



MICROFILMED - 1984

4.3.63 A J. Davy.
DISCOURSE
Concerning the
KNOWLEDGE
OF
Jesus Christ,

And our
Union and Communion with him, &c.
To which is annexed a
Defence and Continuation;

WITH
A particular respect to the Doctrine of the
Church of *England*, and the Charge of
Socinianism, and Pelagianism.

By **WILLIAM SHERLOCK,**
Rector of *St. George Botolph-Lane, London.*

The Third Edition Corrected.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. Clark* for *W. Kettilby*, at the
Bishops-Head in *St. Paul's Church-Yard.* 1678.

THE
P R E F A C E.

Christian Reader,



I Am conscious to my self
of so honest a Design
in writing this Dis-
course, that I am ve-
ry well armed against those various
Censures which are the usual Re-
ward of such Attempts ; for there is
no such Sanctuary against the rudest
Clamours and the most unjust Re-
proaches, as a good Conscience. I was
heartily grieved to see so many well-
disposed Persons abused with Words

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The Preface.

and Phrases, which either signifie nothing, or have a very ambiguous and doubtful, or a very bad sense; when I have observed that great Zeal which some men have for the Worship of God, I have often thought what great Instruments they might be of Gods Glory, were their Zeal directed and governed with Knowledge and Judgment; and when I have observed how innocently and vertuously some of those men live who have espoused such Principles as naturally tend to make them bad, I have thought what excellent Persons they might prove, did they rightly understand so excellent a Religion, as is published to the World in the Gospel of Christ; such thoughts as these at first engaged me in this
Work,

The Preface.

Work, to rectifie those mistakes which will either make men bad, or hinder and retard their progress in true Goodness, which is so pious and charitable a design, as may at least plead my excuse, though it should appear to be a mistaken Zeal.

In the management of this Discourse, I have carefully avoided all Personal Reflections, have not meddled with the Lives and Actions of Men, which I am so charitable as to hope may be more Orthodox than their Judgments: I have represented their Opinions in their own Words, and am not conscious to my self, that I have put any other sense upon their Words than they intended; and I cannot see what reason any man hath to take it ill that I repeat that, which

THE PREFACE.

he himself though fit to publish: where they pretend to argue gravely, I have examined their Arguments with all possible gravity and solemnity; where they plainly toy and trifle, I have so far complied with their humour, as to smile sometimes, though as modestly as any man can desire: I have taken care, not only to unteach men what was amiss, but to explain and confirm the true notions of Religion, lest any man should suspect, that under a pretence of rectifying mistakes I designed to expose all Religion. What men will account severe, I cannot tell, because the gentlest Arguments will appear severe to any man, who is pinched by them; but I have given no hard words, and have sometimes called things

The Preface.

things by softer names than they deserve, on purpose to avoid the imputation of severity, which is now the common Artifice to teach men to despise and reproach what they cannot answer: And if after all this, I cannot escape without some hard names and hard censures, I must be contented with my portion; and indeed no man ought to expect better usage, who considers, that M. Baxter himself, who hath deserved so well for his Pious Labours, could not escape, when he touched upon their Darling Notions.

And now, Christian Reader, I shall beg no more of thee, than to read this Discourse with an honest and unprejudiced mind, and as I did not compose it without imploring the
Guidance

THE PREFACE.

*Guidance and Direction of God,
so I recommend it to thee with my
heartly prayers, that it may prove as
useful, as my intentions were honest
and charitable.*

Farewel.

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INTRODUCTION
TO THE
DEFENCE and CONTINUATION
OF THE
DISCOURSE
CONCERNING
THE KNOWLEDGE OF
JESUS CHRIST, &c.
CONTAINING
*The Reasons which moved me to write
that DISCOURSE.*

THere is not a more lamentable
sight in the World, than the
present state of Religion, which
is assaulted by so many subtil
and malicious Adversaries, crumbled into
so many Sects and Factions, pester'd with
such

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such infinite Disputes, that it is time to cry out, as the Disciples did in the Storm, *Help Lord, or we perish.* And that, which makes the case so desperate, is, that the Disease is too strong for the Remedy, and the wisest Prescriptions do only stir and provoke, not expel the Humors; or as it is in some complicated Distempers, that w^{ch} is proper for one disease, is very hurtful for another; which makes the state both of the Patient and Physician very dangerous; the one being likely to lose his Life, and the other his Reputation. I was not wholly ignorant of these difficulties, when I ventured my late *Discourse* into the world, but have now a more sensible experience, what it is to oppose inveterate prejudices; and what little hope there is of doing much good, when a man must contend, not against Reason and Argument, (in which way any ingenious persons will be glad to be overcome) but against Passion, & Interest, and popular Clamors, and the rude assaults of a spiteful and unchristian Zeal.

And yet I cannot say, that my labour is lost; for I am sensible, that my *Discourse* has already served to rectify the mistakes of some honest and unprejudiced men, and I hope may do so still; for those
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little and unmanly Arts which have been used to disparage it and its Author, cannot long abuse any ingenious minds; and when the cheat is discovered, it will but give the greater reputation to abused truth and honesty.

For this Reason I am resolved not to betray a good Cause, but to venture once more, and to leave the success to the Divine Grace and Providence, which is more peculiarly concerned for the interest of Religion, and true goodness; and if I should see no other good effect of it, yet I can abundantly satisfy my self in honest intentions, and worthy and generous designs.

For if I know my own thoughts (and I think no man knows them better) it was not a disputing humour, nor an affectation of Fame and Glory, which gave birth to that *Discourse*: Popular errors are a more likely way to procure a popular esteem, than despised and persecuted truths; and though the judgment of the wise is more valuable, yet the opinion of the people gives a name; as Dr. Owen verily well observes from his own experience, that his reputation is secured by the cry and vogue of a Faction, when his Arguments are baffled, and practices exposed.

Vind. p. 5.

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And

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And there is nothing I am more averse to, than a disputing humour; there are very few opinions, which I think worth contention; while the general concerns of Religion and a good Life are secured, I can be contented, that men should differ in some nicer speculations, and it is a folly to be discontented at it, for they always will, and there is no hurt in it: There are five hundred curious questions started by some wanton wits, which can never be determined, and it is no matter, whether they be or not; but whatever opinions have a bad influence upon mens lives, are destructive to their souls too; and it becomes every man, who hath any concern for the eternal welfare of mankind, to oppose such dangerous mistakes.

And this was the true occasion of my writing that Discourse; for the principal Doctrines, which I there oppose, are such, as according to the best judgment I can make of them, do either expressly, or in their immediate consequences, encourage men to be bad; and if I am not mistaken in it (as I see no reason yet to think I am) it was the most charitable design I could undertake; and if I be, though my Adversaries may reasonably condemn me for imprudence or ignorance, yet they ought
in

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in justice to commend my Charity: And indeed, let it prove how it will, I cannot but foresee some good effect of it; for those who have any care of their souls, must either reject such Doctrines, as are destructive of a good Life, or more expressly declare for the necessity of a good Life, notwithstanding such Doctrines; and either way I have my end, so this Conclusion be universally received, whatever the Premises be: though this last I think is much the worst way, it being dangerous to intrust men with bad principles, for then they will draw Conclusions for themselves; and most men are very sagacious to discover such consequences as will serve their interest, and patronize their lusts.

This I have often observed in conversing with several sorts of men, that they were very well skild in all those principles which tended to loofness and debauchery, and that they understood the consequences of them too well, and did at all turns make use of them to apologize for their own and other mens vices, who were accounted gracious persons; the impossibility of keeping Gods Laws was their excuse, and the righteousness of Christ their refuge; the one lessened their guilt, and

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the other covered it ; and I found , that let St. *John* say what he would, they had found out a way to be righteous without doing righteousness.

Nay I observed farther, that too many were grown so fond of these Notions, that they were impatient to hear any Preacher, who instructed them in their Duty, and prest the necessity of a holy Life, unless he concluded comfortably with a Caution not to trust in their Duties, nor to expect that God would be ever the better pleased with them upon that score, but that they must hope to be saved only by the Righteousness of Christ, which (however it was intended by the Preacher) I found was too often expounded by the Hearers, as a *Gospel-Use*, which relaxt the Rigor and Severity of that *Legal Doctrine* of the necessity of Good Works.

And it was too evident, that their Preachers did very much contribute to, and encourage this humour, as the last refuge of their sinking Cause : all their pretences for Separation had been notoriously baffled and shamed, and they were reduced to that case, that they could dispute no longer ; and therefore the most effectual way they could take, was to perswade the People, that Christ and the Gospel were

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confined to a *Conventicle*, and to declaim against those *Moral Preachers*, who made it their constant business to perswade men to live well, and urged this, as the most material and necessary part of Religion, and the great end of Christ's coming into the World : A strange and unpardonable crime, that a Minister of the Gospel should preach up good Works ! and yet this is the great reproach that is cast upon the City-Clergy, (and I thank God, that there is so much reason for it) this makes these men jealous of the Honour of Christ, and the Grace of God, as if there would not be sins enough for Christ to expiate, and for the grace of God to pardon, unless men continued wicked : This occasioned that great out-cry against a late excellent Book to prove that *Holiness is the Design of Christianity*, that the great end of what Christ hath done and suffered for us, is, to transform us into the nature of God, and thereby to qualifie us for the eternal fruition of him ; as if this were too mean a design for the Son of God to effect, or there could be any thing more great and honourable, or the Salvation of Mankind could be obtained without it.

So that indeed I was not the first Assailant, but writ in the defence of a holy life, which

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which was cried down by these men either under the name of *Morality*, or of a *Legal Righteousness*, and in justification of those pious and truly Gospel-Preachers, who were scandalized and reproached as great Enemies to Christ, and the Grace of God, without any other pretence than their great Zeal and vigorous Endeavours to convince men of the necessity and advantages of a good Life.

It has bin the artifice of such men in all times to reproach the Loyal and Conformable Clergy; formerly they were a company of *dumb Dogs* and *Idol Shepherds*, because they were not every day in the Pulpit; but since their industrious and conscientious Labours have confuted that calumny, now they quarrel with them for preaching so well, for directing all their discourses to the advancement of true Piety and a practical Religion; without which Preaching can serve no end but to wheadle and cajole the People, and to maintain and promote a Faction.

