Gods Ordinances, which was the first part of my task.

St. Maries,  
Jan. 29.  
1622.

**B**UT how then did *Paul*, and may we so undervalue them as to account and call them *ζυμῶν, οὐβᾶρα* *lofs* and *dung*? Is not this Blasphemy to call the *Bread of life* *ζυμῶν*. (as some expound the word) *Dogs-meat*? and that *lofs*, which is the means of the *saving of our souls*? Yes, if they be so deemed and called as considered according to the former particulars. For which (as

we have seen) they are to be so highly prized and valued. But Paul was no *blasphemer*, though he so judged and spake; but set a Copy for us to write after him, and therefore there is a sense, in which we should so judge of them also: and that is double.

1. If upon any terms especially in point of justification and acceptance with God they be equalled with Christ, or preferred before him.

2. If in a way of opposition they be set against Christ, as *Circumcision* was by the *Jews*, who in comparison of it and their other Jewish Ordinances did so undervalue him, that rather than they would let him go or their confidence in them, they proved professed Enemies and Persecutors of him and of his Gospel; for which opposition and in opposition to them whom he called *dogs* in the second verse, he calls their Ordinances which they desperately adhered to *σκύβαλα* here in the Text, for such *dogs* to feed on; who did so snarl and grin, and tread under-foot the *Childrens bread*, even *Christ the Bread of life*.

Now in the prosecution of this we are

1. To shew wherein we come to be guilty of their sin.

2. The unreasonableness of it; where, on the contrary, we shall see what reason we have with the Apostle here to account the enjoyment of Ordinances but *loss and dung for Christ*.

3. To press all home by a word of application.

1. For the first, we then with the Jews equal Ordinances with Christ, and indeed set them up in opposition to him, when

1. First, we set or hold up Ordinances of our own, instead of, or in *Conjunction with Christ* and his *Institutions*. Such were now *Circumcision*, and the other Jewish Ceremonies; though before (under the Law) they were Gods Holy Institutions, and such as led to Christ, yet now that he was come being yet by the Jews retained instead of accepting him, and by the Judaizing Gentiles taken up in *Conjunction* with him, became *their own devices*, and made *Christ unprofitable to them*, Gal. 5. 2. Yea they cried, *Not Christ, but Barabbas*; and for them they rejected and persecuted Christ and his Gospel, and so they made them their own in opposition to Christ, so that the Apostle might well call them *loss*, that occasioned them to *lose Christ*, and *dung*, when they proved but *beg- Gal. 4. 9.*  
*gerly Elements*, and no better than very *dunghill Idols*. — And the like now may truly be said of all Heathenish, Popish, humane Worship and Ordinances, which men take or hold up in *Conjunction with Christ*, but indeed (as in the Event they prove) *against Christ*;



2 Tim. 3. 2.

Christ; and in this respect the worse, because of Satans or mans invention, not at all, never of Gods Institution, as *Circumcision* and the other Jewish services sometimes were: which yet men *lovers of themselves* and of what is their own, hug and hold fast, will needs join with Christ, and prefer before the Institutions of Christ: for here also that of the Apostle holdeth, *All men seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs*, Philip. 2. 21. more zealously and eagerly press them than the Ordinances of Christ, so as for them fiercely to persecute the Servants and grace of Christ, because they cannot comply with them; witness Popish Inquisitions, Massacres, and other Fanaticks out-rages. But is not this the very same with the Jews sin? And may we not with the Apostle well call such excrementitious superfluities, *dung and loss*? By which the suffering Church hath in all ages lost so much *rest and peace*, and the imposing task-masters have gained nothing but more guilt and wrath: But leave we these *Ordinances of men*.

2. In the second place we repeat this sin of the Jews whilst we pervert Gods own best Ordinances; when in point of Justification and acceptance with God (for that was the point which the Apostle here spake to) we put them in the place of Christ, and rest in them, and the outward enjoyment of them without Christ. This the Jews did, which we are the more to take heed of, because naturally and generally we are very prone to be guilty of it. So *Israel* of old, whatever their danger was, might but the *Ark* be brought into their Camp, accounted themselves shot-free, 1 Sam. 4. 5. though *their* being smitten and the *Arks* being taken, soon and sadly confuted that vain confidence, though (as the first verse of that Chapter tells us) *they pitched in Eben-Ezer*, which by the signification of it's name seem'd to promise them better help and success, and so afterward, Jer. 7. 4. *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord* are these. They made *אולם הייכל* account that the three parts of the Temple (which the Prophet *L. de Dieu* stood in the gate of, v. 2. and here pointed at when he said these *Grotius Calvin.* words) were as a threefold Wall or Moat about an impregnable fortress, which kept God in from leaving them, and judgments out from rushing in upon them: and so they rested secure in it and their costly devotions, which they tendred in it. So the same Prophet telleth us, that *Rebhel* was their confidence, Chap. 48. v. 13. *Judg. 17. 19.* And *Micah* when he had once got a *Levite* for his Priest, thinks himself as safe as a Church-Mouse (as you say in your Proverb)

and at the very day of judgment some are brought in saying, *we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets, Luke 13. 26.* as if in the security of that they both lived and died, and hoped at the last day to appear before God with it.

