

hood of them as disagreeing from the swearer's mind.' The former is sometimes excusable, but the latter never.

There are many other questions about oaths that belong more to the chapter of Contracts and justice between man and man; and thither I refer them.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### *Directions to the People concerning their Internal and Private Duty to their Pastors, and the Improvement of their Ministerial Office and Gifts.*

THE people's internal and private duty to their pastors (which I may treat of without an appearance of encroachment upon the work of the canons, rubrics, and diocesans) I shall open to you in these Directions following.

*Direct.* 1. 'Understand first the true ground, and nature, and reasons of the ministerial office, or else you will not understand the grounds, and nature, and reasons of your duty to them.' The nature and works of the ministerial office I have so plainly opened already that I shall refer you to it to avoid repetition<sup>a</sup>. Here are two sorts of reasons to be given you: 1. The reasons of the necessity of the ministerial work. 2. Why certain persons must be separated to this work, and it must not be left to all in common.

The necessity of the work itself appeareth in the very nature of it, and enumeration of the parts of it<sup>b</sup>. Two sorts of ministers Christ hath made use of for his church: the first sort was for the revelation of some new law or doctrine, to be the rule of faith or life for the church: and these were to prove their authority and credibility by some divine attestation, which was especially by miracles; and so Moses revealed the law to the Jews, and (Christ and) the apostles revealed the Gospel. The second sort of ministers are appointed to guide the church to salvation by opening and applying the rule thus already sealed and delivered: and these as they are to bring no new revelations or doctrines of faith, or rule of life, so they need not bring any miracle to

<sup>a</sup> Disput. ii. of Church Government, chap. i. and Universal Concord.

<sup>b</sup> Of the difference between fixed and unfixed ministers, see my Disput. ii. iii. of Church Government, and Jos. Acosta lib. v. c. 21, 22. de Missionibus.

prove their call or authority to the church; for they have no power to deliver any new doctrine or gospel to the church, but only that which is confirmed by miracles already. And it is impudence to demand that the same gospel be proved by new miracles by every minister that shall expound or preach it: that would make miracles to be no miracles.

The work of the ordinary ministry (such as the priests and teachers were under the law, and ordinary pastors and teachers are under the Gospel,) being only to gather and govern the churches, their work lay in explaining and applying the Word of God, and delivering his sacraments, and now containeth these particulars following: 1. To preach the Gospel for the conversion of the unbelieving and ungodly world. And that is done, partly by expounding the words by a translation into a tongue which the hearers or readers understand; and partly by opening the sense and matter<sup>c</sup>. 2. In this they are not only teachers, but messengers sent from God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to charge, and command, and entreat men in his name to repent, and believe, and be reconciled to God; and in his name to offer them a sealed pardon of all their sins, and title to eternal life<sup>d</sup>. 3. Those that become the disciples of Christ, they are (as his stewards) to receive into his house, as fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God; and as his commissioned officers, to solemnize by baptism their entrance into the holy covenant, and to receive their engagement to God, and to be the messengers of God's engagement unto them, and by investiture to deliver to them by that sacrament the pardon of all their sin, and their title by adoption to eternal life: as a house is delivered by the delivery of a key; or land, by a twig and turf; or knight-hood by a sword or garter, &c. 4. These ministers are to gather these converts into solemn assemblies and ordered churches, for their solemn worshipping of God, and mutual edification, communion, and safe proceeding in their Christian course<sup>e</sup>. 5. They are to be the stated teachers of the

<sup>c</sup> Rom. x. 7. 14. Mark xvi. 15. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

<sup>d</sup> 2 Cor. v. 19—21. Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Eph. ii. 19. Acts ii. 37—40.

<sup>e</sup> Tit. i. 7. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Acts xx. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12.

assemblies, by expounding and applying that word which is fit to build them up. 6. They are to be the guides of the congregation in public worship, and to stand between them and Christ in things pertaining to God, as subservient to Christ in his priestly office: and so both for the people, and also in their names, to put up the public prayers and praises of the church to God. 7. It is their duty to administer to them, as in the name and stead of Christ, his body and blood as broken and shed for them, and so in the frequent renewals of the holy covenants, to subserve Christ especially in his priestly office, to offer and deliver Christ and his benefits to them, and to be their agent in offering themselves to God. 8. They are appointed to oversee and govern the church, in the public ordering of the solemn worship of God, and in rebuking any that are there disorderly, and seeing that all things be done to edification<sup>f</sup>. They are appointed as teachers for every particular member of the church to have personal and private recourse to, (as far as may be,) for the resolving of their weighty doubts, and instruction in cases of difficulty and necessity, and for the settling of their peace and comfort. 10. They are appointed, as physicians under Christ, to watch over all the individual members of their charge, and take care that they be not infected with heresy, or corrupted by vice; and to admonish the offenders, and reduce them into the way of truth and holiness, and if they continue impenitent after public admonition, to reject them from the communion of the church, and command the church to avoid them. 11. They are as to bind over the impenitent to answer their contumacy at the bar of Christ, so to absolve the penitent, and comfort them, and require the church to re-admit them to their communion. 12. They are appointed as stewards in the household of Christ, to have a tender care of the very bodily welfare of their flocks, so as to endeavour the supplying of their wants, and stirring up the rich to relieve the poor, and faithfully (by themselves or the deacons) to distribute what is intrusted with them for that use. 13. They are especially to visit the sick, and when they are sent for, to pray for

<sup>f</sup> Acts xiv. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Acts xiii. 2. ü. 41, 42. vi. 2. xx. 7. 28. 1 Tim. v. 17. Titus i. 5. Acts xx. 30, 31. Col. i. 28. Eph. iv. 11, 12. Mal. ii. 7. 1 Tim. v. 17.

them and with them, and to instruct them in their special preparations for death, and confirm them against those last assaults. 14. They are appointed to be the public champions of the truth, to defend it against all heretical and profane opposers, and thereby to preserve the flock from being seduced. 15. They are appointed to be (under Christ the head) the nerves and ligaments of the several churches, by which they are kept not only in vigour by communication of nutriment, but also in concord, and such communion as they are capable of, by the correspondencies, and consultations, and councils of their pastors<sup>a</sup>. All these are the distinct and special uses to which Christ hath appointed the office of the sacred ministry: which having but named to you, I need to say no more to shew you the excellency, and necessity, and benefits of it.

Herein also the reasons are apparent, why Christ did institute this sacred office. 1. Because it was meet his kingdom should have officers, suited to his work in the administration of it. 2. It was meet that they be men, like ourselves, that we can familiarly converse with. 3. The great necessity of his church required it, where the most are weak, and insufficient to perform all these offices for themselves; and cannot well subsist without the support of others. It was meet therefore that the pastors were selected persons, wiser, and holier, and stronger than the people, and fit for so great and necessary a work. 4. It was requisite also to the order of the church; for if it were like an army without officers, there would be nothing but confusion, and neither order nor edification.