Their pretences indeed for this are glorious and popular, that Christ is not preached, nor the grace of God sufficiently advanced in the Work of our Redemption; this were really a very great fault, if it were true, and such as does unchristian
those

those men who are guilty of it; and therefore the great design of my Book was to wipe off this reproach, to show what it is to know Christ, and to preach him, to explain those Metaphors whereby Christ is described, and to reconcile the necessity of Holiness with the Doctrine of Christs Merits and Satisfaction, and Imputation of his Righteousness; and withal to make it appear, that some, who glory so much in preaching Christ, have made a very false representation of him, and out of a pretended veneration to the *Person* of our Saviour, have thrust his *Gospel* out of the World, or made such a Nose of Wax of it, as to serve any purpose but that, for which it was first designed.

And since my Adversaries have endeavoured to misrepresent the Doctrine and Design of my Book, and by affixing ill names to it, deter their followers from looking on the inside, or once considering what it is they are afraid of; I shall here give a short Abstract of the whole Doctrine, and do earnestly beg that favour of every man, if he will not be at the trouble to read and consider the *Discourse* itself, at least to peruse this short Account of it, before he allow himself the liberty of reviling.

Only

Only I must observe by the way, how the state of things is already altered since the appearing of my Discourse ; before, the great noise and clamour was against Moral and Legal Preachers, who preach'd up Holiness, but left out Christ and the Grace of God ; now when they are charg'd on the other hand with as much undervaluing a holy Life, and with advancing the Person of Christ to the prejudice of his Laws and Religion, they change their note, and would perswade the world, that there is no real difference between us, but that I force their Expressions to a sense which they never intended ; they are now grown great Patrons of Holiness, and whatever they talk of the Excellency of Christs Person, or of his boundless and bottomless compassion, and of such an infinite mercy, which all the sins in the world cannot equal, and of such a Patience as will save us *notwithstanding our sins*, they mean no more, than what we believe, as heartily as they, that Christ is able and willing to save all those who repent, and believe, and reform their lives, and that he will save none but upon these terms : I am glad with all my heart to hear this, for I designed no more than to establish this Doctrine ; but what account can they
give

give after this of their general out-cry against Legal and Moral Preachers? Were there any men who taught the People that Holiness would save them without the Merits of Christ? I know no such, they were none of my Companions and Complices, at whom the Doctor so often flirts.

And if there be no real difference between us, but only a different phrase and manner of expression, I wonder why they should be so angry with those men, who speak that so plainly, that the People cannot mistake them, which they affect to obscure in uncouth and mystical phrases : There can be no account given of this, but that they are willing, at least, that the People should believe there is a difference, and are not so faithful to Mens Souls as to prevent such dangerous mistakes.

Were these phrases of *coming to Christ*, and *closing with Christ*, and *leaning and resting* and *rolling our Souls on Christ for Salvation*, and such like, generally understood, (not only by some cunning Sophisters, when they are forc'd by reason and argument to put a sober sense on them, but by the common people) to signifie no more than expecting to be saved by Christ according to Gospel-terms, that is, upon the conditions of Faith
and

and Repentance, and a new Life, I should think him very ill employed, who should disturb the peace of the Church for the sake of any modes of speaking; but when it is so evident, that the Preachers themselves, when they have no adversary, expound these phrases to a very different, if not contrary purpose; and that the generality of Hearers never suspect that coming to Christ, and closing with Christ, include Obedience and a holy Life; but that this is rather a hinderance to their closing with Christ, as their Preachers tell them: This makes it necessary to oppose those forms of speech which are generally abused to evil purposes, and it is an argument of no great honesty, to be fond of words and phrases to the prejudice of mens souls.

And yet after all this, the Doctor cannot forget his old grudge against these Preachers of holiness: He tells us, *I know there are not a few, who in the course of a vain worldly conversation, whilst there is scarce a back or belly of a Disciple of Christ that bleaseth God upon account of their bounty or charity (the footsteps of levity, vanity, scurrility, and prophaness, being moreover left upon all the paths of their haunt) are wont to declaim about holiness, good works, and justification by them, which is a*

ready

ready way to instruct men to Atheism, or the scorn of every thing that is professed in Religion.

No doubt but there is a great mixture of truth and modesty in this censure; I thank God I know no such persons, and if I did, I should abhor them as much, as he can: but the Doctors quarrel seems to be not so much at the *vanity and prophaness, &c. of their Conversation*, (for it is a known Maxim among them, *The worse the better*) as at their preaching Holiness, &c. Good Sir, if such men are permitted to preach, what would you have them preach? Should they cry down holiness, and preach up debauchery? Is this the way to cure the world of Atheism? Or should they teach men to trust wholly in the righteousness of Christ, without any righteousness of their own? I confess, this would much more become them; and I wonder all bad men are not of this persuasion, though I hope the Doctor and his Friends have some better reason for their Zeal.

For the same cause these men persecute my Discourse, the whole design of which is no more than to convince men of the absolute necessity of a universal Righteousness in order to please God, and to save their souls; that no man must expect to be saved by Christ without obeying the Gospel,

Gospel, and imitating the example of his Lord; and that this is the meaning of all those phrases of Scripture, of *believing in Christ, and coming to him, and receiving him, and being united to him, and ingrafted in him,* and the like, which are expounded by some men to the prejudice of obedience, and to encourage sinners to expect justification by Christ (and those who are justified, are actually in a state of salvation) while they are in their filth and impurities.

I cannot but think it very glorious to suffer in such a cause; this was the very reason, why the Pharisees persecuted our Saviour himself, because he rejected all their external and ceremonial righteousness, and exacted from them a sincere and internal obedience to the divine Laws; and plainly told them, That nothing would carry them to Heaven, but such a renovation of their minds and spirits as transformed them into the likeness and image of God: This is the great fault of my Book, and the true reason of all this noise and clamour, as will appear by taking a summary account of the whole Design, and Doctrine of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Containing a short Account of the Design and Doctrine of the Discourse concerning the Knowledge of Christ, &c.

THe Design I proposed to my self in that Discourse, was to reconcile that Love and Honour and Adoration, Trust and Affiance, which all Christians owe to their Lord and Saviour, with the necessity of obeying his Laws, and being conformed to his Example; that esteem and reverence we owe to the Person of Christ, with a reverence for his Laws; that no man might expect to be saved by Christ, though he be infinitely gracious and compassionate, and inherit all the boundless Perfections of the Deity, without the practice of an universal Righteousness. And therefore I showed that all those Considerations Chap. 2. which did naturally result from the contemplation of the Person of Christ, as he is the Eternal Son of God, who was made Man,

Man, and sent into the World to accomplish the work of our Redemption, did necessarily engage us to obey his Laws, but gave us no encouragement to expect any thing more from him upon his Personal account, than what he hath promised in his Gospel.

“ This (I observed) was a plain demonstration of Gods love to Mankind, that he sent so great and so dear a Person as his only begotten Son, to save Sinners: — No man can doubt of Gods good will to Sinners, who sees the Son of God cloathed with our flesh, and dying as a Sacrifice for our sins; and this gives relief to our guilty fears, and encourages us to retrieve our past follies by new Obedience. No man will return to his Duty without some hope of Pardon and Forgiveness for his past sins; and the proper use of Gods love in sending Christ into the World, is to conquer our Obstinacy, and to encourage our Hopes.

Thus the greatness of Christs Person gives great Reverence and Authority to his Gospel, and an inviolable Sanction to his Laws, as the Apostle argues; *If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of Reward, how shall we escape if we neglect*

neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, 2 Heb. 1. 2, 3.

And this gives great Authority to his Example, and lays forcible obligations on us to imitate him, who was not only our Saviour, but God incarnate.

“ And this assures us of the infinite value of his Sacrifice, and of the power of his Intercession: God cannot but be pleased, when his own Son undertakes to be a Ransom, and to make Atonement for sinners, which is so great a vindication of Gods Dominion and Sovereignty, of the authority of his Laws, and the wisdom and justice of his Providence, that he may securely pardon humble and penitent sinners without reproaching any of his Attributes; and we can desire no greater security for the performance of this Gospel-Covenant, than that it was sealed with the blood of the Son of God.

And this is a great encouragement to return to God, when we have such a powerful Advocate and Mediator to intercede for us.

“ But then we must expect no more from Christ, upon account of his personal Excellencies and Perfections, than what he hath promised in his Gospel.

C

Christ

“ Christ is the object of our Faith and
 “ Hope, only as he is our Saviour; and he
 “ is our Saviour in no other sense, than as
 “ he is our Mediator; and he mediates for
 “ us as our Priest, that is, in vertue of that
 “ Covenant, which he hath sealed with
 “ his blood; and therefore we have no
 “ reason to expect any thing from the
 “ Person of Christ which is not contained
 “ in his Covenant, much less, which con-
 “ tradicts it; for that would be, in effect,
 “ to renounce his Mediation, and to trust to the
 “ goodness of his Nature.

Christ will in his own Person accom-
 plish all those Promises he hath made,
 whether they concern the present assistan-
 ces of his Grace, or his Providence and
 Protection in this world, or the future re-
 wards of the next: but we must learn what
 Christ will do for us, and upon what
 terms, not from the boundless Perfections
 and Excellencies of his Person, but from
 the Declarations of the Gospel, though
 the consideration of his Person, who he is,
 and how he lived, and what he taught,
 may convince any man, that he will be a
 Saviour to none but those who live in the
 practise of that Righteousness, of which
 he was a Preacher and Example.

Now to silence the clamors of some
 men,

men, who upbraided those Preachers who
 spent their greatest zeal in expounding
 the Laws of Christ, and in pressing men
 by all the Motives and Arguments of the
 Gospel (the Sacrifice and Mediation of
 Christ, the necessity of a good Life to
 make men happy hereafter, and the many
 great advantages of Holiness here, &c.)
 to the practise of an universal Righteous-
 ness; I say, to silence the clamors of those,
 who upbraided such Preachers with not
 preaching Christ, I considered in the next
 place, what it is to know Christ, and so
 consequently, what it is to preach Him;
 and the sum of it was this, That to know
 Christ, is to be acquainted with that Re-
 velation which Christ hath made of Gods
 will to the world: For as in former ages
 God made himself known by the light of
 Nature, and the works of Creation and
 Providence, and those partial and occasi-
 onal Revelations of his Will, which he
 made to good men; now in these last days
 he hath sent his Son into the world, to de-
 clare his Will to us: And therefore the
 only useful knowledge is to understand
 those Revelations, which Christ hath made
 of Gods Will, the necessary consequence
 of which is, that he, who expounds the
 Laws and Doctrine of the Gospel, does in
 the

*Discourse
 of the
 Knowledge
 of Christ,
 Chap. 3.*

the most proper sense preach Christ, as *Philip* is said to preach Christ to the *Samaritans*, Act. 8. 5. which in *ver.* 12. is called, *Preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ*; that is, the whole Doctrine of the Gospel.