This because natural is very usual with us, something we would have to quiet our selves and Consciences with, but we would not be at any great cost for it, nor trouble our selves with the inward and vigorous actings of faith and grace, in mortification of lust, and the strenuous exerting of the power of Godliness; and therefore are ready to take up with what's next at hand and will least disturb our spiritual sloth or beloved lusts; and therefore because in Ordinances is the outward face of Religion, we are willing to put on that visard, and because it may cover our bosom sins which we mean not to part with (as they Ezek. 33. 31.) on them we will diligently attend, and in our outward gestures and postures be as formal and punctual as the most devout, as you may have seen the most debauched Drunkard and uncleanest Adulterer in a whole Congregation; and then stroke our own head, as having done God fair service, which he cannot sure but accept of and of us for; as the Harlot, when she hath presented her *Peace-offerings*, and made *her vows*, Prov. 7. 14. *Pre. 30. 20* *wipes her mouth, and she hath done no wickedness*; but rather as having thus befriended God she makes account she hath obtained a *License* to pursue her dalliance, as your devout-profane Papist after he hath been at Mass or shrift, thinks all so well with him that he may fairly step out of the Church to the next Brothel-House, at least rest in *opere operato*; a sin which many better men are in part too often overtaken with, whilst they too much rest in the duty of praying, hearing, receiving, though they meet but little with Christ in them. The very sin of the Jews, in 1. taking up Ordinances of our own, and 2. taking up with the outward enjoyment even of Christ's Ordinances.

2. Which (for the second thing propounded, to shew the unreasonableness of it) the Apostle here calls *loss* and *damng*. And well he might upon these following Considerations, if they be equalled with, preferred before, or set in opposition to Christ.

1. And the first is taken from the uncertainty of their continuing or abiding by us, or we by them. It's true indeed, in the blessed effect and fruit of them (if whilst enjoyed we have *gained Christ* by them) they will abide with us for ever, as the Cordial

# The Eighth SERMON

will be to cheer us when it may be the Cup is taken away from us, and that is only because Christ lives and abides by us. But they will not so always.

Not in Heaven, no Ordinances there, where it will be our happiness most fully to enjoy his presence to Eternity. Thou wilt say no need of them there, but there will here.

And art thou sure thou shalt enjoy them here always? May not the Ark be taken from thee as once from Israel, 1 Sam. 4.? or thou from the Ark, as David was often?

*The Priests were not suffered to continue by reason of death, Hebr. 7. 23. Your fathers where are they? and do the Prophets live for ever? Zech. 1. 5. That Minister under whose Ministry thou sometimes satest with great delight, and, it may be, restedst too much in, may die, or be taken away. The Shepherd may be smitten, and the sheep scattered, and then whither wilt thou cast thy sorrow to go, to find sustenance to live on? when thy life (as Jacob's in Benjamin's) is wrapped up in his life, how sad will the cries of the famished infant be when pluckt from the dead Nurses Breast? which sometimes it sucked so sweetly, and in this famine of the word as* Cap. 2. 11 4.4. *in that of Jeremiab, in his Lamentation, the tongue of the sucking Child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth, and the suckling swoon in the midst of the streets of the City?*

Or should the Minister live, and thou too, the ark not taken, 2 King. 20. 1, yet thou taken from the Ark by sickness with Hezekiab, imprisonment with Jeremiab, Cap. 36. 5. by banishment as David, and then if he then envieth the sparrows that might Nest by the Altar, Psal. 84. whilst himself sits alone as a sparrow on the house-top, or like a Pelican in the Wilderness, or an Owl in the desert, pants like the Hart Psal. 102. 6. after the Water brooks, whilst his tears are his drink, and he powreth out his soul when he thinks how sometimes he had gone with the multitude to the house of God from which he is now banished, and in that distance with a long look looketh toward it from the Mount Hermon and the Hill Mizzar, i. e. from every higher Mountain and little lower Hillock, that he might get a look thitherward from, and this only for want of the Ordinances, when yet by his former improving of them he had with him the God of Ordinances: How sad and sinking will thy moan be in the like (or indeed far worse) Case when through thy former negligent non-improvement of them thou wastest both them and him too? Will they not then be lost when they are now lost and with them Christ also, who (otherwise than best Minister) never

dieth but ever liveth, *Heb. 7. 24, 25.* otherwise than best Ordinance, would never have left thee, or suffer thee to be pluckt from him; who would in the most *barren Wilderness* (as he did *Israel*) have fed thee with hidden *Manna*, *Revel. 22. 17.* and (as to *David*) made even thy tears thy bread to comfort thee, in the darkest *Prison* shone into thee, as to *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Act. 16. 25, 26.* in *Banishment* have more than preach'd to thee, as to *St. John* in *Patmos*, *Revel. 1. 9.* and on thy *Death-Bed* instead of the Sacrament been thy *viaticum*.