By this you may also see the nature and reasons of your obedience to your pastors: as they are not appointed to govern you by force<sup>b</sup>, but willingly, “not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, not as being lords over God’s heritage, but as ensamples to the flock<sup>c</sup>,” so you must willingly and

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 16. 26 Acts xx. 7. 36. James v. 14. Acts vi. 4. ii. 42. Phil. i. 4. Neh. xii. 24. xi. 17. 1 Cor. xi. 24. x. 16. Heb. vii. 7. Tit. ii. 15. i. 9. 11. 1 Tim. v. 19. iii. 5. Tit. iii. 10. Matt. xviii. 17, 18. 1 Cor. v. 4. 11. 15. Eph. iv. 13, 14. Acts xv.

<sup>b</sup> Princes may force their subjects by the temporal sword which they bear: bishops may not force their flock with any corporal or external violence. Bilson, Christ. Subjectioun, p. 525.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Peter v. 1—3.

cheerfully obey them in their work. As their government<sup>k</sup> is not by any bodily penalties or mulcts (for that is the magistrate's work and not theirs), but a government by the force of Truth and Love; so your obedience of them consisteth in the loving and thankful reception of the truth which they teach you, and the mercies which they offer you from Christ.

You see then that the reasons of your obedience are manifold. 1. Some of them from God: he hath sent his messengers to you, and set his officers over you; and Christ hath told you that he that heareth them heareth him, and he that despiseth them despiseth him, and him that sent him<sup>l</sup>: he commandeth you to hear and obey them as his officers. 2. From themselves: they have authority by their commission, and they have ability in their qualifications, which require your obedience and improvement. 3. From yourselves; have you reason to obey your natural parents, on whom your livelihood in the world dependeth? Have you reason to obey him that tendereth you a pardon from the king when you are condemned? or that offereth you gold or riches in your want? or that inviteth you to a feast in time of famine? or that offereth to defend and save you from your enemies? Much more have you reason to obey Christ's ministers when they call you to repentance, and offer you pardon of sin, and peace, and salvation, and eternal life. Did you ever hear a man so mad and churlish, as to say to one that offered him riches, or liberty, or life, 'I am not bound to obey you: offer them to those that you have authority over!' When the office of the ministry is as well subservient to Christ as a Saviour and Benefactor, as to Christ as your Teacher and your King, the very nature of their work engageth you to obey them as you love yourselves. If you were in hell, and Christ should send for you out, you would not refuse to go, till the messenger had

<sup>k</sup> Dr. Hammond Annot. q. d. The bishops of your several churches, I exhort—Take care of your several churches, and govern them, not as secular rulers, by force, but as pastors do their sheep, by calling and going before them, that so they may follow of their own accord.' If you would know the true nature and extent of a bishop's work and office, read carefully the said Dr. Hammond's Paraphrase on Acts xx. 28. Heb. xiii. 7. 17. 1 Tim. v. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12. Heb. xiii. Annot. a. Tit. iii. 10. 1 Cor. xii. 28. Annot. e. Jam. v. 14. Annot. Acts xi. 30. Annot. b- Acts xiv. 23.

<sup>l</sup> Luke x. 16.

proved his authority. And when you are the heirs of hell, condemned by the law, and going thither, will you refuse to turn back, and yield to the offers and commands of grace, till you have skill enough to read the minister's commission?

By this also you see, that the power of your pastors is not absolute, nor coercive and lordly, but ministerial<sup>m</sup>. And though the Papists make a scorn of the word "minister," it is but in that pride, and passion, and malice which maketh them speak against their knowledge: for their pope himself calleth himself the servant of God's servants; and Paul saith, "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God<sup>n</sup>." "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed<sup>o</sup>." "Who made us able ministers of the New Testament<sup>p</sup>." "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God<sup>q</sup>." Even magistrates, yea, and angels are not too good to be called (and used as) the ministers of God for the good of his servants<sup>r</sup>, and to "minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation<sup>s</sup>." Yea, Christ himself is so called<sup>t</sup>. And therefore you have no more excuse for your disobedience, than for refusing his help that would pull you out of the fire or water when you are perishing. You see here that your pastors cannot command you what they list, nor how they list: they have nothing to do with the magistrate's work; nor can they usurp the power of a master over his servants, nor command you how to do your work and worldly business, (except in the morality of it). In the fifteen particulars beforementioned their work and office do consist, and in those it is that you owe them a rational obedience.

*Direct.* 11. 'Know your own pastors in particular: and know both what you owe to a minister as a minister of

<sup>m</sup> Chrysost. cited by Bilson, p. 525. But if any man wander from the right path of the Christian faith, the pastor must use great pains, care, and patience. For he may not be forced, nor constrained with terror, but only persuaded to return entirely to the truth.—A bishop cannot cure men with such authority as a shepherd doth his sheep.—For of all men Christian bishops may least correct the faults of men by force. p. 526. Matt. xx. 26. Mark x. 43. See Psal. ciii. 21. civ. 4. Isa. xvi. 6. Jer. xxxiii. 21. Joel i. 9. 13. ii. 17. 2 Cor. xi. 23. Acts xxvi. 26. Rom. xv. 16. Ephes. iii. 7. Col. i. 23, 25. 1 Tim. iv. 6. 1 Thes. iii. 2. Col. i. 7.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 1.

<sup>o</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 5.

<sup>p</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 6.

<sup>q</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 4.

<sup>r</sup> Rom. xiii. 36.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. i. 7. 14.

Christ in common, and what you owe him moreover as your pastor by special relation and charge<sup>u</sup>.’ When any minister of Christ delivereth his Word to you, he must be heard as a minister of Christ, and not as a private man; but to your own pastor you are bound in a peculiar relation, to an ordinary and regular attendance upon his ministry in all the particulars beforementioned that concern you. Your own bishop must in a special manner be obeyed:

1. As one that laboureth among you, and is over you in the Lord, and admonisheth you, and preacheth to you the Word of God<sup>x</sup>, watching for your souls as one that must give account<sup>y</sup>, and as one that ruleth well, and especially that laboureth in the Word and doctrine<sup>z</sup>, “teaching you publicly and from house to house, taking heed to himself, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made him an overseer, not ceasing to warn every one night and day with tears<sup>a</sup>.” “Preaching Christ, and warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that he may present every man perfect in Christ<sup>b</sup>.”

2. He is to be obeyed as the guide of the congregation in the management of God’s public worship: you must seriously and reverently join with him, every Lord’s day at least, in the public prayers and praises of the church, and not ordinarily go from him to another.

3. You must receive from him or with him, the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ: which of old was administered every Lord’s day, and that only in the church where the bishop was, that is, in every church of the faithful: for as Ignatius most observably saith<sup>c</sup>, ‘*ἐν θυσιαστήριον πάση τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, καὶ εἰς ἐπίσκοπος ἅμα τῷ πρεσβυτηρίῳ, καὶ τοῖς διακόνοις*’——‘UNUM ALTARE OMNI ECCLESIAE, ET UNUS EPISCOPUS CUM PRESBYTERIO ET DIACONIS.’——‘IN EVERY CHURCH there is ONE AL-

<sup>x</sup> Functiones in ecclesia perpetuæ sunt dum, Presbyterorum et Diaconorum: Presbyteros voco cum omni ecclesia veteri eos, qui ecclesiam pascunt verbi prædicatione, sacramentis et clavibus; quæ jure Divino sunt individua. Grotius de Imperio pag. 267. cap. 10.