The whole Christian Religion is the Knowledge of Christ, and the Laws of Righteousness, and the Motives to Obedience as principal a part as any, because this was the ultimate design of Christ's coming into the world to reform mens lives, and to prepare them for the happiness of the next world, by transforming them into a Divine Nature: All that Christ did and suffered, was only in order to this end, and then we understand all those mysteries of the Incarnation, and Death, and Intercession of Christ, as much as is necessary to the purposes of Religion; when we understand what obligations, they lay on us to a holy Life, and feel their power and vertue in renewing and sanctifying our minds.

In the next place I observed, that the foundation of the greatest and most dangerous mistakes, was laid in a wrong notion of our *Union to Christ*, of which some men discourse in such uncouth and Cabalistical terms, as no Body can understand,

stand, and therefore I endeavoured to state the true notion of our Union to Christ, and Communion with him. chap. 4.

And the sum of it is this, that those Metaphors which describe our union to Christ, do primarily refer to the Christian Church, not to every individual Christian; as Christ is the Head, and the Church or whole Society of Christians his Body; a Husband, and the Church his Spouse; a Shepherd, and the Church his Flock; a Rock, whereon his Church is built; the chief corner Stone, and the Church a holy Temple.

But as for particular Christians, their Union to Christ is by means of their Union to the Christian Church: that is, no man can be united to Christ, till he be a Christian; and no man is in the Scripture account a Christian, till he make a public profession of his Faith, and be solemnly admitted into the Christian Church, which is the Body of Christ, for which he died, and to which all the Promises of the Gospel are made.

A secret and private Faith in Christ is not ordinarily enough to make any man a Christian; but Faith in the Heart, and the Confession of the Mouth are both necessary: *Rom. x. 9, 10.* Christ himself hath

appointed the publick Sacrament of our Initiation, and our Church teacheth her Children, that in their Baptism (which is their solemn admission into the Christian Church) *They are made Members of Christ, the Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

But I have abundantly confirmed this Notion in my former Discourse, and those who would be more fully satisfied in it, may have recourse thither. The next thing to be considered is, what is the true nature of this Union betwixt Christ and his Church, and the most general and comprehensive notion is, that it is a Political, not a natural Union: the Union between Christ and his Church consists in their mutual Relations to each other; now those Relations whereby the Scripture represents this Union, signifie Power and Authority on Christs part, and Inferiourity and Subjection in the Church: Christ is the Head and Husband, which signifies Rule and Government; and the Church is his Spouse and Body; and therefore as the Wife is subject to the Husband, and the Body to the Head, so the Church must be subject to Christ; and the like may be said of all those other Relations, whereby this Union is described.

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Only when I call it a Political Union, you must not imagine that it is only such an external Relation, as is between a Prince and his Subjects; because Christ is a spiritual King, and his Authority reaches to the Heart and Spirit, which no Humane Power can: no man is in a proper sense a Subject of Christs Kingdom, but he, who governs his Heart and Spirit, as well as his external Actions, by the Laws of the Gospel; and though an external and visible profession of the Gospel entitles men to an external Communion with the Christian Church, because the external Government of the Church is committed to men, who cannot discern hearts and thoughts; yet whoever does not heartily obey Christ, is not really united to him; for the subjection of the Mind and Spirit is the principal thing which denominates us the Subjects of a spiritual King: and therefore this may be called a Spiritual-Political Union, which principally respects the Subjection of our Minds and Spirits to Christ, and does necessarily include a participation of the same nature with him, and a mutual & reciprocal love: It is a Political Union because it consists in the Authority and Government of Christ as a Head and Husband, and in the

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Subjection and Obedience of the Church, as his Body and Spouse: and it is Spiritual, because the Authority of Christ does not only reach our Outward Actions, as the Government of Earthly Princes does, but extends it self to our Minds and Spirits: and if you will put it into other words, our Union to Christ consists in a hearty belief of his Revelations, in obedience to his Laws, and subjection to his Authority, this makes us the Church the Temple of God, wherein he dwells, as he formerly did in the Temple at *Jerusalem*; this is that which the Scripture calls having Fellowship and Communion with God and Christ, which signifies being of that Society, which puts us into a peculiar relation to God, that God is our Father, and we his Children; that Christ is our Head and Husband, our Lord and Master, we his Disciples and Followers, his Spouse and his Body: this entitles us to his Merits and Righteousness, to his peculiar Care and Providence, to the Influences of his Grace, to the Power of his Intercession, to all those blessings, which he hath purchased for, and promised to his Church.

Now besides that this Notion is plain and intelligible, and very aptly agrees with

with all those Metaphors and Forms of Speech, whereby the Scripture represents our Union to Christ, there are these two great advantages we gain by it: first that this is a plain demonstration of the evil and danger of Schism, a sin which very few men have any sense of in these days; for if our Union to Christ as our Head, necessarily requires our Union to the Christian Church, which is his Body, then to divide from the Christian Church, or any true and sound part of it, does not only make a rent in the Body of Christ, which is a very great evil, but divides us from Christ; as a Member, which is separated from the Body, is separated from the Head too: this makes the Sentence of Excommunication so dreadful, because it cuts us off from the Body of *Christ*; and this Sentence every Schismatick executes upon himself, and that more infallibly too than church-Governours can; for they may be mistaken in the Justice of the cause, and may separate those from the external Communion of the Church, who are spiritually united to *Christ*, and then their Sentence is reversed by a superior Tribunal: But whoever causlessly separates from the Christian Church, or any part of it, does infallibly divide himself from *Christ*.

Christ, unless it be through such invincible mistakes, as may mitigate the crime, and plead his excuse; for Schism is a work of the flesh, the effect of Pride, and Passion, or Interest, or some other carnal Lust; and it concerns those men, who make so light of Schism, to consider, how they expect to be saved by Christ, who is only the Saviour of the Body, when they have divided themselves from his Body, and are no longer any part or member of it.

A second advantage, which we gain by this notion, is this, that it gives a plain account of the necessity of Holiness and Obedience to entitle us to the Merits of Christ, and Justification by him, and to all those Promises, which Christ hath made to his Body and Members; whoever is in Christ, and united to him, shall certainly be saved by him; for he is the Saviour of the Body; and our Justification is not owing to our own Merits and Deserts, but to the Merits of Christ, for whose sake alone, God hath promised to justify and reward those, who are united to him; but since our Union to Christ consists in the subjection of our Souls and Bodies to him, Holiness and Obedience is as necessary a condition of our Justification by Christ, as it

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is essential to our Union to him: We cannot be justified by Christ, till we are united to him, and we are not united to him, till we obey him: this gives the glory of all to Christ, because we are justified for his sake, by virtue of our Union to him, and yet vindicates the necessity of a holy Life, because this is essential to our Union to Christ.

And this is the sum of whatever I asserted concerning the Necessity of Good Works to our Justification; not that they can merit any thing of God, but that they are the necessary conditions of the Covenant of Grace, which was purchased and sealed by the Blood of Christ; or in other words, that they are necessary to our Union with Christ, and thereby to give us an interest in all those Promises of Pardon, and Grace, and Eternal Life, which Christ hath made to his Church. The Righteousness of Christ is our Righteousness, when we speak of the Foundation of the Covenant, by which we are accepted; but if we speak of the terms of the Covenant, then we must have a Righteousness of our own, not to merit Justification or Eternal Life, but to entitle us to the Grace and Mercy of the New Covenant, or which is all one, to unite us to Christ,

Christ, by whom and for whose sake we are justified: to say, that Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel, a new Nature, and Holiness of Life, are the necessary conditions of our Justification by Christ, and to say, that they are essential to our Union to Christ, by whom we are justified, are different forms of Speech, but signifie the same thing; because Christ justifies none but those, who are united to him, and none are united to him but by Faith and Obedience; and so *e converso*, those who believe and obey the Gospel are in so doing united to Christ, and they, and none else, shall be justified by him: which gives a plain account, how the Virtue and Merit of all is due to Christ, because we are justified by our relation to him; and explains the meaning of those phrases of *receiving Christ, and coming to him for Life and Salvation, and believing in him*; which signifies our being united to him by a sincere Faith and Obedience, which is necessarily required of all those, who would be justified by him.

In the last Chapter I give a short account of the nature of Christ's love to us, and of our love to Christ, that no man might mistake the love of Christ for a fond and easie passion, nor think to please him with some

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heats and raptures of Fancy, instead of the substantial Returns of Duty and Obedience: the sum of which in short is this; that Christ expressed a wonderful and stupendious Love in dying for us, especially in dying for us, while we were his Enemies; upon which account the Scripture every where magnifies the love of Christ: but though this were the greatest, yet it is not the only expression of his love, but he manifests the same good will in all the methods of his Grace and Providence: he is an easie and gentle Governour, who rules with the natural tenderness and compassion of a Shepherd, a Husband, a Head, a Friend: He pities our weakneses and infirmities, and is ready to help and succour us; he is now ascended up to Heaven, where he personally intercedes for us, and with his own hand dispences all those Blessings to us, which we want, and pray for in his Name. And he who loved Sinners so as to die for them, must needs take pleasure in good men, and dwell with them as one Friend dwells with another, *Joh. xiv. 21, 23.* Christ will in a more especial manner be present with such good men, who are careful in all things to obey him, and will give very sensible demonstrations of his presence with them, *will manifest himself*

himself unto them, and make his abode with them.