2. But secondly suppose Ordinances should be continued to thee and thou to them, they will be *loss* because at least at best thou wilt be no true *gainer* by them, if (as the *Apostle* here speaks) thou dost not *gain Christ* with them.

At best they are in themselves but *means*, and *media habent amabilitatem à fine*, they have all their desireableness and goodness from the end, without the enjoyment of which by them *frustrà omnia*, they are wholly vain, useless, idle, or rather the use of them is a trouble and not a benefit; for *what is Paul* and *what is Apollos*, but *Ministers by whom you believed?* *1 Cor. 3. 5.* and if but *Ministers*, it was but to *minister Christ* to you, and what was *John Baptist*, than whom there was none greater that was born of a woman, saith our Saviour, but a *friend* only of the *Bridegroom?* *John 3. 29.* Not to wooe for himself, but to bring *Christ* and thy *Soul* as his *Spouse* together? And what are best Ordinances at best but the *Bed of loves?* (as some expound that in the *Canticles*.) *Cantic. 1. 16.* But what is the *Bed of loves*, if the *Spouse* find not her beloved there? For all that she goeth up and down as a desolate *Widow*, saying, *But saw you him whom my soul loveth?* *Cant. 3. 1, 3.* It is *Christ* in a *word*, in a *Sacrament*, in any *Ordinance* that the chaste *Spouse* desireth to meet with and seeks after, whom if she findeth not, though she enjoy them, she hath but the *Casket* without the *Jewel*, the *Field* but not the *Pearl*, and if he be *all in all*, then *Col. 3. 11.* all these and all else without him are nothing, *πεντομή* is but *κα-* *Philip. 3. 2.* *τατομή* *Circumcision*, but a cutting and mangling of the flesh, and that's all. *Prayer* without *Communion* with *Christ* in it but a meer lip-labour; *Sacraments* but empty *Ceremonies*, and *bearing*, *listning* to as empty a *sound*. The less is *Grace* beholden to *Pelagian* and *Arminian* Divinity which placeth all the efficacy of it in the bare proposall of *Doctrine*, which without the *Spirits* inward teachings will prove wholly ineffectual, for it's not the *bread's touching of the skirt of the Priests Garment*, that will make it holy,

but on the contrary any *unclean bodies touching it makes it unholý*, Hagg. 2. 12, 13. and so any unsanctified Souls conversing with holy Ordinances, rather pollutes them than receives sanctification or other blessing by them. Without Christ they are *lost*, because thou lovest that which thou shouldst especially desire and expect from them. It's *no good* thou gainest by them. But on the contrary,

3. Much hurt and dammage, for if *not for the better*, it will certainly be *for the worse*, 1 Cor. 11. 17. and that every way; both in point, 1. Of sin. 2. Of misery.

1. Of Sin: and hence it is, that we often find *worst men* under *best Ordinances*. Sowrest grapes brought forth where most cost hath been spent, Isa. 5. 2, 7. strong Physick if it do not Cure, strengthening and enraging the Disease, and so

1. For more *spiritual* or rather *devilish sins*, seldom shall you meet with more keen anger and rage, or more invenomed malice and hatred against God and Godliness than in such men, who having enjoyed means of Salvation, not being by all Christs intreaties prevailed with to be *reconciled friends*, prove most inveterate Enemies. So we find *the men of Penueel*, Judg. 8. 8. yea the young Children in *Bethel*, 2 King. 2. 23. to have been virulent scoffers; and from the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* downward, greatest pretenders to Gods worship, most malicious persecutors.

2. Nor are sensual lusts (though 2 Sam. 12. 4. expressed under the notion of a *traveller*) wont to be strangers to those whom we now speak of. Paul writes of such *fornication* to have been among the *Corimbians* (with whom he had staid and preached longer than in most other places) *as was not so much as named among the Gentiles*: And Peter and Jude speak of *false Prophets* and Professors in the Church, as in this kind abominably guilty, whom we should never have so well understood if our *Libertines* and *Ranters* in the former and present age, had not imitated and out-acted in their loathsome practices; to the most impious defiling of the Church, and scandal of the Gospel; God in his just judgment revenging their rejecting of Christ and his Holy Spirit by suffering them as the Gentiles of old, *to give themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*; yea with the blaphemous pretences of Gospel-liberty and holiness.

I do not now insist on all that either open or secret *uncleanness*, either of profane sinners, or close Hypocrites amongst us, which God and their own Consciences, and it may be other men

1 Cor. 5. 1.

2 Pet. 2. 10,

12, 13, 14,

18, 19, 20.

Jude 4, 8, 10,

16, 18, 19.

Ephes. 4. 19.

are privy to. This that I have said is sufficient to have shewed that dead Trees grow the more corrupt and rotten by being often rained upon.