<sup>y</sup> Bishop Jer. Taylor of Repentance, Pref. ‘I am sure we cannot give an account of souls of which we have no notice.’

<sup>z</sup> 1 Thess. v. 12. Heb. xiii. 7. 17.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Tim. v. 17.

<sup>b</sup> Acts xx. 19, 20. 24. 28. 31. 33.

<sup>c</sup> Col. i. 28.

<sup>d</sup> Ignat. Epis. ad Philad. Vid. Mead’s Disc. of Churches, p. 48—50.

TAR, and ONE BISHOP, WITH THE PRESBYTERY and DEACONS.'— So in his Epist. ad Magnes. 'Come all as one, to the temple of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ.' And saith Tertullian<sup>d</sup>, 'Eucharistiæ Sacramentum—nec de aliorum manu quam præsentium summus:' 'we take not the sacrament of the eucharist from the hand of any but the president.'

4. You must have recourse to him especially for the resolution of your weighty doubts, in private<sup>e</sup>.

5. You must hear your bishops and repent, when in meekness and love they convince and admonish you against your sins, and not resist the Word of God which they powerfully and patiently lay home to your consciences, nor put them with grief to cut you off, as impenitent in scandalous sins, from the communion of the church.

6. You must, after any scandalous sin which hath brought you under the censure of the church, go humble yourselves by penitent confession, and crave absolution and restoration to the communion of the church.

7. Your public church alms should ordinarily be deposited into the bishop's hands, who relieveth the orphans and widows, and is the curator or guardian to all absolutely that are in want, saith Ignatius to Polycarp, cited by Dr. Hammond on 1 Cor. xii. 28<sup>f</sup>.

8. You must send for him in your sickness to pray with you and advise you. See Dr. Hammond on James v. 14. And on 1 Cor. xii. 28. he saith, 'Polycarp himself speaking of the elders or bishops saith, They visit and take care of all that are sick, not neglecting the widows, the orphans, or the poor.' And Dr. Hammond on James v. 14. sheweth out of antiquity<sup>g</sup>, that 'One part of the bishop's office is set down, that they are those that visit all the sick.' Not but that a stranger may be made use of also; but ordinarily and especially your own bishop must be sent for; because as you are his special charge, and he "watcheth for your souls

<sup>d</sup> Tertull. de Coron. Milit. c. 3.

<sup>e</sup> It is very observable that Acosta saith, lib. vi. c. 12. that they found it an old custom among the Indians to confess their sins to the priests before the Gospel came thither.

<sup>f</sup> See more in Dr. Hammond, *ibid*.

<sup>g</sup> Vid. Canon. Apost. 5. 32. Et Concil. Antioch. c. 5. Et Concil. Carthag. 4. Can. 35.



as one that must give account<sup>b</sup>;" so it is supposed that he is better acquainted with your spiritual state and life than others are, and therefore in less danger of wronging you by mistake and misapplications: for it is supposed that you have acquainted him with your personal condition in your health, having taken him as your ordinary counsellor for your souls, and that he hath acquainted himself with your condition, and confirmed you, and watched over you by name, as Ignatius to Polycarp bishop of Smyrna saith<sup>c</sup>, 'Sæpe congregationes fiant: ex nomine omnes quære: servos et ancillas ne despicias.' As bishop Usher's old Latin translation hath it. 'Let congregations be often held: inquire after all by name: despise not servants and maids.' The bishop took notice of every servant and maid by name; and he had an opportunity to see whether they were in the congregation.

9. You must use him as your leader or champion against all heretics, infidels, and subtle adversaries of the truth, with whom you are unable to contend yourselves, that your bishop may clear up and defend the cause of Christ and righteousness, and by irresistible evidence, stop the mouths of all gainsayers<sup>d</sup>. It is for your own benefit and not for theirs that you are required in all these works of their office to use them and readily obey them. And what hurt can it do you to obey them in any of these?

*Direct.* III. 'Understand how it is that Christ doth authorize and send forth his ministers, lest wolves and devourers should either obtrude themselves upon you as your lawful pastors, or should alienate you from those that God hath set over you, by puzzling you in subtle questioning or disputing against their call.' Not only Paul's warnings, Acts xx. 30. and 2 Tim. iii. 6.; but lamentable experience telleth us what an eager desire there is in proud and self-conceited men, to obtrude themselves as teachers and pastors on the churches, to creep into houses and lead people captive, and draw away disciples after them, and say (and perhaps think) that others are deceivers, and none are the true teachers indeed but they. And the first part of the art

<sup>b</sup> Heb. xiii. 17.

<sup>c</sup> Vid. Just. Mart. Apol. 2. Vid. Tertul. Apol. c. 39.

<sup>d</sup> I hope all this will tell you what a bishop indeed is.

and work of wolves, is to separate you from your pastors, and catch up the stragglers that are thus separated. The malice, and slanders, and lies, and railing of hirelings and deceivers, and all the powers of hell, are principally poured out on the faithful pastors and leaders of the flocks. The principal work of the Jesuits against you, is to make you believe that your pastors are no true pastors, but uncalled private persons, and mere usurpers: and the reason must be, because they have not an ordination of bishops successively from the apostles without interruption<sup>1</sup>. I confess if our interruptions had been half as lamentable as theirs, (by their schisms, and variety of popes at once; and popes accused, or condemned by general councils, for heretics; and their variety of ways of electing popes, and their incapacities by simony, usurpation, &c.) I should think at least that our ancestors had cause to have questioned the calling of some that were then over them. But I will help you in a few words to discern the juggling of these deceivers, by shewing you the truth concerning the way of Christ's giving his commission to the ministers that are truly called, and the needlessness of the proof of an uninterrupted succession of regular ordination, to your reception of your pastors and their ministrations.

The ministerial commission is contained in, and conveyed by the law of Christ, which is the charter of the church, and every true bishop or pastor hath his power from Christ, and not at all from the efficient conveyance of any mortal man: even as kings have their power not from man, but from God himself; but with this difference, that in the church Christ hath immediately determined of the species of church offices, but in the civil government, only of the genus (absolutely and immediately<sup>m</sup>). You cannot have a

<sup>1</sup> Grot. de Imp. p. 273. *Pastorum est ordinare pastores. Neque id officium eis competit, quâ hujus aut illius ecclesiæ pastores sunt, sed qua ministris ecclesiæ Catholicæ.*

<sup>m</sup> See in Grotius de Imper. sum. potest. p. 269. The necessary distinction of 1. *Ipsa facultas prædicandi sacramenta et claves administrandi, quod Mandatum vocat.* 2.  *Applicatio hujus facultatis ad certam personam, viz. Ordinatio.* 3.  *Applicatio hujus personæ ad certum cœtum et locum, viz. Electio.* 4.  *Illud quo certa persona in certo loco ministerium suum exercet publico præsidio ac publicâ autoritate, viz. Confirmatio.* p. 273.  *Constat muneris institutionem à Deo esse: ordinationem à pastoribus, confirmationem publicam à summâ potestate.* So that the doubt is only about election. Which yet must be differenced from consent.