And now in return to this, we must consider that Christ is our Superiour, our Lord, and Master, and therefore our love to Christ must not express it self in a fond and familiar passion, such as we have for our Friends and Equals, but in a great Reverence and Devotion. Superiors must be treated with Honour and Respect, and therefore our love to our Parents and Superiors in the Fifth Commandment is called *Honour*; and the same religious Affection to God, which is sometimes called Love, is at other times called Fear, which signifies a *Reverential Love*, or a Love of Honour, Reverence, and Devotion; and therefore the external Expressions of our love to our Saviour are as various, as the Expressions of Honour, and must bear some respect to the nature and condition of the Person, and that relation we stand in to him: Christ being the only begotten Son of God, we must have regard to the Greatness and Excellency of his Person: Since he became Man, and died for us, we must admire and praise his Goodness: He being our Mediator and Advocate, we must trust and confide in him, and expect the returns of our Prayers, and all other
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Blessings, from the prevalency of his Intercession: He being our Prophet and Lawgiver, we must express our Love to him in a belief of his Gospel, and a sincere Obedience to his Laws; as Christ requires of his Disciples, *If you love me, keep my Commandments*: And when we consider our Saviour, as our *Guide and Example*, the truest expression of our Love and Honour is *to imitate him, to live as he lived in the World*: And that, which perfects our Love, is an undaunted Courage and Resolution in professing the Faith of Christ, whatever Dangers and Miseries, it may expose us to in this world: *For there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear*. These are the proper expressions of our love to Christ, which are summarily comprehended in believing his Gospel, and obeying it; for to be a true Lover of Christ, signifies neither more, nor less, than to be a good Christian.

This is a faithful account of the Design and Doctrine of my Book, which hath raised so much Noise and Clamour, and hath sharpened the Pens and Tongues of so many against me; but it is a vain attempt to think to out-face the Sun; these are such bright and glorious Truths as will out-shine all the New Lights of present or
former

former Ages, and command belief from all honest and inquisitive Minds, by their own natural Evidence.

The Doctrines, which I designedly opposed in that Discourse, are such as contradict these great Truths, or at least such, as I apprehended to do so, either expressly, or in their immediate consequences; and because this is the principal thing, which has anger'd so many men, whose Cause and Reputation are concerned in the quarrel, I shall give some brief account, what those Doctrines are, and in what sense I reject them, which I hope may silence those scandalous reports, as if I had struck at the very foundations of Christianity.

And first whereas I observed, that to know Christ, signifies the belief and knowledge of those Revelations which Christ hath made to the World, which includes whatever he hath revealed to us concerning his own Person, Natures, Mediation, and the whole Will of God concerning our Salvation, which must be learnt from the express Declarations of the Gospel, not from some fanciful and imaginary consequences, which is a very unsafe way in matters of pure Revelation; Doctor Owen hath advanced an *Acquaintance with the*

the Person of Christ, as the only Medium of saving knowledge; that is, when we have from the Gospel learnt, who Christ is, what he hath done and suffered for us; when we have learnt those things, which concern his *Person, Offices, and Work*, we may then give free scope to our fancies, and draw such conclusions, as are nowhere expressly contained in Scripture, or could not possibly have been learnt from Scripture, at least not *clearly and savingly*, without such an Acquaintance with the Person of Christ, that is, without reasoning and drawing conclusions from what Christ hath done, & suffered. These conclusions must be formed into artificial Theories, and Schemes of Religion, and then these are the great Gospel-Mysteries, and the only saving knowledge of Christ: and those men only preach Christ, who fill peoples heads with such choice Speculations, as they have learnt from this Acquaintance with Christ.

I thought there was very great reason to oppose this Principle, which gave such boundless scope to mens fancies, and allowed every man to frame and mold a Religion according to his own humour; and was the more confirmed in this, when I observed what strange Mysteries the Do-

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For himself had learn'd from this Acquaintance with Christ, which I am sure without this, he could never have learnt either from Scripture or Reason; I gave several instances of this nature out of his own Writings, which shall be made good in due time; at present I must observe what Doctrines I there reject, and in what sense.

I rejected such a notion of Gods Justice, as represents him as fierce and savage as the worst of beings; such a notion of Justice as disparages the Satisfaction of Christ, as if the whole design of it were to gratifie Revenge, and to appease a furious and merciless Deity; which notion at first frighted *Socinus* out of his Wits, and made him rather chuse to deny the satisfaction of Christ, than to believe any thing so unworthy of God; though thanks be to God, that we need do neither.

I reject such a notion of Justice, as disparages the Wisdom of God in the contrivance of our Redemption by Jesus Christ: for if it were absolutely necessary for God to punish sin, and there were no other Person in the World fit or able to bear the punishment of sin, and to make expiation for it, but only Christ, there was required no great Wisdom to make the choice.

I reject such a notion of the Mercy and Patience of God, as represents it to be the effect only of the satisfaction of Revenge, which is like the tameness of an angry man, when his passion is over, which is an unworthy conceit of the infinite Love and Goodness of the Divine Nature.

I reject such a notion of Mercy, as represents God to be fond & easie to sinners, while they continue so; and I think such a notion of Justice and Mercy very unworthy of God, which represents him more concerned to punish Sin, than to reform it: And is it not hard, that a man must be scandalized with denying the satisfaction of Christ, and blaspheming God, merely for rejecting such Doctrines, as are injurious to the Satisfaction of Christ, and when they are pursued to their just and natural consequences, are down right blasphemy against God: this is a certain way to prevent the confutation of such Doctrines, for you cannot confute them without discovering their blasphemy, and whoever does so, shall himself be charged as a Blasphemer.

But to proceed, I reject such a notion of our Union to the Person of Christ, as is unintelligible, such as the Great Patrons

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of it cannot explain, nor any one else understand ; for since all our hopes of Salvation depends upon our Union to Christ, I can by no means think, that this is such a Mystery, as surpasses humane knowledge ; for that on which the happiness of all men depends, ought in reason to be so plain, that it may be understood by all.

I reject such a notion of our Union to the Person of Christ, as intitles us to all the Personal Excellencies, Fulness, Beauty, and to the Personal Righteousness of Christ, as much as Marriage intitles a Woman to her Husbands Estate ; that whatever Christ hath done and suffered is as much reckoned ours, when we are united to him, as if we had done and suffered the same things our selves ; and that upon this account we are justified only by the Righteousness of Christ, without respect to any inherent Righteousness in our selves.

Now I reject this, because no Union can thus intitle us to Christs personal Excellencies and Righteousness, but such a natural Union as makes Christ and Believers *One Person*, that they are *Christed with Christ*, which is an absurd and dangerous Heresie ; but neither our Marriage to Christ, nor his being our Surety, or Mediator, can effect this ;

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this ; for whatever Union there may be between the Person of Christ and the Persons of Believers, while their Persons remain distinct, their Properties and Qualifications and Righteousness must be considered as distinct too ; and though we may receive great advantage by what Christ hath done and suffered, yet it cannot be reckoned ours, in that strict notion, as if it had been done by us : and there is a vast difference between these two notions ; for the first only makes the Righteousness of Christ the meritorious cause of our Pardon and Reward, which makes it necessary to have a Righteousness of our own to entitle us to these Blessings ; but the second makes the Righteousness of Christ our Personal Righteousness, which destroys the necessity of any inherent Righteousness in our selves ; but of this more hereafter.

I reject such a notion of our Union to Christ, whereby bad men may be, nay must be united to Christ, while they continue in their sins : for if it once be granted (as it must be granted, if we believe the Gospel) that our Union to Christ gives us an actual interest in all his Promises, such as Pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life ; it is easie to observe how this overthrows

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the whole Design of the Gospel, if a bad man, while he continues so, may be united to Christ; for then he is a Son of God, and an Heir of Everlasting Life; and what becomes then of all those Gospel-Threatnings, which denounce *the wrath of God against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men*? When Christ tells us, *That he who breaks the least of his Commandments, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; that except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: and when St. Paul tells us, *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such-like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.* I say, must these and such-like places, which so expressly denounce the wrath of God against all wickedness and impieties, be expounded with this limitation, that this shall be the portion of such men, unless they be united to Christ, and thereby sheltered from the wrath of God, as a Wife under covert is

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secured from all Arrests at Law? But as soon as any man hath got into Christ, let him be what he will, he is redeem'd from the curse of the Law, and made an Heir of Eternal Life: And does not this effectually evacuate all the Threatnings of the Gospel, and set up the Person of Christ, as a Refuge and Sanctuary for the Ungodly, and make the Grace of Christs Person a Dispensation from his own Laws and Threatnings? I am sure the Apostle understood not this limitation, as is plain from what he adds ver. 24, *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* And in Rom. viii. 1. *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*; and that we might not mistake him, he expressly tells us, whom he means, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*: This is essential to our Union to Christ, and to entitle us to the Grace of the Gospel.

And it is not enough to say, that Christ will save none, but those who do live very holy lives, because there is no reason for this saying: for if men are united to Christ before they are holy, their very Union to Christ gives them a title to eternal Life, and this can never be reconciled with the antecedent necessity of Holiness,

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which the Gospel inculcates, not only to qualifie us for actual Salvation, but to give us a right to it: and therefore I had good reason to reject this notion of Union, unless I would renounce the whole Gospel.

I reject such a notion of Union, as makes it impossible for any man to know, either how to get into Christ, or whether he be in Christ or not; and I think every man, who values the salvation of his soul, or the peace and comfort of his own mind, hath reason to reject this too.

I reject such a notion of Sanctification, as makes it impossible to distinguish a sanctified from an un sanctified state.

I reject such a notion of Christs love to us as represents it too like a fond and foolish passion, as respects the very Person, without regard to any Qualifications in him, whether he be a fit object of love or not, which is so great an imperfection in humane love, that I cannot imagine it to be the perfection of a Divine Love.

And I reject such a notion of the immutability of Christs love, as sin it self cannot alter, which is contrary to all the Declarations of his Gospel, and inconsistent with the Holiness and Purity of his Nature.

I reject such a notion of our love to Christ, as excludes all respect to the infinite love of Christ, and those numerous Benefits, we receive by him; which the Scripture assigns as the true reason of our love to Christ.

I reject such a notion of love to christ, as excludes all regard to our own Happiness and Salyation by him, and must make us contented to be damned, and eternally separated from him; which is not only impossible to humane Nature, but contrary to the Principles of Christianity.

I reject such a notion of our love to christ, as opposes our Love to Christ to our Duty and Obedience to him, which is the most proper and natural expression of our love of him; such a love as consists only in some flights of fancy and imagination, in admiring and valuing the *Person of Jesus Christ*, and in preferring him above all Legal Righteousness, and blamelesness of conversation, and Duties upon conviction; and in using all Duties and Ordinances only to *have us over to Christ*, for Righteousness and Salvation, and whatever we need; for this is no better than to set up the *Person of christ* in opposition to his *Laws and Religion*.