3. I only add a third sin, which they who *gain not Christ* by the enjoyment of his Ordinances take occasion to lull themselves asleep in, and that is *carnal security*, and *presumption* and *obduracy*, that they are not only Sermon and Ordinance-proof, (*can rebel against the light*, Job 24. 13.) but think they have by them gotten a *protection*, and *plea* which will hold at the last Judgment-Bar to secure them against the accusations of all their other abominations, that Christ hath *preached in their streets*, as you heard out of Luke 13. 26. and those other fore-mentioned instances: and so it cometh to pass that these blessed helps prove their greatest hindrances and diversions *in the way to life*, whilst taking up with outward attendance on Ordinances *as the way*, they sit down and rest in it, and so never come to their intended journeys end, or rather most dangerously mistaking the way to Hell for that to Heaven, before they be aware come to a sadder end of it, than they ever thought of, and so, as I said, they find *best helps* to prove *greatest hindrances* of their peace and salvation.

And heaviest *aggravations* both of their *sin* and *condemnation*. Of their *sin*, when *at an higher rate*, because *against greater light*.

And of their *Condemnation*, which will be exceeding heavy when Gospel-Grace neglected pronounceth the sentence, and the *wrath* of the meek Lamb proves heavier than *rocks and mountains*, Revel. 6. 16. But this leads me to

2. The second thing propounded, that by Ordinances without Christ gained by them, we come to be worse, as in point of sin, so of judgment, and this *temporal*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*.

I confess the Case is very sad when our *Physick* proves *poysen*. It was one of the saddest Curses that David could imprecate against his worst Enemies, that their *table* should become a *snare*, and *what should have been for their welfare*, a *trap*, Psal. 69. 22. and yet that's sadder which the Prophet expresseth, that the *acceptable year of the Lord* should become the *day of vengeance of our God*, Isa. 61. 2. and yet another Prophet fore-tells it will so be, that very day in which the *Sun of Righteousness* would shine upon some, should *burn like an Oven* to others, Mal. 4. 1, 2. and a third assureth us, that the Lord God is a *witness* against Sinners, even

*Calvin in loc.* out of his holy Temple, Micah. 1. 2. not only from Mount Sinai, but even Sion too. God thunders in judgment against such that make not sure of Christ for their shelter; And that Earth is nearest to a Curse, and its end is most sure to be burnt, that drinketh in the rain from heaven, and yet brings forth nothing but briars and thorns, which make fuel for the fire, even the savour of life, proves to such the savour of death, 2 Cor. 2. 16. A surfeit of Bread, some say, is most dangerous, but how deadly will it be, if a surfeit of this Bread of life! The Cure is desperate, when, as Austin speaks, *De Temp. Serm.* *ipsa medicamenta convertuntur in vulnera*, if my Medicine wound me, and the word of life kill me. And yet so it doth; if Christ be not gain'd but rejected, Ordinances though enjoyed will be so far from proving means of Salvation, that they or rather our abuse of them will be the inlet and means of

1. Heaviest temporal judgments both to persons and nations. Scripture for this is pregnant and instances too frequent. In the giving and instituting of Ordinances, Passover, Law, Gospel, Lords Supper Promises are join'd with Threats. The burden of the valley of Vision, Isa. 22. 1. The Controversie of Zion, Isa. 34. 8. the quarrel of God's Covenant, Levit. 26. 25. and the vengeance of his Temple, Jer. 50. 28. are very reverend and terrible, and speak loud to this purpose. Holy Ordinances are sharp-edged tools, and we had need of great care how we handle them; as being in great danger to wound our selves with them if we do it not dextrously. (Such shows that should quench the fire prove Oil to kindle it.) This in part made the Elders of Bethlehem tremble at the Prophet *1 Sam. 16. 4.* Samuels coming to them, and the Widow of Sarepta in a passion to *1 King. 17. 18.* say to the Prophet Elijah, what have I to do with thee, O thou man of God, Art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance, and slay my Son? This the men of God by accident often do, as the Prophet Jeremiah was set over Nations and Kingdoms, as well to root up and pull down as to build and to plant. As soon as ever *Jer. 1. 10.* the Gospel began to be preached to the Jews, then *Matth. 3. 10.* was the axe laid to the root of their tree, if they brought not forth fruit, to hew them down, and the sharper the Axe, the sooner it cuts the barren tree down, and the more powerful the Ministry is, the speedier it doth the same to an unfruitful and rebellious people, as the purer the air, the sooner sometimes it dispatcheth a corrupt Consumptive body. This was sadly exemplified in the destruction of the Jews, their City and Temple, when, as Nazianzen saith, *ὅτι ἀλλήλειον ἐπὶ πολέμιοι, αἵματ' ἐπὶ πόλιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι πνεῦμα καὶ αἵματ'.* their de-