plainer illustration, than by considering how mayors and bailiffs, and constables are annually made in corporations: the king by his charter saith that 'every year at a certain time the freemen or burgesses shall meet, and choose one to be their mayor, and the steward or town-clerk shall give him his oath, and thus or thus he shall be invested in his place, and this shall be his power and work and no other.' So the king by his law appointeth that constables and church-wardens shall be chosen in every parish. Now let our two questions be here decided: 1. Who is it that giveth these officers their power? 2. Whether an uninterrupted succession of such officers through all generations since the enacting of that law, be necessary to the validity of the present officer's authority? To the first, It is certain that it is the king by his law or charter that giveth the officers their power; and that the corporations and parishes do not give it them by electing, or investing them: yea though the king hath made such election and investiture to be in a sort his instrument in the conveying it, it is but, as the opening of the door to let them in, 'sine quo non;' but it doth not make the instruments to be at all the givers of the power, nor were they the receiving, or containing mediate causes of it. The king never gave them the power which the officers receive, either to use, or to give: but only makes the electors his instruments to determine of the person that shall receive the power immediately from the law or charter; and the investors he maketh his instruments of solemnizing the tradition and admission: which if the law or charter make absolutely necessary 'ad esse officii,' it will be so; but if it make it necessary only 'ad melius esse,' or but for order and regular admittance when no necessity hindereth it, the necessity will be no more. And to the second question, It is plain that the law which is the 'fundamentum juris' remaining still the same, if a parish omit for divers years to choose any constable or church-warden, yet the next time they do choose one according to law, the law doth authorise him, nevertheless, though there was an interruption or vacancy so long: and so in corporations, (unless the law or charter say the contrary): so is it in the present case. 1. It is the established law of Christ, which describeth the office, determineth of the degree and kind of power, and

granteth or conveyeth it, when the person is determined of by the electors and ordainers, though by ordination the delivery and admission is regularly to be solemnized; which actions are of just so much necessity as that law hath made them, and no more. 2. And if there were never so long an interruption or vacancy, he that afterward entereth lawfully, so as to want nothing which the law of Christ hath made necessary to the being of the office, doth receive his power nevertheless immediately from the law of Christ. And Belarmine himself saith, that it is not necessary to the people, and to the validity of sacraments and offices to them, to know that their pastors be truly called or ordained: and if it be not necessary to the validity of sacraments, it is not necessary to the validity of ordination. And W. Johnson<sup>a</sup> confesseth to me that consecration is not absolutely necessary 'ad esse officii' to the pope himself: no nor any one sort of electors in his election. Page 333. And in his *Repl. Term. Expl.* p. 45. he saith, 'Neither papal nor episcopal jurisdiction (as all the learned know) depends of episcopal or papal ordination: nor was there ever interruptions of successions in episcopal jurisdiction in any see, for want of that alone, that is necessary for consecrating others validly, and not for jurisdiction over them.' You see then how little sincerity is in these mens' disputations, when they would persuade you to reject your lawful pastors as no true ministers of Christ, for want of their ordination or succession.

*Direct. iv.* 'Though the sacraments and other ministerial offices are valid when a minister is qualified (in his abilities and call) but with so much as is essential to the office, though he be defective in degree of parts and faithfulness, and have personal faults which prove his own destruction; yet so great is the difference between a holy, heavenly, learned, judicious, experienced, skilful, zealous, laborious, faithful minister, and an ignorant, ungodly, idle, unskilful one; and so highly should every wise man value the best means and advantages to his eternal happiness, that he should use all lawful means in his power to enjoy and live under such an able, godly, powerful ministry, though he part with his worldly wealth and pleasure to attain it.' I

<sup>a</sup> See my *Disput. with him of the Successive Visibility of the Church*, p. 336.

• Cyprian, *Epis. lxxviii.* Plebs obsequens præceptis dominicis & peccatore præ-

know no evil must be done for the attainment of the greatest helps: (for we cannot expect that God should bless a sinful course, or that our sin should tend to the saving of our souls.) And I know God can bless the weakest means, when they are such as he appointeth us to use; and can teach us by angels when he denieth us the help of men; but Scripture, reason and experience tell us, that ordinarily he worketh morally by means, and fitteth the means to the work which he will do by them: and as he doth not use to light men by a clod or stone, but by a candle, nor by a rotten post or glowworm so much as by a torch or luminary; so he doth not use to work as much, by an ignorant, drunken, idle person, who despiseth the God, the heaven, the Christ, the Spirit, the grace, the sacred Word which he preacheth, and vilifieth both his own, and other men's souls; as he doth by an able, compassionate minister. And the soul is of so much more worth than the body, and eternal things than temporal, that a little commodity to the soul, in order to the securing of our salvation, must be preferred before a great deal of worldly riches. He that knoweth what his soul, his Saviour, and heaven are worth, will not easily sit down contented, under such a dark, and dull, and starving minister, as he feeleth he can but little profit by, if better may be had on lawful terms. He that feeleth no difference between the ministry of these two sorts of men, it is because he is a stranger to the work of the Gospel on the soul: and "if the Gospel (in its truth, or worth, or use) be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, the God of this world having blinded their minds." It must be no small matter that must satisfy

*posito separare se debet.* Which Grotius de Imper. p. 230. citing saith, *Jubentur enim singuli, multo magis universi, cavere prophetas falsos, alieum pastorem fugere, ab iis declinare qui dissidia faciunt et offensas contra doctrinam.* 2 Imperatur fidelibus familiarem eorum consuetudinem declinare qui fratres, &c. 2 Cor. v. Rom. xvi. 17. John v. 2 Tim. iii. 6. 2 Thess. iii. 6. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

¶ Satan or their own worldly advantages, saith Dr. Hammond. Dan. i. 12, 13. Ezek. iv. 12, 15. Read c. iii. Acosta excellently rebuking the negligence of their priests that taught the Indians the catechism idly, and without explication, or calling them to account about the sense, and then laid all the fault on the blockishness of the people, when 'Tota catechisandi ratio erat umbratilis, et ludicre similis: ego vero (inquit) si homines ingenio accerrimo, et discendi percupidis tales præceptores nacti essent, nihil aliud quam ut duplo ignorantiores evaderent, doceri isto modo arbitrarer. Olim in symbolo addiscendo et intelligendo, mysterisque fidei agnoscendis viri ingenio præstantes et literatura celebres, diu in catechumenorum ordine tenebantur, cum ecclesiastica disciplina vigeret; neque autem ad fidei sacramentum admittebantur,

a serious Christian to cast his soul upon any hurtful or dangerous disadvantage. Though Daniel and his companions may live well on pulse, yea, and Ezekiel upon bread baked with dung, when God will have it so, yet no wise man will choose such a diet; especially if his diseases require the most exact diet, or his weakness the most restorative, and all too little; which, alas, is the common case. Yet this caution you must here take with you, 1. That you pretend not your own benefit, to the common loss or hurt of others. 2. And that you consider as well where you may do most good, as where you may get most; for the way of greatest service, is the way of greatest gain.