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This is a short and plain account of the whole Doctrine and Design of my late Discourse, and the more I consider it, the less reason I see to repent of my Undertaking : The Doctrines I have professedly taught, are the most necessary and useful Doctrines of Christianity, and so plain and evident, that a younger man than my self may defend them against the oldest Sophister : And the Doctrines that I have opposed, are as certainly false, as the other are true. That such Doctrines have been taught, I have made it sufficiently evident already, by the express Testimonies of some late Writers, and because Doctor *Owen* is unwilling to own the charge, as far as he is concerned in it, I must be forced to make it good, in vindication of my own Honesty, and that is all the trouble, which he has given me : Only I would desire the Reader to observe, that since the Doctor disowns the charge, he renounces such Doctrines too, and that was all I designed, I have no personal quarrel with any man, and should be glad to find them more Orthodox, than their express words would ever suffer me yet to believe, they are ; though I fear much
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that upon Examination it will appear, that I understood them too well, and that the Doctor is not willing to recant those Doctrines, which he would seem to disown : There is some reason to suspect this, because he is not willing to declare his sense in plain words, but endeavours to avoid the blow by juggling and sophistical Arts ; as will appear in what follows.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

*Containing an ANSWER to some
Popular Exceptions.*

NEXT to no Adversary, the most desirable thing is, to have a fair and ingenuous one; but this must never be expected, where men serve a Faction, which makes them try all ways, not to discover what is true, but how they may palliate their mistakes, and maintain their Authority and Reputation.

It is my unhappiness to fall into such mens hands, who wanting better Weapons to defend their cause, return to their old childish tricks of flinging stones and dirt: I am not so well skilled at this sport, as to venture to engage with them, nor shall I envy them such a Victory, which will cost them some time and trouble to make themselves clean again.

There are several familiar Topicks of Reproach, which such men use, when they dare not directly engage in the Dispute.

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They have a peculiar Gift of discerning thoughts and intentions, and there never was any Book writ, which they could not answer, but it was writ with a very ill design. Thus the Doctor would persuade the world, that it has been the great design of late days, *to cavil at his Writings, and to load his Person with reproaches, and accordingly, that I principally intended my Book against himself, and his Book, because he was the Author of it, which (as he says) will at last prove to be its only guilt and crime:* Vind. p. 5.

What a mighty conceit has the Doctor of himself, to think that he is so considerable that so many men should make it their business to oppose him! He might have been quiet for ought I know, had he not been troublesome to others, and set up for the Great Champion of the Cause; and his former miscarriages might have been buried in silence, had he not forc'd men to publish them: But I assure him, as for my own part, that I did not principally design that Discourse against him, nor any other man, much less against any party; but against those foolish and absurd Doctrines (whoever were the first Inventers, or Patrons of them) which debauch the practise of Christianity, and turn the plain Revelations of the Gospel into unintelligible My-

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Mysteries. I envy no mans Reputation, when it is consistent with the interest of Religion, nor do I think, that any mans Reputation ought to be so dear to us, as to forego the most useful and necessary Truths, rather than let the World know, that such Men of Name and Renown have been in a mistake.

Speculum,
p. 55.

But it may be the *Looking-Glass-Maker* may see more than other men, though there is some danger, lest such persons should draw other mens faces by the reflection of their own: however let us hear, what he has to say. And he very gravely proves, that my design could not be good, by several arguments.

For first, if it had, then *before I had charged any Opinion, I ought fairly to have stated, and candidly represented that Opinion,* but may not the want of this sometimes be a defect in Skill, not a failure in Honesty? Or else what will become of many of his good Friends, who are not much versed in Logic, and never were acquainted with this knack of stating things fairly: But he adds, *This I seldom find him to do, and if I had said, I never found him so to have done, I should not lie, though perhaps I might be mistaken:* Now I know not how to help him, only would advise him the next time to use his Spectacles

Spectacles instead of a Looking-glass, and then I hope he may see better, and discover a great many things fairly stated.

Secondly, He says, *That I ought never to charge any man with those consequences of an Opinion, which I know to be disowned, and disavowed by him:* Now how this comes in, I cannot tell, for he has not the confidence to charge me with doing so, though he would willingly insinuate that I do.

But the third is a heavy charge, *That I draw a bad sense out of words which are capable of a good sense, which is a great Sin against God and my Neighbour:* Now this I confess, is a great crime, if by *capable* he means, when according to the common acceptation of the words, and use of phrases, and circumstances of the place, and the avowed Doctrines and Principles of the Author, it appears to be intended otherwise; but when the phrase is doubtful and ambiguous, and on purpose contrived so to conceal those Doctrines, which cannot endure the clear and open light; or when those expressions, which may be capable of a good sense, are by a traditionary exposition generally understood in a bad sense, especially if the bad sense be most agreeable to the professed Principles of the Writer, and such phrases be delivered without

without an expresse caution against the bad sense; in these cases it is no fault to expound such expressions to the worst sense; but a great charity to mens Souls to warn them against such easie and obvious mistakes.

But this is a great charge, and therefore let us hear how he proves it: He gives too instances of it, one with respect to Doctor Owen's Doctrine concerning *an Acquaintance with Christs Person*: this I shall let pass at present, because I shall meet with it again in the Doctor; but his other instance, on which he insists, is with reference to Mr. Shephard: I show how impossible it is, according to some mens Principles, to discover our Union to Christ, and Justification by him by the marks of Sanctification, and among other things I observe, "That when they have a mind to
" take down the confidence of men, who
" are apt to presume too soon, that their
" condition is good, they do so magnifie
" the attainments of Hypocrites; who
" shall never go to Heaven, that it is im-
" possible for any sanctified man to do
" more than a Hypocrite may do. This
I make good by a large citation out of Mr. Shephard's *Sincere Convert*: And here he first quarrels, that I say *some men do so,*
and

and prove it only from Mr. Shephard. These men, I see, will never be pleased; sometimes they quarrel, that I name any body, and sometimes that I name no more: but I can assure this Gentleman, that this was not Mr. Shephard's private Opinion, and shall make it good, when I find more of his Mind to require a proof of it.

The wrong which he supposes I have done Mr. Shephard, is this, That *I bring him in answering the Pleas of several Hypocrites for themselves, and then suppose the same man to make all these Pleas for himself, which is not fair or just*: "As for instance, the man accused of Hypocrisie, or at least suspected, pleads for himself, that he has reformed those Vices he once lived in, that he prays often, that he fasts sometimes, as well as prays, that he hears the Word of God, and likes the best Preachers, that he reads the Scriptures often, that he is grieved and sorrowful for his past sins, that he loves good men and their company, that he has more knowledge than others, and keeps the Lords day strictly, and has many very good desires and endeavours to get to heaven, and performs all these Duties with Life and Zeal, and is constant and perseveres in godly courses, and is conscious to him-
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self of his own Sincerity in all this, that he does all this with a good heart for God: That Mr. *Shephard* objects all this in the person of *one man*, whom he designs after all to prove a Hypocrite, is so evident, that nothing could excuse our Author for supposing, that he spoke this in the persons of several men, that one pleaded one thing for himself, and another another, but only his confession, that he had not read the Book; and how far that will excuse him, let others consider. Mr. *Shephard* begins thus, *In what hast thou gone beyond them that think they are rich, and want nothing, who yet are poor, and miserable, and naked? Thou wilt say haply first, I have left my sins I once lived in, &c.* So that this is but the first thing such a man objects or pleads, which argues that the other pleas are made in the same person; and so he goes on in the same person, *But I pray; But I fast; But I read the Scriptures, &c.* where I can refer to none but the Person, who first made this Plea; and *but* connects it with the former Pleas, and is design'd to take off the force of the preceding Answers, that though a Hypocrite might do some one good thing, yet he did not another, or if he did a second or a third, yet at least he did not do all those good things which this poor man pleaded for himself. And

And indeed the way Mr. *Shephard* takes with this man, to prove that he either is, or may be a Hypocrite, is so common and familiar a practise, that I wonder very much at the ignorance, or at the honesty of our Author in requiring a proof of it: It is an ordinary question, *How far a Hypocrite may go, and yet miss of Heaven*; and the common way of answering it, is the same, which Mr. *Shephard* takes, by considering what particular good thing has been done by bad men, and since some bad men may do one good thing, and some another, and there is no single grace or vertue, but may be counterfeited by a Hypocrite; they put all the good things together, which were ever done by bad men, and this is the attainment of Hypocrites: as if because a Hypocrite may do some one good thing, and continue a Hypocrite, therefore a man may do all the good things, which were ever done by any Hypocrites, and yet be a Hypocrite; and after this, it is impossible for any man to know, whether he be a Hypocrite or not, since there is no one good thing, that can be named, but some Hypocrite or other has either done it, or done something like it.

And now after this, every man must
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needs see how absurd and impertinent that difference is between a regenerate and unregenerate man, which Mr. Shephard assigns, and which our Author defends; That *an unregenerate man, let him go never so far, do never so much, yet he lives in one sin or other*: I readily grant, that this is a good mark, in it self considered, of an unregenerate man, that whoever lives in any one sin, is certainly an unregenerate man: but that he should live in some one sin, *who goes never so far, and does never so much*, is a wonderful thing to me; especially when we consider, what is meant by *going never so far, and doing never so much*, which has respect to what he had discoursed before of the attainments of Hypocrites; such as the reformation of his former vices, an honest, smooth, innocent, blameless life, joynd with all the acts of Worship and Homage to God, prayer, fasting, reading, hearing, observing the Lords day, and perseverance and sincerity in all this; what those sins are, in which such a man lives, is strange to me, and all the *Philosophy in the world will not cure my admiration*: and therefore Mr. Shephard did not think this an infallible sign, but lays greater weight upon some more spiritual marks, *of being carried out of all Duties to Christ, and taking*

taking up his Eternal Rest and Lodging in Christ only, which are surer evidences of Grace than all that Legal Righteousness of good Works, which Hypocrites may counterfeit: but this our Author fairly passes over in silence.

Now though I know not how to excuse my self to the Reader already, for taking so much notice of such an Objector, who writes without reading the Books, which he defends, or scarce those which he answers, yet I cannot but divert my self a while with some few Remarks upon his Answers to the several Pleas.