filed Altars, first burnt their City; and their blood was (not only mixed with their Sacrifices, but) shed instead of the blood of their Sacrifices. The present state of that forlorn people in this kind is most sad; and so of the other Eastern Churches. The death of seventy thousand of the Bethshemites; for their rude entertainment of the Ark. That Bethel became Beth-Aven, that Shilo was forsaken, that a Wo was proclaimed to Ariel, to Ariel the City where David dwelt, That that peoples abuse of Ordinances brought them to such a pass, that they must perish without Remedy, 2 Chron. 36. 16. and without pity, for so (v. 15.) when God out of compassion had afforded Ordinances and they abused them, he (v. 17.) sends Enemies which would shew them no mercy, nor have any compassion. These are sad instances of this Truth, and strong proofs, that (as the Prophet saith) Gods fire is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem, to consume Enemies as well Domestick as Strangers, though the latter there especially meant. For although the usual word was, The Lord bless thee out of Zion, yet it hath proved as true, the Lord curse thee out of Zion too: for in the Revelation we shall find, the seven Angels that have the seven Plagues, and pour out the seven vials of the wrath of God, upon the Antichristian State, came out of the Temple: and that the Angel took coals of fire from the Altar, and cast them upon the Earth, from which came such thundrings and lightnings, and Earth quakes in the World. Temple Ordinances if profaned and despised, nay if not walked worthy of, bring down heavy judgments; and it were well if it were sadly considered, whether this amongst and above other sins of ours, did not cause our present Earth-quakes and unsettlements, and so repented of as to prevent future and now impending heavier judgments, which so sorely threaten us: for so we find it of old, when Israel was so stupid and obstinate, that like to dull and froward Scholars, line must be upon line, and precept upon precept to them, that God laid judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and because he was fain to lisp (as it were) and stammer and speak to them with another tongue, and they yet would not understand and obey, therefore he would bring Strangers and Enemies upon them of a deep speech and a stammering tongue, which they should not understand. A most heavy judgment! which the Lord keep us from, that such vexation do not make such froward dullards as we are understand doctrine as some read and interpret that 19th verse of the 28th of Isaiah. To conclude this, we may certainly conclude upon it, that (as in the former part of this

1 Sam. 6. 19.

Hos. 4. 15. 5.

8.

Jer. 7. 12.

Isa. 29. 1.

Isa. 31. 9.

Psal. 128. 5.

Revel. 15. 6.

16. 1.

Revel. 8. 5.

Isa. 28. 9, 10,

11, 17.

Isa. 33. 19.

Margin. Eng.

lish Annot.



point we shewed) as God's Ordinances duly entertained and walked worthy of, use to bring in outward mercies with them; so, if abused, they will as certainly pour in upon us heaviest outward judgments; for as Gods *way is in the Sanctuary*, *Psal. 77. 13.* so in the sea too, *v. 19.* as to conduct Israel into Canaan, so to overwhelm Egyptians, even with heaviest temporal miseries.

2. But with more heavy spiritual judgments (they are judgments, καὶ ἰσχυρὰ, *Jude v. 4.*) and such are the permitting and giving over to stupid senselessness, most enormous, outrageous sins, obstinate obdurateness and final impenitency in them. But of these we spake before. Only consider them here in *genere pane*, as judicially, but most justly inflicted as the recompense of mens ingrate and impious neglect and despising of God in the profane abuse of his holy and blessed Ordinances. *Sion sinners* usually are the greatest Sinners, and Ordinance-despisers, as of all most obstinate, so their case most desperate, and it's a righteous thing with God to leave them so. The very Remonstrants who will not allow God the liberty and freedom of his Decrees, do yet freely subscribe to the equity and justice of this dispensation, that when means of Salvation have been non improved and despised, men may by God be judicially and irrecoverably hardened; that he may by his Prophets justly say, *we would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed, therefore forsake her, Jer. 51. 9.* Nay we read him saying it even to Jerusalem, *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, Ezek. 24. 13.* Nay it is a Gospel-Sanction, and we read it in the very end and close of the New Testament, in the two and twentieth of the Revelation, after all the fore-going Revelation in that Book, yea after the full manifestation of the will of God in the whole Scripture, when he now comes to seal the Canon of it, *v. 18, 19.* if any, notwithstanding all this, will still continue ignorant and obstinate, he seals him up under this most heavy doom, *He that is unjust let him be unjust still. He that is filthy let him be filthy still, v. 11.* God with such hath as a Physician gone through all his methods of Physick, and if by none of them the Cure be wrought, it's given over as desperate (as in that place of *Jeremy, 51. 9.*) Or (as in *Isaiab*) as an Husband-man he hath been planting and dressing, and watering his Vineyard, if after all, nothing but *sour grapes*; מַה עָשִׂיתִי עוֹר, *what could I have done more, or rather* (as some otherwise, and (it may be) better, render it) *what is more to be done, in so desperate a Case? (Isa. 5. 4.)* but what

what he adds and answers (*v. 5.*) but to *take away the bedg that it may be eaten up and trodden down.*