*Direct. v.* 'Understand what sort and measure of belief it is that you owe to your teachers, that so your incredulity hinder not your faith in Christ, nor your over-much credulity betray you to heresy, nor make you the servants of men, contrary to Matt. xxiii. 8—10. Eph. iv. 13. 2 Cor. i. 24. Acts xx. 30.' We see on one side how many poor souls are cheated into schism and dangerous errors, by forsaking their teachers and refusing their necessary help, and all upon this pretence, that they must not make men the lords of their faith, nor pin their faith on the minister's sleeve, nor take their religion upon trust. And on the other side we see among the Papists, and in every sect, what lamentable

quam multas ab episcopo de symbolo conciones audissent, diu et multum cum catechista contulissent; post quas omnes curas et meditationes, magnum erat si recta sentirent, consentanea responderent, &c. and he addeth, p. 360. Equidem sic opinor, neque ab ea opinione avelli unquam potero, quin pessimo præceptorum omnes esse auditores hebetes credam. A bad teacher hath always bad scholars. Even in the Roman church how little their authority can do against profane and negligence, the same Acosta sheweth, lib. vi. c. ii. p. 519. Cum in provinciali concilio Limensi ab omnibus Peruensibus episcopis cæterisque gravibus viris ad ea vitia emendanda multum operæ et studii collatum sit, atque edita extent egregia decreta de reformatione permulta, nihil tamen amplius perfectum est, quam si ab otiosis navis de republica moderanda consultatæ esset. Bonific. Mogunt. Ep. liii. mentioneth it as the error of a new sprung sect, that heinous sinners even so continuing may be priests. And Ep. lxxiii. it is said, No man may be made a priest that hath sinned mortally after baptism, and, Si is qui tam in episcopatu vel presbyterio positus mortale peccatum aliquod admisit, non debet offerre panes Domino, quanto magis—patienter retrahat se ab hoc non tam honore quam onere, et aliorum locum qui digni sunt non ambiat occupare. Qui enim in erudiendis et instituendis ad virtutem populis præst, necesse est, ut in omnibus sanctus sit, et in nullo reprehensibilis habeatur. Qui enim aliquem de peccato arguit, ipse à peccato debet esse iunioris. Auct. Bib. Pat. Tom. ii. p. 81. If there were somewhat too much strictness in the ancient exclusion of them that heinously sinned after baptism from the priesthood, let not us be as much too loose.

work is made by an over-much credulity and implicit belief of ambitious, worldly, factious, proud and erroneous guides. That you may escape both these extremes, you must observe the truth of these conclusions following, which shew you what it is that your teachers have to reveal unto you, and in what order, and how far the several particulars are, or are not to be taken upon their words.

And first, as a preparative, it is presupposed, (1.) That you find yourself ignorant, and one that needeth a teacher: for if you think you know all that you need to know already, you are like a full bottle that will hold no more. (2.) It is presupposed that you take the man that you learn of to be wiser than yourself and fit to teach you: either because fame or other men's reports have told you so (as the woman John iv. drew the Samaritans to Christ), or because his own profession of skill doth make you think so (as you will hearken to him that professeth to be able to teach you any art or science); or else because your present hearing his discourse doth convince you of his wisdom; by one of these means you are brought to think that he is one that you may learn of, and is fit for you to hear; (so that here is no need that first you take him to be infallible, or that you know which is the true church, as the Papists say). These are supposed.

The doctrines which he is to teach you are these, and in this method to be taught. 1. He will teach you the natural knowledge of yourself; that being a man, you are a rational, free agent, made by another for his will and use, and by him to be ruled in order to your ultimate end, being wholly his, and at his disposal.

2. He will next teach you that there is a God that made you, and what he is, and what relation he standeth in to you, and you to him, as your Creator, your Owner, your Ruler, and your Benefactor, and your End: and what duty you owe him in these relations, to submit to him, and resign yourselves to him as his own, to be obedient to all his laws, and to love him and delight in him: and this with all your heart, and soul, and might; even to serve him with all the powers of your soul and body, and with your estates and all his blessings.

3. He will next teach you that this God hath made your

souls immortal, and that there is a life after this where everlasting happiness or misery will be your part, and where the great rewards and punishments are executed by the Judge of all the world as men have behaved themselves in this present life. That your end and happiness is not here, but in the life to come, and that this life is the way and time of preparation, in which everlasting happiness is won or lost.

Thus far he needeth no supernatural proof of what he saith ; but can prove it all to you from the light of nature : and these things you are not primarily to receive of him as a testifier by mere believing him ; but as a teacher, by learning of him the evidences by which you may by degrees come to know these things yourselves.

Yet it is supposed that all along you give him so much credit as the difference between his knowledge and yours doth require, so far as it appeareth to you : as you will hear a physician, a lawyer, a philosopher, or any man with reverence, while he discourseth of the matters of his own profession ; as confessing his judgment to be better than your's, and therefore more suspecting your own apprehensions than his. Not but that the truth may compel you to discern it, though you should come with no such reverence or respect to him ; but then you cast yourself upon much disadvantage irrationally ; and this human belief of him is but a medium to your learning, and so to the knowledge of the matter ; so that you do not stop and rest in his authority or credibility, but only use it in order to your discovery of that evidence which you rest in, which as a teacher he acquaints you with.

These things being thus far revealed by natural light, are (usually) at first apprehended by natural reason, not so as presently to put or prove the soul in a state of saving grace ; but so as to awaken it to make further inquiry ; and so when the soul is come so far as to see the same truths by supernatural grace in the supernatural revelation of the Holy Scriptures, then they become more effectual and saving, which before were known but preparatorily : and so the same truths are then both the objects of knowledge and of faith.

4. Having acquainted you with man's ultimate end and happiness in the life to come, the next thing to be taught



you by the ministers of Christ, is, that Christ as our Saviour, and faith, and repentance, and sincere obedience to be performed by us through his grace, is the way to heaven, or the means by which we must attain this end. Though the knowledge of the preacher's wisdom, piety and credibility remove some impediments which would make the receiving of this the more difficult to you, yet you are not to take it barely on his word, as a point of human faith; but you are to call for his proof of it, that you may see better reasons than his affirmations for the entertainment of it.

5. The proof that he will give you is in these two propositions, 1. God's revelations are all true. 2. This is one of God's revelations: this is an argument, 'Whatsoever God saith is true: but this God saith, therefore this is true. The first proposition you are not to take upon the trust of his word, but to learn of him as a teacher to know it in its proper evidence: for it is the formal object of your faith: the veracity of God is first known to you, by the same evidence and means as you know that there is a God: and then it is by the force of this that you believe the particular truths which are the material object of faith. And the second proposition that God hath revealed this, is orderly to be first proved, and so received upon its proper evidence; and not taken merely upon your teacher's word: yet if you do believe him by a human faith as a man that is likely to know what he saith, and this in order to a divine faith, it will not hinder, but help your divine faith and salvation; and is indeed no more than is your duty.