Plea: *I have left my sins I once lived in, and am now no Drunkard, no Swearer, no Lyer, &c.* Mark (says our Author) *it is not supposed that he hath left all the sins he once lived in.* Nor is the contrary supposed, though &c. you know is of a very large signification; and an indefinite proposition, when the subject matter requires it, is equivalent to an universal; and so it must be here; for he, who pleads for his sincerity from the reformation of his former sins, must be supposed by his sins, to understand all his sins, unless he be a greater fool than a Hypocrite; for if forsaking sin be necessary, then forsaking all sin is as necessary, as to forsake any. It is well our Author

Speculum
p. 51.

Epistle to
Historia
quinq; Ar-
ticulis
exarticu-
lata.

did not fall into Mr. *Hickman's* hands, for he has declared against teaching his Adversaries Logick.

Upon the second Plea he observes, *That though a man live a blameless, innocent, honest, smooth life, yet if it be not so with relation to God and Men, and in every thing, his prayers may avail nothing.* Our Author is as fit a man to defend Mr. *Shephard*, as ever I met with, for their Understandings and Logick seem to be much of a size: What difference is there between being blameless &c. with reference to God and Men, and in every thing; and between being blameless in their lives, honest and innocent in their conversation with men, and devout Worshippers of God, as those are, who sincerely and heartily pray to him. However if the prayers of such men may avail nothing, he must prove it from some other Text than *Isa. i. 11.* for those Jews, whose Sacrifices God rejected, were not such honest and innocent men.

Upon the next Plea, he observes, *That Hypocrites may fast sometimes*; yes no doubt, though I am but young, I am old enough to remember this; but what he adds, that this is enough to justify Mr. *Shephard*, I doubt is not so true as the other; for though this has been too common an Art

of

of Hypocrisie, yet I am not willing to believe, that every one, who fasts, is an Hypocrite; much less, if he be an honest and innocent man. But whether they were the Scribes, or Pharisees, who fasted twice a week to devour Widows Houses, I was not much concerned to enquire, we have seen Examples enough of both sorts.

Upon the next Plea I assert, That to hear the Word with joy, and to believe it, which is the description of the Stony Ground, had been a good sign of Grace, if it had continued: And this is the fault our Saviour found in this Ground, that this sudden Faith and Joy did not continue. What has he to object against this? Why then

———*Ultima semper*

Expectanda dies homini est, sanctusque

vocari

Ante obitum nemo, supremaque funera
debet.

That is, every man must expect his last hour, and cannot be called *holy*, till he dies. But why so pray? We cannot say indeed, that any man will persevere, till we see him die well; but we may call any

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man holy before, who lives holily: While he lives well, it is the best sign of Grace in the World, and if he continue to do so, his sign of Grace continues, but Perseverance must crown all. Why does not our Author correct our Saviour, for telling those new Converts, *If ye continue in my words, then shall ye be my Disciples indeed? John viii. 31.* Why does he not correct the whole Gospel, the language of which is, *He that continueth to the end shall be saved?*

Upon the next Plea, he has a learned Dispute about the Pharisees Memories, which were better than any Concordance for the Hebrew Text; I know the Story, as well as he, and do not much matter, what the credit of it is; but is not this a wise reason why our Saviour did not name the Text in preaching to a promiscuous Auditory, because it may be some few great Rabbies knew where to find it, whereas the generality of the people are said *not to know the Law.*

In the next place, he disputes as learnedly whether *Judas hanged himself*, and I perceive this great Critick thinks every one must be as impertinent as himself, who cannot meet with the word *Judas*, or *hanged*, or the like, but whether it be to the

pur-

purpose or not, must dispute the case whether *Judas* were hanged: for if he broke his Neck, or had drowned, or burnt himself, it had been all one to my purpose, and I was not disposed to go out of my way, to pursue Feathers, and Butterflies.

Upon the next, he gravely observes, That *there are no good men but sleep sometimes, unless they be wiser than the five wise Virgins.* We will allow him this, so they do not sleep to let their Lamps go out, as the five foolish Virgins did.

On the next, he observes, That *it is a huge commendation of good Knowledge, that I say, If a good man have the keeping of it, it is never the worse for him;* though if he think this any disparagement to good Knowledge, I perceive he understands Rhetoric as little as Logick; or thinks his Readers understand neither.

On the next, when I say, *That keeping the Lords day strictly, is one good thing, which doth well in the company of more;* he is afraid I forgot my self and stumbled upon a *Puritanical* saying before I was aware; and adds, that notwithstanding I thus commend a strict observation of the Lords day, *I could like well enough of a Book of Sports;* the uncharitableness of which Censure, contrary

to

to the exprefs sense of my words, I leave to be corrected by his own Conscience, if he have any left.

And here our Author thinks fit to break off, for it was not safe to go any farther; those other Pleas, which this poor man makes to defend himself against the imputation of Hypocrisie, are such on which he dares not venture; as, *That he performs all these Duties with life and zeal; That he is constant, and perseveres in godly courses; and that he is conscions to himself of his Honesty and Sincerity in all this, that he does all with a good heart for God;* that is, out of a hearty Devotion to God, and Reverence for his Laws; and if such a man may be a Hypocrite, no man can be sure of his Sincerity.

Only upon this last, he observes, *That Mr. Shephard only says, That a man may think he hath a good heart to God, and yet deceive himself: whereas I wish he had said, that a man, who thinks he hath a good heart to God must needs be mistaken; and then I would say, the whole Doctrine concerning Marks and Evidences were at an end.* Now to make it appear, what a fair Adversary I have of this Author, I shall transcribe this whole passage.

Object. *But some men are conscions to themselves*

themselves of their own hypocrisie, but I do all with a good heart for God. Answ. *So thou maist think of thy self, and be deceived: Upon this, I observe, If this be an Objection, let a man have what marks he will, the Objection will still be good; for after all it may be objected, that a man may be deceived in it, and think he hath these marks, when he hath them not: And as a proof of this, Mr. Shephard adds, There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is death; thou mayest live so, as to deceive thy self and others, and yet prove an Hypocrite: On which I observe, that the sense of this argument is this, As if because some men may think themselves good, who are in a bad way, no man could ever be sure that he were in the right; and thus farewell all Evidences.* So that there is no need Mr. Shephard should say, *that he who thinks he hath a good heart towards God, must needs be mistaken,* in order to overthrow the Doctrine of Marks and Evidences; for if a man, who is conscions to himself of his own sincerity, that he hath a great reverence and regard for God in all his actions, may be deceived in it, it is sufficient to destroy all Marks and Evidences. For if we cannot be sure what the workings and motions, purposes and resolutions, and habitual inclinations of our own Minds are, we can be sure of

nothing: and if a man, who is as sure of this, as inward sense and feeling can make him, may be deceived, then there is no way to be sure of it: this makes men as down-right Scepticks in the Doctrine of Marks and Evidences, as to deny the truth of our Senses, or of our Faculties, does in Philosophy.

That refined Hypocrisie, wherewith men deceive themselves, does not consist in such an hypocrisie and deceitfulness of the heart, as conceals it self from it self, which is absolutely impossible; but in a false and hypocritical Religion, when they think to please God by some exterior homage, or flattering Devotions, or costly or pompous Ceremonies, or by an Orthodox Faith, or counterfeit Reliances, or any other mode or form of Religion, without a sincere Obedience to his Laws; the men know that they are Villains all this while, that they are guilty of notorious wickedness, as the Scribes and Pharisees were; but they flatter themselves, that they may be very dear to God notwithstanding this, either for the sake of the Righteousness of Christ, or some hypocritical performances of their own: *These are the ways, which seem right to a man, when the end thereof is death.*

This

This is the sum of our Authors charge against me, for perverting mens words, and how he hath acquitted himself in it, let the Reader judge; and all the amends I shall require of him is, to turn his Looking-Glass upon himself, and to view his own face in it.

But there is one Argument still behind, to prove, that I could have no good design in writing that Discourse, and when I have answered that, I hope I may pass at least for a well-meaning man. And that is, *That I thrust out my sting against those, who have* ^{speculum,} *written nothing (taken notice of by me) that can* ^{p. 65.} *be supposed to hurt or hinder Godlineß: And though he mentions those, he instances only in one, a fault, which at all turns he corrects in me; now suppose this were true, is there nothing fit to be corrected, but what has an immediate tendency to make men bad? Must men be suffered to play and toy with sacred things; and prostitute the most venerable Religion to mean and low conceits; and confound mens notions with mystical and allegorical descriptions, and turn the vital parts of Religion, into a work of imagination and fancy?*

This is the present case, for in this charge he refers to that short reflection I make

make upon Mr. Tho. Vincents Invitation of young Women to Christ; and our Author tells us, That the Exhortation is directed to his Hearers to chuse Christ for their Husband; It is so, but it is to his *She-Hearers* in particular, which is a very *spiritual* conceit; because he knew that Women, not Men, wanted Husbands: He has in the same Pamphlet a distinct Exhortation to *young Men*, but does he invite *them* to chuse Christ for their *Husband*? by no means; the conceit would not do there; for young Men are more for Wives than Husbands, and therefore his Exhortation to them is only to give God their Hearts; which is a plain confession of guilt, that he had so debased and carnalized the notion of that *spiritual* Marriage between Christ and his Church, that it was not so properly applicable to men, as to Women, as if there were any regard to the difference of Sex in this Spiritual Marriage: Nay, which is still more fulsome, the Exhortation is not only to *Women*, but to *young Women*, because they generally have most mind to Husbands; and indeed it appears by his Exhortation, that this Sermon was designed to gratifie his *young She-Hearers*; *I shall direct my speech unto you, and that to all, both Men and Women, but particularly to you that*

that are young Women, whom especially I am now called to preach unto. What the Call was, is not said, some extraordinary one, no doubt: But whether this Exhortation had been directed to Men or Women, to Young or Old, yet I wonder what Mr. Vincent thought of his Hearers, whether they were Turks, or Jews, or Pagans, for it is plain he did not look upon them as Christians, because he perswaded them to be married to Christ, to chuse Christ for their Husband: If they are the Members of the visible Church of Christ, they are already married to Christ, in the Scripture notion of it, and the proper Exhortation to them is, not to chuse Christ for their Husband, but to live worthy of that Relation: Neither Christ nor his Apostles ever made such an Exhortation as this; The proper Exhortation to those who are not Christians, is to embrace the Faith of Christ; and to those who are, to walk worthy of that Profession and Relation; but such Discourses, as these, perswade People, that to be married to Christ signifies something more than to be Christians, or else they would never with so much patience hear their Preachers exhorting them to be married to Christ, that is, to turn Christians; nor reproving them for flight-

flighting the offers of Christ, that is, for rejecting Christianity.