Or as a *founder of metal* he hath been about melting and refining, and purging their dross from them, but the *bellows are burnt and the lead is consumed, and the dross not taken away* Reprobate silver: *then call them, for the Lord hath rejected them.* Jer. 6. 29, 30. Ezek. 22. 18, 19, 20. The saddest judgment that in this life can befall a man, and no sadder sight in the World than to behold such a *triste bidental*, such an Heaven-struck forlorn Sinners grown *blind by seeing the light, and deaf* (as they that dwell near the out-falls of *Nilus*) by hearing a more pleasing sound, even the word of life, more *filthy* for *washing*, more barren (or rather fruitful of poysonous weeds) for watering, and more desperately and irrecoverably sick, by the best Physicians greater care of the Cure, so that it cannot be written on his door, *The Lord be merciful to him.* It's pity, you say, *that fair weather should do any hurt*; but a thousand pities to see a miserably blinded sinner to go into everlasting darkness by the light of the Sun-shine of the Gospel; to see an unruly stray Sheep that would not be kept in the Shepherds Fold, in the *Wolfs or Lions mouth*, dragged through all mire and dirt into his Den, and there to be devoured. Seest thou this? thou seest a miserable forlorn Sinner, whom the good *Shepherds Rod and Staff* could not keep in to be *fed in green pastures, and led by still waters*, now forsaken of God like another *Cain or Judas*, made senseless and obdurate in sin, and dragged into the pit-fall of Hell to his everlasting destruction.

3. Which is the third and last particular before mentioned, that eternal wrath and judgment, that irrecoverable loss which such Sinners in another World procure to themselves by their abuse of Ordinances, when they have not *gain'd Christ* by them. Of all others the Sinners in *Sion* shall be *most afraid*, when it shall once come to *dwelling with devouring fire and everlasting burnings*, Isa. 33. 14. Then *Capernaum*, that in enjoyment of Ordinances was once *lifted up as high as heaven*, shall be *thrown as low as hell*, Math. 11. 23, nay to the lowest depths of it, where *Sodom and Gomorrha's fire* shall be *more tolerable*; this *furnace being heated seven times hotter* whilst the *breath of the Lord as a stream of brimstone shall kindle it*: Isa. 30. 33. that *Tophet* intolerable, that *fire unquenchable*, when the some. Mark 9. 43. times sweet breathings of the Gospel-Spirit, and Word and Ministry shall blow it up, and keep it burning to Eternity. Oh! No Condemnation to Gospel-Condemnation. No wrath so fierce as

that, when after *grace turned into wantonness*, patience shall be *turned into fury*. How low low will that for-ever-lost Soul be sunk, that in those unsupportable torments shall everlastingly have time and cause to think and say, How shall I ever *escape* that have *neglected*, abused, despised, so great Salvation! That of all other aggravates and perpetuates such mens damnation. Gospel Grace and Ordinances, which are the Key to open Heaven to Believers, lock up neglecters and despisers in the Prison of Hell; and roul the heaviest stone upon the mouth of the bottomless pit: the unsupportable weight whereof will not only prevent all removal or escape, but above all things will pinch, and press, and sink them down to Eternity. Then they will be fully convinced of the truth of the point in hand, that *all things are loss and dung* in comparision of Christ, when they shall sadly but unprofitably and despairingly say, Oh of how much greater worth is Christ above all other comforts, even best Ordinances, when notwithstanding them for want of him, we are now everlastingly lodged and *tormented* in Hell, whereas had we by the enjoyment of them come to have *gained* and enjoyed him, we had with him in Heaven been happy for ever.

Use.

Which in the Application of it should most seriously advise and perswade us in our due both estimate and abearance both to Christ and his Ordinances respectively.

1. And first for Ordinances, as the former part of the point called upon us highly to prize them and diligently and constantly to attend upon them, so what hath been said in this latter should with all sadness warn us

1. They may do us no good, therefore rest not in them.

1. Not to rely on, or to rest in the bare enjoyment of them; for, (as we have heard) as they may be, so, should we thus do, certainly they will be empty, and at best we shall get no good by them. *Circumcision is nothing*, 1 Cor. 7. 19. The Letter without the Spirit signifieth little, and the best Ordinances without Christ, as to our Salvation, will prove just *nothing*. They are indeed in themselves, and by God's Institution, *Wells of Salvation*; but to us in the issue they will prove but *dry empty Cisterns*, if this *water of life* be not conveyed to us by them: and therefore in this our journeying to Heaven, let us not take up and dwell in our Inns; and although the way of Ordinances lead thither, yet if we sit down in our way we shall never come to our *journeys end*. In this therefore follow the Psalmists example, *Psal. 121.* who, when in the first verse he had said, *I will lift up mine eyes to the Hill,*