Here note, 1. That primarily these two great principles of faith, 'God is true,' and 'this is God's revelation,' are not themselves 'credenda', the material objects of divine faith, but of knowledge. 2. That yet the result of both is 'de fide,' matter of faith. 3. And the same principles are secondarily 'de fide,' as it is that there is a God. For though they are first to be known by natural evidence, yet when the Scripture is opened to us, we shall find them there revealed; and so the same thing may be the object both of knowledge and of faith. 4. And faith itself is a sort of knowledge: for though human faith have that uncertainty in its premises (for the most part), as forbiddeth us to say (properly) 'I know this to be true, because such a man said

it ;' yet divine faith hath that certainty which may make it an excellent sort of knowledge ; as I have proved copiously elsewhere. In believing man we argue thus, ' Whatsoever so wise and honest a man saith, is credible, that is, most likely to be true ; but this he saith : Therefore, &c.' But in believing God we argue thus, ' Whatever God saith is credible, that is, as infallible truth ; but this God saith : Therefore, &c.' So that the word ' credible,' signifieth not the same thing in the two arguments ; nor are divine faith, and human faith the same.

6. The next thing that the preacher hath to teach you, is the proof of the aforesaid minor proposition (for the major was proved in the proof of a deity) : and that is thus ; The Gospel which Christ and his apostles first preached, and is now delivered in the sacred Scriptures is the Word, or infallible revelation of God : but this doctrine, that Christ, with faith, and repentance, and obedience on our parts, are the way to life eternal, is the Gospel which Christ and his apostles first preached, &c. Therefore it is the Word of God. For the minor you need not take your teacher's word, if you can read ; for you may see it in the Bible, (of which more anon) : but the major is that which all men will desire to be assured of ' That the Gospel is God's Word.' And for that, though a belief of your teacher is a help and good preparatory, yet you are not there to stop, but to use him as a teacher to shew you the truth of it in the proofs : else you must take any thing for God's Word, which your teacher affirmeth to be such. And the proof which he will give you, must be some divine attestation which may be shewed to those whom we would convince.

7. This divine attestation, which he is next to shew you, hath many parts, that it may be complete and satisfactory.

1. God's antecedent testimony.
2. His inherent or impressed testimony.
3. His adherent, concomitant testimony.
4. His subsequent testimony.

1. God's antecedent testimony by which he attested the Gospel, is the train of promises, prophecies, types, and the preparing ministry of John, which all foretold Christ, and were fulfilled in him.

2. God's impressed testimony is that image and superscription of God (in his governing wisdom, holiness, and love,) which is inimitably engraven on the Gospel ; as an image

upon a seal, which is thereby made the instrument to imprint the same on other things. Thus as the sun, the Gospel shineth, and proveth itself by its proper light. 3. The concomitant attestation of God, is that of multitudes of certain, uncontrolled miracles, done by Christ and his apostles, which proved the approving hand of God, and oblige all rational creatures to believe a testimony so confirmed to them. Among these, Christ's own resurrection and ascension, and the gifts of his apostles are the chief. 4. The subsequent attestation of God is, the power and efficacy of the Gospel, in calling and sanctifying unto Christ a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and directing and confirming them against all temptations and torments to the end; producing that same image of God on the souls of his elect, which is (more perfectly) engraven on the Word itself: making such changes, and gathering such a people unto God, as no other doctrine ever did. And all these four attestations are but one, even the Holy Spirit, who is become the great witness of Christ and his Gospel in the world: viz.

1. The spirit of prophecy is the antecedent attestation.
2. The holy image which the Spirit hath printed on the Gospel itself, is the inherent evidence.
3. The miracles of the Spirit, is the concomitant attestation or evidence.
4. And the sanctifying work of the Spirit is the subsequent attestation, renewed and accompanying it to the end of the world.

So that the argument runs thus, 'That doctrine which hath this witness of the Holy Ghost, antecedently in such prophecies, inherently bearing his image so inimitably, accompanied by so many certain, uncontrolled miracles, and followed and attended with such matchless success in the sanctification of the body of Christ, is fully attested by God to be his own: but such is the doctrine of the Gospel; Therefore, &c.' The major you are not to take upon trust from your teachers, though your esteem of their judgment may the better dispose you to learn; but you are to discern the evidences of truth which is apparent in it. For he that denieth this, must by force of argument be driven to deny,

1. Either that God is the Governor of the world; or that he is the supreme; but say he is controlled by another.
2. Or that he is good and true; and must affirm that he either governeth the world by mere deceits, and undiscernible lies,

or that he hath given up the power to some one that so governeth it: all which is but to affirm that there is no God, (which is supposed to be proved before).

8. There now remaineth nothing to be taught you, as to prove the truth of the Gospel, but only those matters of fact which are contained and supposed in the minor of the two last arguments: and they are these particulars. 1. That there were such persons as Christ and his apostles, and such a Gospel preached by them. 2. That such miracles were done by them, as are supposed. 3. That both doctrine and miracles were committed to writing by them, in the Scriptures, for the more certain preserving them to the church's use<sup>9</sup>. 4. That churches were planted, and souls converted and confirmed by them in the first ages, many of whom did seal them with their blood. 5. That there have been a succession of such churches as have adhered to this Christ and Gospel. 6. That this which we call the Bible is that very book containing those sacred writings aforementioned. 7. That it hath been still copied out, and preserved without any such depravation or corruption as might frustrate its ends. 8. That the copies are such out of which we have them translated, and which we shew. 9. That they are so truly translated as to have no such corruptions or mistakes, as to frustrate their ends, or make them unapt for the work they were appointed to. 10. That these particular words are indeed here written which we read; and these particular doctrines containing the essentials of Christianity, together with the rest of the material objects of faith.

All these ten particulars are matters of fact that are merely subservient to the constituting principles of our faith, but yet very needful to be known. Now the question is, How these must be known and received by us so as not to invalidate our faith? And how far our teachers must be here believed? And first it is very useful for us to inquire, How so many of these matters of fact as were then existent were known to the first Christians? As how knew they in those days that there were such persons as Christ and his apostles? That they preached such doctrines, and spake

<sup>9</sup> Est enim admirabilis quedam continuatio seriesque rerum, ut alia ex alia nexa, et omnes inter se apte, colligatque videantur. Cic. Nat. D. I. 9.

such languages, and did such works, and that they wrote such books, and sent such epistles to the churches, and that churches were hereby converted and confirmed, and martyrs sealed this with their blood, &c.? It is easy to tell how they were certain of all these; even by their own eyes, and ears, and sensible observation, as we know that there are Englishmen live in England; and those that were more remote from some of the matters of fact, knew them by such report of those that did see them, as those among us that never saw the king, or court, or his restoration, do know that such a thing there was, and such a person there is. Thus they knew it then.

From whence I note, 1. That in those days it was not necessary to the being of true faith, that any supernatural testimony of the Spirit, or any other sort of proof, than their very senses and reason, should acquaint them with those matters of fact which they were eye-witnesses of. 2. That credible report or history was then the means for any one that saw not a matter of fact, to know as much as they that saw it. 3. That therefore this is now the way also of producing faith. Some things we have yet sight and sense for: as that such bibles, and such churches are existent; that such holy effects this doctrine hath upon the soul (which we see in others by the fruits, and after feel in ourselves): the rest we must know by history, tradition, or report.