And whether this notion, as it is managed by those who best understand the consequences of it, be not prejudicial to a good Life, I shall refer my Readers to my late Discourse to consider; for the whole of Religion at this rate consists only in a fanciful application of Christ to themselves, to consummate the Marriage with him, and then whatever they were before, they are rich, and lovely, and beautiful, by vertue of their Marriage with a rich and lovely and beautiful Husband: When once they are married to Christ, they are secured from all the Arrests of Gods Justice, as a Woman under Covert; the Bond is indissoluble, and Christ must now bear with all the faults of his Spouse, and answer for all too: His Righteousness must conceal their Deformities, and make them righteous before God; which I think doth not much encourage a personal and inherent Righteousness.

Though to give Mr. *Vincent* his due, he does not understand the depths of this Mystery, and therefore must not be charged with such consequences as he does not understand. He thinks honestly, that in order

order to our Marriage with Christ, we must put off our filthy Garments, all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, &c. and that we must put on the white Raiment, and clean Garments, and rich Robes, which Christ hath provided for us, I mean the Attire of Grace, the Robes of his perfect Righteousness.

I cannot but think, how severely Mr. *Shephard* would have corrected this mistake, and have told him, how unfit he was to be a Suiter for Christ. What? Must we make our selves beautiful before we are married to Christ, or receive all our beauty from him? Have you a mind to teach People such Antichristian Pride; as to go about to make themselves fit for Christ, before they will close with him? Which is a ready way to make them despise Christ, when they find themselves beautiful without him. And how is it possible, they should get the Robes of Christs Righteousness, till they are married to him? For it is only Marriage that gives us a title to the Righteousness and Fulness and All of Christ, as it gives a Woman right to her Husbands Estate.

And now if any man be agrieved at this, he must thank our Author for it, who has fore'd me in my own vindication to say more of Mr. *Vincent*, than ever I intended.

tended ; whose greatest fault, for ought I see, is, that he affects to speak in such phrases, as he does not understand ; and might instruct people to good purpose, would he content himself with the plainness and unaffected simplicity of the Gospel.

Having thus vindicated the Honesty of my Intentions, the next objection is, That I have writ with great Scorn and Contempt ; which is a very proper Objection to be made by so candid a man as Doctor Owen, whose Writings favour of such a humble and mortified Spirit : Indeed had this Objection any truth in it, I could not have wished for a better justification, than the Doctors Answer, which has so much out-done all that ever I saw in Satyr and Fury, that I must needs hereafter be esteemed a very cold and tame Writer ; I am sure his Answer has pride and insolence enough, and if it be not sufficiently Scotptical, it is plain, that it was not for want of good will, but for want of wit.

But pray whom or what do I scorn ? Do I make any spiteful Reflections upon mens Persons ? Do I tell merry Tales of them ? Do I transprose them, or dress them up in a fools Coat to be laught at ? I shall leave these Arts to my Adversaries, who are
more

more vers'd, and better skill'd in them ; the cause I undertook, did not need such a Defence : My business indeed was to confute and to shame such Doctrines as have a very bad influence upon mens lives, and yet are cried up for great Gospel-Mysterics, and Soul-saving Truths ; and this is that, the Doctor calls writing scornfully, that I have so plainly discovered the absurdities of such Doctrines, as to expose them to scorn and contempt ; which as he observes very well, was my design in Writing, as well as I could to give them a shameful baffle : for I never thought my self concerned to be tender of the reputation of dangerous, though popular, Errors. And that I do not attempt a grave and solemn confutation of Nonsense, or absurd forms of speech, is no fault, Mr. Ferguson himself being Judge, who tells us, *That Non-sense is not to be refused, but exposed. For he betrays the weakness of his own Reason, who undertakes to encounter an absurd phrase with Arguments.*

And that the Reputation of Persons is concerned in the Reputation of Doctrines, and that the scorn, which I bestow on one, reflects upon the other, I cannot help, though they may : My only design was to confute their Doctrines, and there is not

any expression which they call scornful, which was levell'd against the personal weakneses and infirmities of Men, but against the fulsome and palpable absurdities of Opinions; and when such absurd notions are cried up for great and venerable Mysteries, there is the greater reason to speak very plain, that they may appear absurd to the meanest apprehension. This is the only Reason why my Book is accus'd of Scorn and Contempt; and I do not deny, but they have some reason to be angry at this, though I shall never be persuaded to like my Book ever the worse for it.

But the Doctor observes farther, "That the Discourse, which I thus rave against, is Didactical, and accommodated unto a popular way of Instruction, and it hath hitherto been the common ingenuity of all learned men, to give an allowance unto such Discourses, so as not to exact from them an accuracy and propriety in expressions, such as are required in those, which are Scholastical and Polemical, &c. I cannot understand the reason of this Exception, when the Doctor, pag. 7. had so expressly affirmed, *That he could not find any Thing, any Doctrine, any Expressions, any Words rest ed on, which the Exceptions of*
this

Find.
P. 43.

this man do give him the least occasion to alter, or desire that they had been otherwise either expressed or delivered. Now if his Discourse be writ with such accuracy, what matter whether it be *Didactical* or *Polemical*: But as for the thing it self, it must be acknowledged, that it is very disingenuous to expect a *Polemical Accuracy* in Popular Discourses, for it is not fit to instruct people in terms of Art, borrowed from the Schools of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, which, we may be sure, the people understand not, nor it may be these *Polemical* men neither. But there is another kind of accuracy very necessary for Popular Discourses, which I should be very glad to find in Dr. O. and some late Writers, that is, strict Truth, and plainness of expression, and when Popular Discourses are defective in these, it is no disingenuity to take notice of it; for there is nothing does more mischief to Religion, than to teach the people a Set of unintelligible and ambiguous Phrases; which how-ever they may be forc'd to some tolerable sense by men of Art and Skill, yet to the generality of Readers, either signifie nothing, or that which is very bad.

But by this the Doctor would fain insinuate, that my Book consists only of some
F 3 cavilling

cavilling Exceptions about Words and Phrases, and improper forms of Speech, which, if it could be proved, would be a more effectual confutation of it, than any I have yet seen; and yet the *Looking-Glass-Maker* proceeds upon this supposition, and therefore to requite me, picks quarrels with my Words, and discovers great improprieties, contradictions, nonsense; and writes just such a Confutation of my Book as I should have expected from a Court-Jester, or a *Prevaricator*. I shall give some few instances of this nature, which may be sufficient to divert the Reader, and that is the only reason I know, why I should take any notice of them: Except for fear the Author should think himself slighted, and judge me of the same morose humour with Mr. *Hickman*, who uses to punish such Scriblers, *with not buying nor reading their Books*.

Thus sometimes I use some popular forms of Speech, the sense of which is generally very well understood, but they will not down with our Author, because they cannot be reconciled to strict Rules of Logick, or terms of Art; thus he observes that I say in one place, *some men*, where-ever they meet with the word *Christ* in Scripture, alway understand by it the

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ticularis
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the Person of *Christ*; and this I doubt not is true of a great many private Christians, and some ignorant Preachers; but then in another place I affirm, that it is acknowledged by *all*, that *Christ* sometimes signifies the *Church of Christ*; now this is a contradiction, that all sometimes understand by the name *Christ*, the *Church of Christ*, and some always understand the person of *Christ*: But pray what need is there that *all* should include those *some*? Why could not he by *all*, understand all men of any knowledge and skill in the use of words, which *some*, and a great many, have not? How comes it to pass, that he has so soon forgot their beloved distinction of *singuli generum, & genera singulorum*, whereby they prove, that *Christ* died for all, without dying for all?

Thus I observe, that *Christ* hath told us in the Gospel, *whatever* he intends to do for us, and hath charged us to expect no more from him; which the circumstances of the place determine to the terms and conditions of our Salvation by *Christ*; but nothing will serve our Author, unless *whatever* be supposed to signify all the particularities of *Christ's* Providence towards the *Church*; as the very particular time when *Kingly* and *Episcopal* Government should be restored

here in England: Though I doubt not, but our Author had much rather know, when they shall be pulled down again.

Thus when I say, *That now the only true Medium of knowing God, is the knowledge of Christ, who came into the world to declare God to us*: that is, as I soon add, *That the only certain way of attaining to the knowledge of the nature and will of God, is by knowing Christ, whom God sent into the world to publish the everlasting Gospel, who hath made more perfect Revelations of Gods will, than ever the world had before, &c.* Because I say, that Christ is the *only true Medium* of knowing God, he concludes, that I am a Fanatick, who reject the Light of Nature, and the Works of Creation and Providence, as *false Mediums* of knowing God, *which must be thrown away, or not made use of*: But does he know what a true *Medium* is? It is that which gives us a clear and certain, and perfect knowledge; as a true *Medium* of sight is that which conveys the perfect images of things with clearness and certainty: now will he say that the Light of Nature, &c. can give us such a clear and perfect and certain knowledge of the nature of God, and his will concerning our Salvation, as the Revelations of the Gospel? Or must they be false, or wholly rejected, because they

Ibid. p. 14

they are not a *true Medium* of knowledge in that sense, wherein the Gospel of Christ is? But pray, who taught him to oppose the Light of Nature to the Gospel of Christ? That he, who owns the Gospel of Christ as the *only true Medium* of knowledge, must be supposed to reject the Light of Nature? I am sure this is a *Fanatical* notion of the Gospel of Christ; for Christ did not only reveal those things to us, which could not be known by the Light of Nature, but gave us a more perfect and certain knowledge of those things, which the Light of Nature did more imperfectly and uncertainly discover: And therefore the Gospel of Christ is the surest *Medium* of natural knowledge, *so far as it concerns matters of Religion*, as well as of revealed knowledge; I say, *as far as it concerns matters of Religion*, for fear this happy man at senseless mistakes, should imagine, that I mean that Christ taught *Natural Philosophy* in the Gospel.