*Hills* (of *Zion* and *Moriab* the seat of God's Ordinances, as Interpreters expound it) *from whence cometh my help*; as though he had said too much of them or any Ordinances that his *help* should come from them, as it were correcting himself in the second verse, he presently adds, *my help cometh from the Lord which hath made Heaven and Earth*. It's God and Christ only who made Heaven and Earth, that can create the fruit of the best Ministers lips to be peace to his people, *Isa.* 57. 19. and therefore some Expositors read that first verse of the Psalm interrogatorily, *should I lift up mine eyes to the Hills, as though from them should come my help?* The *lifting up* of eyes and soul in Scripture-Phrase expresseth not only *delight* and *desire*, but *expectance* and *dependance*, and then (although we should come to Ordinances with encouraging expectations of help from God in them, yet) should we thus *lift up our Eyes to the Hills themselves*, to the highest trowing Eloquence, or most raised abilities, or most sublime piety of the Ministers that we most admire, so as to expect saving help from them? No. Alas, Either They, or at least the Event will tell thee, that they are but *empty Cisterns* and *dry Breasts*, which cannot afford the least drop, but what Christ the fountain hath put into them: and it may be out of thy experience thou maist be able to say to thy self, that thou never wentest away more empty and less satisfied than when (not making out after Christ) in way of a Carnal-Creature-confidence thou expectedst most from them. Though thou beest therefore on the *Mount of Transfiguration* (where Christ was *Matth.* 17. 4: transfigured, but they were not) Do not sit down with *Peter* and say, *It's good to be here*, unless Christ be there, and in such pure glasses thou seest the face of Christ, and art *changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ by the spirit of Christ*, sit not down satisfied, That's the first. Rest not secure in the bare outward enjoyment of Ordinances, for so they may prove empty, and at best do thee no good.

*Vide Augustinum. Tract. 1. in Joannem, mor ab initio.*

2. Nay secondly, *Rejoice with trembling*. Cheerfully and thankfully receive and entertain them, yet with much awful reverence and solicitousness, for we may so handle the matter, that (as hath been shewn) by them we may come by much hurt and disadvantage; as the *Israelites* and *Bethshemites* received the *Ark* with much joy, *1 Sam.* 4. 5. and *Chap.* 6. 13. but by their Carnal confidence in it (in the former place) and their too bold, and rude usage of it (in the latter) their joy was soon damp'd and extinguished with their tears and blood, Precious Ordinances being

2. They (without Christ) may do us much hurt, therefore with all holy care and fear converse with them.

like great cheer and high fare in an Inn; which though it please whilest eating, yet at last it brings in a great and heavy reckoning: and some have paid very dear for their abuse of God's bounty and cost in these spiritual entertainments. *The Devil entered into Judas with the sop*, as many take their Bane in the Sacrament, are blasted by the breath of the word (*Never fruit grow on thee hereafter*) and by their guilt and frowardness make the very Gospel, though it be not the *Ministry of Condemnation*, to pronounce the sentence of their Condemnation, like the mad man that stranglenth himself with the Cord that is let down to him to draw him out of the Dungeon, as if *Jeremiab* had put that Cord about his neck, and not *under his armbolles*. How solicitous therefore should we be instead of rushing into God's presence, according to *Solomon's* advice, *Eccles. 5. 1.* to *take heed to our foot when we go to the house of God*, lest we tread awry, and wrench it, to be of the number and temper of those who *tremble at his word*, *Isa. 66. 5.* not to weaken faith, but to quicken our care and such awful thoughts as these are: God now though upon a *throne of grace*, is yet upon a *Judgment-seat*, so that when I go to his word I go upon my trial, and if I look not better to it, this Letter that I read, if it be only a letter without spirit, may kill; this word that I hear may be the matter of my guilt, and sentence me to death: This Sacrament that I receive is a seal, but may seal to me my damnation. I had need therefore pray, and read, and hear and receive for my life, draw near to God as an holy God, who will be *sanctified in all them that come nigh him*, *Levit. 10. 3.* entertain and converse in holy Ordinances with all care and reverential fear; as by which, through my neglect and abuse of them, I may make them *loss and dammage* by procuring to my self much hurt, but shall be no gainer at my last account, unless (with the Apostle here) I *win and gain Christ* with them and by them.

2 Cor. 3. 6.

John 13. 27.

2 Cor. 3. 7.

Jer. 38. 12.

Cap. 4. 14.

2. Which leadeth to the second part of the Instruction which this point teacheth us in reference to Christ, and so it calleth upon us for two things.

1. To prize Christ above all Ordinances the choicest, and when most purely and regularly dispensed, such was *Circumcision on the eighth day*. And yet that with Paul was but *loss* in compare with Christ. And so they should with us. Honour we our Ministers as the Ministers of God, and as the *Galatians* sometimes did Paul, even as *Angels of God*, even as *Christ Jesus*; but that

Cap. 4. 14.

It must be only of *Similitude*, not of *Equality*. It must be under Christ. Their affection was so great to Paul, that he saith, they were ready to have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them *V. 15.* to him, but not thereupon to prove so blind, as not to give their hearts to Christ. Prize also all God's Ordinances, Word, Sacraments, and the rest very much, and you cannot over-prize them if it be kept in a subordination to Christ and his Grace, which they are instituted as means to administer and convey and lead to, as the great end of our endeavours and their appointment. Let him therefore be ever (after Paul's example) prized above Ordinances.