And in the reception of these historical passages note further, 1. That human belief is here a naturally necessary means to acquaint us with the matter of our divine belief. 2. That there are various degrees of this belief, and some need more of it by far than others, according to the various degrees of their ignorance<sup>r</sup>: as he that cannot read himself, must know by human belief (in great part) that the

<sup>r</sup> By all this it is easy to gather whether a pastor may do his work per alium. See Grotius de Imp. pp. 290, 291. Nam illud quod quis per alium facit per se facere videtur ad eas duntaxat pertinet actiones quarum causa efficiens proxima à jure indefinita est. Yet people should labour after such maturity and stedfastness, that they may be able to stand if their pastors be dead or taken from them by persecution, yea, or forsake the truth themselves. Victor utic. saith of the people in Africa when their pastors were banished, and others might not be ordained in their steads: Inter hæc tamen Dei populus in fide consistens, ut examina apam cereas edificantiæ mansiones, crescendo melleis fidei claviculis firmabatur. Quanto magis affligebantur, tanto magis multiplicabantur. Victor. p. 582.

preacher readeth truly, or that such words indeed are in the Gospel as he saith are there; but a literate person may know this by his eye-sight, and not take it upon trust. So he that understandeth not Hebrew and Greek, must take it upon trust that the Scripture is truly translated; but another that understandeth those tongues, may see it with his eyes. 3. History being the proper means to know matters of fact that are done in times past, and out of our sight, the same industry that is necessary to a thorough acquaintance with other history, is necessary to the same acquaintance with this. 4. That the common beginning of receiving all such historical truths is first by believing our teachers so far as becometh learners, and in the mean time going on to learn till we come to know as much as they, and upon the same historical evidence as they. 5. That if any man be here necessitated to take more than others upon the trust or belief of their teachers, it is long of their ignorance: and therefore if such cry out against their taking things on trust, it is like a madman's raving against them that would order him; or as if one should reproach a nurse for feeding infants, and not letting them feed themselves. 'Oportet discentem credere.' He that will not believe his teacher will never learn. If a child will not believe his master, that tells him which are the letters, the vowels, and consonants, and what is their power, and what they spell, and what every word signifieth in the language which he is teaching him, will he be ever the better for his teaching? 6. That he that knoweth these historical matters no otherwise than by the belief of his particular teacher, may nevertheless have a divine and saving faith: for though he believe by a human faith that these things were done, that this is the same book, &c., yet he believeth the Gospel itself (thus brought to his knowledge) because God is true that hath attested it. Even as it was a saving faith in Mary and Martha that knew by their eyes and ears, and not only by belief, that Lazarus was raised, and that Christ preached thus and thus to them: but believed his doctrine to be true, because of God's veracity who attested it. 7. That it is the great wisdom and mercy of God to his weak and ignorant people, to provide them teachers to acquaint them with these things, and to vouchsafe them such a help to their salvation, as to

make it a standing office in his church to the end of the world, that the infants and ignorant might not be cast off, but have fathers, and nurses, and teachers to take care of them. 8. But especially mark, that yet these infants have much disadvantage in comparison of others, that know all these matters of fact by the same convincing evidence as their teachers; and that he that followeth on to learn it as he ought, may come to prove these subservient matters of fact, by such a concurrence of evidences, as amounteth to an infallibility or moral certainty, beyond mere human faith as such: as e. g. an illiterate person that hath it but from others, may be certain that it is indeed a Bible which is ordinarily read and preached to him; and that it is so truly translated as to be a sufficient rule of faith and life, having no mistake which must hazard a man's salvation; because the Bible in the original tongues is so commonly to be had; and so many among us understand it, and there is among them so great a contrariety of judgments and interests, that it is not possible but many would detect such a public lie, if any should deal falsely in so weighty and evident a case. There is a moral certainty (equal to a natural) that some actions will not be done by whole countries, which every individual person hath power and natural liberty to do: as e. g. there is no man in the kingdom but may possibly kill himself, or may fast to-morrow, or may lie in bed many days together. And yet it is certain, that all the people in England will do none of these: so it is possible that any single person may lie even in a palpable public case, as to pretend that this is a Bible when it is some other book, or that this is the same book that was received from the apostles by the churches of that age, when it is not it, &c. But for all the country, and all the world that are competent witnesses, to agree to do this, is a mere impossibility, I mean such a thing as cannot be done without a miracle, yea, an universal miracle. And more than so, it is impossible that God should do a miracle to accomplish such an universal wickedness and deceit; whereas it is possible that natural causes by a miracle may be turned out of course, where there is nothing in the nature of God against it (as that the sun should stand still, &c.). We have a certainty that there was a Julius Cæsar, a William the Conqueror, an Aristotle,

a Cicero, an Augustine, a Chrysostom, and that the laws and statutes of the land were really enacted by the kings and parliaments whose names they bear; because the natural and civil interests of so many thousands that are able to detect it, could never be reconciled here to a deceit. When judges and counsellors, kings and nobles, and plaintiffs and defendants, utter enemies, are all agreed in it, it is more certain to a single person than if he had seen the passing of them with his eyes. So in our case, when an office was established in the church, to read and preach this Gospel in the assemblies; and when all the congregations took it as the charter of their salvation, and the rule of their faith and life; and when these pastors and churches were dispersed over all the Christian world, who thus worshipped God from day to day; and all sects and enemies were ready to have detected a falsification or deceit, it is here as impossible for such a kind of history, or tradition, or testimony to be false, in such material points of fact, as for one man's senses to deceive him, and much more.

Thus I have at once shewed you the true order of the preaching, and proofs, and receiving of the several matters of religion, and how and into what our faith must be resolved; and how far your teachers are to be believed. And here you must especially observe two things, 1. That there can be no danger in this resolution of faith, of derogating either from the work of the Holy Ghost, or the Scriptures' self-evidence, or any other cause whatever: because we ascribe nothing to history or tradition which was ascribed to any of these causes by the first Christians; but only put our reception by tradition instead of their reception immediately by sense: our receiving by infallible history, is but in the place of their receiving by sight; and not in the place of the self-evidence of Scripture, or any testimony or teaching of the Spirit. The method is exactly laid down, Heb. ii. 3, 4. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness both with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will." Here is the sum of what I have been saying.

2. Observe also the great difference between us and the



Papists in this controversy of using tradition in the resolution of our faith. 1. They decide the main question in gross by tradition, viz. Whether the Scripture be the Word of God? But we only decide the questions about history or matters of fact by it, which are subservient to the other. 2. The tradition which most of them plead, is nothing but the authoritative judgment of the successive pastors of the church in a general council confirmed by the pope; and as another faction among them saith, The reception of the whole church both laity and clergy; and this church must be only the Roman faction. But the tradition which we plead is the concurrent testimony of friends and foes, orthodox and heretics; and of all the churches throughout the world, both Greek and Latin, Ethiopian, Armenian, Protestants, &c. And this testimony we plead, not merely as a human testimony, much less as such as is credible chiefly for the mere power (real or pretended) of the testifiers; but as such as by a concurrence of testimonies and circumstances hath (besides the teachers' authority) the evidences of infallible moral certainty, in the very history; as we have of the statutes of the realm.