2. Desired, made after and made sure of in and by Ordinances. This also the Apostles sense and expressions fully hold out, *δια τῶν χειρῶν*, *v. 7.* and *ἵνα χειρὶν ἀκροήσῃ*, *v. 8.* All was *For Christ*, and *That he might gain Christ*, as the main end he aimed at, and the chief good which either with them or without them he looked after, and so *Go thou and do likewise*. In the use of Ordinances it is thy duty, as *Zacchaeus* did, to set thy self in Christ's way and walk, but on purpose that thou maist meet with him in it, and so receive him into thy heart as he entertain'd him in his house, into which *salvation* that day came with the Saviour, *v. 9.* so that he lost nothing by his invitation and entertainment. So it was the *One thing which David desired of the Lord*, and which he would still seek after, that he might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life: But that was, that he might so behold the beauty of the Lord, and enquire in his Temple, *Psal. 27. 4.* And elsewhere when now an exile in the wilderness, his Soul thirsteth, and his flesh longeth for God to see his power and his glory as he had seen him in the sanctuary, *Psal. 63. 1, 2.* It's a choice mercy highly to be prized and earnestly to be thirsted after all our days to dwell in Gods house, and peaceably to enjoy his Ordinances in the sanctuary. But that's not all that a David or any of his Spirit seeks after and takes up with. He desires to go into, yea to dwell in the Temple, but it is to enquire after God, and to meet with Christ there (as God was wont to meet with Israel at the door of the Tabernacle, and at the mercy-seat) to see his power and glory in the sanctuary, not with the Disciples to gaze on the goodly outward structure and Ornaments of the Temple, no nor so much to be taken with the solemn and stately outward worship and service of it (which in its costly and precious Vessels, and other Utensils, the lustre of the Priests Vestments, and the royal sound of so many

*Exod. 29. 42.*

*25. 22.*

*Mark 13. 1.*

2 Cor. 3. 9.

many Trumpets over their Sacrifices was very magnificent, and a part of the *Beauty of Holiness* which the Scripture often speaks of (which yet the more simple but more spiritual form and order of Gospel-worship far exceeds in glory) but it's the power and presence of Christ in them that exceeds both that and this and all with a true Gospel Spirit. The Gold glittered, but it was the *Altar that sanctified the Gold*, and it was Christ that sanctified the Altar, that sanctifieth and blesteth all, and which in all and above all most precious Ordinances a sanctified heart most highly prizeth and most earnestly looks and seeks after, and in comparison of which (as the Apostle here) *accounts all as loss and dung*.

1. All outward Excellencies. 2. All Birth-right-Privileges. 3. The enjoyment of all Church-Ordinances. And fourthly, All Personal moral qualifications which the Apostle expresseth in those words :

V. 5. 6.

κατὰ νόμον φαισαῖς, κατὰ ἥλον διακονοῦν τὴν ἑκκλησίαν, κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενῃ ἀμεμπτος.

*As touching the Law, [or the order and Religion of my sect] a Pharisee : Concerning zeal, persecuting the Church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

St. Maries  
May 13. 1660.

ἐκκλησία γὰρ  
πάντα ἀπε-  
ρίστα ἔχοντα  
τὸ περισπού-  
δηναι ἐκ αὐτοῦ,  
&c. Chrysost.  
in locum.

Postquam de  
generis nobili-  
tate differuit,  
nunc descendit ad dotes  
personæ pecu-  
liaræ. Calvin.  
Eftius v. 5.  
laudavit se à  
genere, v. 6. à  
proprio studio  
& factis in Je-  
daismo, Cor. 3.  
à Lapide.

**I**N which three expressions the Apostle proceeds further, and riseth higher in his comparing of all things with Christ, and preferring him before them all. The foregoing Privileges, that he was circumcised, an Israelite, a Benjamite, an Hebrew were  
1. More common to him with others. 2. More external, as pointing at his relation to others, and what he had from others.  
3. Or if more inward and innate, yet more natural, and having less of his will and choice in them. But these of his being by his chosen Profession a Pharisee, and so zealous and unblameable, were  
*contrarily* 1. More proper and peculiar, and personal to himself. 2. More inward and expressing the frame of his mind. And Thirdly, More voluntary and of his own choice, τὰ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ προαίρεσις, as Chrysostom expresseth it, *que sunt propriae electionis, ideoque plus habere videntur commendationis*, of his own more free Election, and therefore matter of greater Commendation.

And in these you may observe this gradation.

1. In these words *as touching the law, a Pharisee*, and it being (as he elsewhere telleth us, *Act. 26. 5.*) ἀκριβεστάτην ἀίρεσιν, the accuratest and strictest Sect of the Jewish Religion : he telleth you that