*Direct. vi.* 'Understand what kind and measure of obedience it is that you owe your lawful pastors, that you neither prove schismatical and unruly, nor yet have a hand in setting up idols and usurpations in the church.' This you may learn from the foregoing description of the pastor's work. The kind of your obedience is commensurate to the kind of his office and work. You are not to obey your pastors, as civil magistrates that bear the sword; nor as physicians, to tell you what you must do for your health; nor as artificers, to command you how to plough, and sow, and trade, &c. (except in the morality of these): but it is as your teachers and guides in matters of salvation that you must obey them\*. And that not as prophets or lawgivers to the

\* We may not offer any violence, but only persuade: we have not so great authority given us by the laws, as to repress offenders: and if it were lawful for us so to do, we have no use of any such violent power: for that Christ crowneth them that abstain from sin, not of a forced, but of a willing mind and purpose. Chrys. citante Hilson of Subjection, p. 526. Et ibid. ex Hilar. If this violence were used for the true faith, the doctrine of bishops would be against it: God needeth no forced service. He requiseth no constrained confession. I cannot receive any man but him that is willing: I cannot give ear, but to him that entreateth, &c. Ita et Origen. ibid. citat. 2 Cor. i. 24. Gal. i. 7, 8. 2 Cor. x. 8. xiii. 10.

church ; but as the stated officers of Christ to open and apply the laws that he hath given, and determine of such circumstances as are subservient thereunto. Not as those that have dominion of your faith, or may preach another Gospel, or contradict any truth of God, which by Scripture or nature he hath revealed, or can dispense with any duty which he hath commanded ; but as those that have all their power from God, and for God and your salvation, and the good of other men's souls ; to edification only, and not to destruction : particular cases I here purposely forbear.

*Direct.* VII. ' Be sure that you look on them as the officers of Christ in all that they do as such ; and see not only their natural, but their ecclesiastical persons, that through them you may have to do with God.' Especially in preaching and administering the sacraments, and binding the impenitent, and absolving the penitent, and comforting the sad and humbled souls. All the holiness, and life, and power of your spiritual converse with them consisteth in your seeing and conversing with God in them, and using them as his messengers or officers, that deliver his message and do his work, and not their own. If you disobey them in his work, it is God that you disobey : and if they teach you his Word, or deliver you Christ and his benefits in the sacraments, it is Christ himself that doth it by them as by his instruments, so far as they do it according to his commission and his will. This observing Christ in their teaching will possess you with due reverence and care, and cause you to do it as a holy work ; and to see Christ in them, delivering and sealing his covenant to you, will very much increase your joy ; when man as man is but a shadow.

*Direct.* VIII. ' Make use of their help in private, and not in public only : ' as the use of a physician is not only to read a lecture of physic to his patients, but to be ready to direct every person according to their particular case (there being such variety of temperatures, diseases, and accidents, that in dangerous cases the direction of the judicious is needful in the application) : so here, it is not the least of the pastoral work, to oversee the individuals, and to give them personally such particular advice as their case requireth. Never expect that all thy books, or sermons, or prayers, or meditations should serve thy turn without the counsel of thy

pastors, in greater cases; for that were but to devise how to prove God's officers needless to his church. If thou be an ignorant or unconverted sinner, go to the minister, and ask him, what thou must do to be saved? And resolve to follow his sound advice. If thou be in doubt of any weighty point of faith or godliness, or assaulted perilously by any adversary, or need his advice for thy settled peace, thy assurance of pardon and salvation, and thy preparation for death; go ask counsel of thy pastors, and receive their help with readiness and thankfulness: or if thou live where there is none that is able and willing thus to help thee, remove to them that are such, if lawfully thou canst.

*Direct. ix.* ' Assist your pastors in the work of God, by the duties of your places which tend thereto.' Labour by your holy, serious conference, to instruct the ignorant, and convince the unbelieving, and convert the ungodly, and strengthen the weak, with whom you have fit opportunity for such work. Labour by your holy examples, by love, and concord, and meekness, and sobriety, and contempt of the world, and a heavenly life, to shine as lights in the midst of a dark and crooked generation. Preach all of you by the examples of your blameless, humble, holy lives. O how abundantly would this course promote the success or the public preaching of the Gospel! If you would cause those men to see the glory and power of the Gospel in your holy and heavenly lives, who cannot see it in itself; then many that would not be won by the Word, might be won without it (to seek after it at least) by your conversations. Thus all must preach and be helpers of the ministers of Christ.

*Direct. x.* ' Forsake not your faithful pastors to follow deceivers; but adhere to them who spend and are spent for you: defend their innocency against false accusers; and refuse them not such maintenance as is needful to their entire giving up themselves to that holy work to which they are devoted.' Read and study well Ephes. iv. 13—15. Acts xx. 30. It is for your sakes that your faithful pastors are singled out in the world to bear the slanders and contradictions of the wicked; and to lead the way in the fiery trial. If they would forsake you, and that sacred truth and duty that is needful to your salvation, and sell you up into the hands of cruel and deceitful men, it were as easy for them to have the applause of men, and the prosperity of the world as

others : it is perfidious ingratitude to forsake them in every trial, that must lose their lives and all the world, rather than forsake you or betray your souls : or to grudge them food and raiment that lay by the gainful employments of the world, that they may attend continually on the service of your soula.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *Directions for the Discovery of the Truth among Contenders, and the Escape of Heresy and Deceit.*

THOUGH truth be naturally the object of man's understanding, to which it hath a certain inclination, and though it be a delightful thing to know the truth<sup>a</sup>; yet that which is saving meeteth with so much opposition in the flesh, and in the world, that while it is applauded in the general, it is resisted and rejected in particulars : and yet while the use of holy truth is hated and obstinately cast away, the name and the barren profession of it is made the matter of the glorying of hypocrites, and the occasion of reproaching dissenters as heretics, and the world is filled with bloody persecutions, and inhuman, implacable enmities and divisions, by a wonderful zeal for the name of truth, even by those men that will rather venture on damnation, than they will obey the truth which they so contend for. Multitudes of men have tormented or murdered others as heretics, who themselves must be tormented in hell for not being Christians. It concerneth us therefore to deal very wisely and cautiously in this business.

*Direct. 1.* 'Take heed lest there be any carnal interest or lust which maketh you unwilling to receive the truth, or inclineth you to error, that it may serve that interest or lust.' It is no small number of men that are strangers or enemies to the truth, not because they cannot attain the knowledge of it, but because they would not have it to be truth. And men of great learning and natural parts are frequently thus deceived and led into error by a naughty, carnal, biassed heart : either because that error is the vulgar

<sup>a</sup> Nitebatur Socrates summo ingenii acumine, non tam illorum sententiam resellere, quam ipse quid verum esset, invenire. *Dlog. Læret. in Socrat. lib. ii. sect. 22. p. 93.*