At other times he quarrels with single words and expressions, as very improper: As I say, *That Christ is originally the name of an Office, which the Jews call the Messiah, or one anointed by God*: The plain meaning of which can be no more than this, that this Name Christ doth primarily respect an Office; that

that is, when this Name is given to any Person, it is wholly with respect to the Office with which he is invested ; and though there can be no such thing, as an Office without a Person, yet the Name doth more immediately respect the Office than the Person ; as is plain from this, that when we hear such a name, it does not convey the Idea of any particular person, but the notion of an Office to our minds ; when we hear the Name King, Priest, or Prophet, it naturally excites in us the notion of those Offices, without regard to any particular persons invested with them ; upon the hearing such names, our minds naturally prescind the consideration of the Office from the Person ; and since words are but artificial images of things, we may safely affirm that to be the original signification of a name, which answers to that notion and idea, which it first imprints upon our minds. The reason our Author assigns, why Christ is not originally the name of an Office, is because it is a Concrete, or Connotative term ; but did he never hear of some Adjectives that are used Substantively, and so I take *πῶς* and *Χεῖρας* to be, and when a word respects two things, may it not more immediately refer to one of them ? And is not that then
the

Spec. p. 3.

the original signification of the Name ?

This I perceive is a very material Exception, and therefore is repeated by Mr. *Ferguson*, together with a censure of another absurd form of speech, *The Duties and Actions of an Office*, at which Doctor *Owen* also had before quarrell'd : now the Duties and Actions of an Office is a very plain and ordinary form of speech to signify those Duties and Actions, which are proper and peculiar to any person with respect to such an Office ; and no man who is in his wits, can by such an expression be led into such a blundering mistake, as to think that the Office is the *Agent* : Methinks Mr. *Ferguson* might have learnt from the Title of his own Book to have been more favourable to such forms of speech, for *The Interest of Reason in Religion*, is to the full as absurd, as the *Actions of an Office* ; *Interest* is a term as proper and peculiar to a Person, as *Actions*, and pray what kind of Person is *Reason* ? Just such a Person as *In-dwelling-Sin*, or some mens *Consciences*, which are often described, as if they were distinct Beings, which have Properties, Actions, Powers, and a kind of Personality and Subsistence of their own, distinct from the man, in whom they are. And indeed I have no reason to quarrel with these men, who deal

P. 457.

deal much more favourably with me, than they do with St. Paul in the like cases: they only reprove me for an improper expression, but do not affix an improper sense to my words; whereas they usually make St. Paul's meaning to be as absurd, as they fancy my words improper.

Ibid. p. 7.

But to return to our Author: I add farther, that this name Christ is used to signify the Person who is invested with that Office: Which our Author says, *Is a rare and odd notion; for as the name Christ never signifies the Office abstracted from the Person, so it never signifies the Person, but as invested with the Office:* But what then? Christ may be used as a proper name, to signify such a determinate Person, which very much differs from the more general acceptation of the word without affixing it to any particular person, as every School-boy knows. A Poet, or Orator, or Philosopher, are names which may be indifferently given to any Poet, Orator, or Philosopher, and therefore do not in their own nature signify any determinate Person; but if these names be given by eminency, or for any other reason, to any particular Persons, as to Aristotle, or Tully, or Virgil, this doth as much alter the property of them, as when the name of the Species is appropriated

ated to any one Individual: Thus it is here, Christ may signify any one, who is anointed by God to any Office, or it may respect the particular Office of the Messias, without knowing who shall bear this Office; but besides this, it may denote some determinate Person, as Jesus of Nazareth, who is invested in this Office. And he who knows not how to distinguish a common Name, from the same Name, when it is appropriated to a particular Person, has not much reason to talk either of Grammar or Logick.

But this, it seems, is too hard for our Authors understanding; who can by no means conceive the difference between acknowledging Jesus to be the Christ, as his Disciples and some other Jews sometimes did in his life-time, and using Christ as a proper Name, to signify the same Person who was called Jesus. As if to say Aristotle is a Philosopher, and to say that Philosopher is the proper name of Aristotle, were the same thing. Ibid. p. 8.

He adds, *The reason, why the Evangelists use the name Jesus more frequently than the name Christ, could not be, because in the life-time of Christ it was disputed whether Jesus were the Christ, for the Gospels were all written after the Resurrection of Christ, and one of them was written*

written after all Paul's Epistles were written, at which time there were many Churches founded on this persuasion and belief, that Jesus was the Christ.

But our Author mistakes the state of the question, which is not why the name Christ is used more frequently in the Epistles than in the Gospels, but why it is not used at all in the Gospels, as a proper name: and his reason shews, that he would make no very good Historian, but would relate things not according to the Customs and Usages of the Times, wherein they were acted, but according to the practice of the Times, wherein he writ; for otherwise it is nothing to the purpose, at what time the Gospels were writ, nor what was the belief and practice of that Age, if we suppose the Gospels to be a true History, not of those present times, but of the Life of Christ, and of that Age wherein he lived.

Speculum,
P. 47.

He argues much at the same rate in another place, where he would prove, that the Sermons & Parables of our Saviour ought not to be of greater Authority in the Christian Church, than the Writings of the Apostles (which is contrary to the Judgment and practice of the Ancient Church) and his Argument is extraordinary subtil; *Be-*
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cause our Saviour did no more write the four Gospels, than he did the Epistles; the same Spirit that inspired Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, to write the Gospels, inspired Paul, Peter, James, John, Jude, to write the Epistles. As if the Authority of our Saviours Sermons did depend upon the Writer, not on the Speaker: There is a vast difference between the Truth of a Relation, and the Authority of those Sermons and Parables contained in it; the first depends upon the honesty of the Historian, the second upon the Authority of the Speaker: So that though *Matthew*, or *Mark*, &c. wrote the History of the Gospel, yet the Sermons and Parables of the Gospel derive their authority and veneration from Christ himself: and therefore the comparison between the Gospels and Epistles does not lie between *St. Mathew* and *Mark*, &c. and *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, but between Christ and his Apostles: and though the Evangelists were inspired men, yet the only inspiration, which was necessary for this Work, was only to help their Memories to make a true and faithful Relation of what our Saviour did and taught; and though the Apostles were inspired men too, yet their very Inspirations were to be examined by the Doctrine of the Gospel, which was
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to be the Rule of their Preaching and Writings.

But to return : In pag. 4. I find our Author in a great amazement, and I always suspected something was the matter with him, that he wrote so much like a man out of his wits ; the occasion of it is, that I say, *That all these Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, are not properly distinct Offices in Christ, but the several parts and administrations of his Mediatorial Kingdom.* Here he first observes, *That 'tis a strange Presumption for a Young Divine, to say that these Offices are not distinct Offices in Christ, and never in the least suggest, wherein the impropriety of so calling them doth lie :* But I did not say that they are not distinct Offices, but not so properly distinct Offices ; and had he not been in a great amazement, he might have seen the reasons, why I said so, because Christ did exercise a Regal Power and Authority in each of these Offices : and the reason why I chose to state it in this manner, was the better to show, how all these Offices did conspire to the same end : *Christ is a Mediatorial King, whose Office is to reconcile God and Man, and in order to attain this end, he gives us his Laws to be the Rule of our Lives, makes Atonement for our Sins, and powerfully bestows*

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all those Blessings on us, which he hath purchased by his death : All this is necessary to the Recovery of lost man, and therefore we must not expect to receive any benefit by his Expiation and Sacrifice, without Obedience to his Laws, nor think that his Kingly Power will save those, who submit not to his Rule and Government ; which those are very apt to do, who do not consider how all these Offices belong to him as a Mediatorial King, but look upon them as such distinct things, which have distinct effects, without any relation to, or dependance on each other.

For this very reason a late Reverend Author quarrels at Mr. Baxter's definition of Justifying Faith, that it is to receive *Christ* in all his *Offices*, as Prophet, Priest, and King. He dares not deny that justifying Faith must receive a whole *Christ*, but then he affirms, that Christ is the formal Object of justifying Faith, not considered as Prophet or King, but as Priest. *Etsi Idem Christus sit Dominus & Sacerdos, totusque in justificatione recipiatur, totus tamen omni sensu, i. e. omnium promiscue munerum intuitu ad justificationem formaliter minime requiritur, sed tantum qua Sacerdos, & legi satisfaciens : i. e. Though the same Christ be both Lord and Priest, and whole Christ is received in justification, yet not under*

Justificatio Paulina, p. 112.

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has

that formal consideration, as a whole Christ, in all his Offices, but only as a Priest, who makes satisfaction to the Law. And the reason which he assigns for it, is this, That Justification consists in being delivered from the Curse of the Law; that the only way whereby we are delivered from this Curse, is the Satisfaction of Christ; and Christ made this Satisfaction for us, only as our Priest and Sacrifice: And this were a good reason indeed for justifying Faith to eye Christ only as our Priest and Sacrifice, if his Satisfaction alone could give us a title to Justification; if expiation of sin were the only thing required to the pardon of it: The Sacrifice of Christ hath made a general expiation for the sins of the world, but this Satisfaction it self intitles no particular man to the benefit of it; that more properly belongs to the Prophetical and Kingly Office, to confer a Right and Title to the Benefits of Christs Priesthood; and therefore we must first receive Christ, as our Prophet, and our King, that is, must believe his Revelations, obey his Laws, and submit to his Government, before we have any reason to look on him as our Priest, to expiate our sins. His Priestly and Prophetical Offices are but subservient to his Regal Power, (as the Priests and Prophets

phets under the Law, were to their Kings) and therefore can have no effect without our subjection to Christ, as our Lord and King, which unites us to him, and makes us Members of his Body, which he redeemed and purchased with his Blood.

But then he wonders, why *they may not be distinct Offices, and yet parts of Christs Mediator Kingdom*: but then I wonder too, what he means by *distinct Offices, and parts*: When I say they are not properly to be considered as distinct Offices, by distinct Offices I mean, such Offices, as have no dependance upon each other, but can attain their ends single and apart; and when I say, they are several parts of the Mediator Kingdom, I mean, as any one might easily guess, that though there are several Acts distinct from each other, and proper to each of these Offices, yet they all center in one common end; they are all but the different administrations of the Mediator Kingdom, and necessary to produce the same effect, the Salvation of Mankind. But this troubles him too, that I say, they are the different administrations of this Mediator Kingdom; for says our Author, *Is an Office an Administration?* No, by no means, therefore I say they ought not to be look'd on as different Offices, but as

different Administrations of the same Supreme Office, which comprehends them all.

But then he would fain know, *what kind of Totum a Mediatory Kingdom is, to the Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King*: Why Sir, just such a *Totum* as consists of three parts: His mistake, which occasions this wondering humour, is, that he thought a Mediatory Kingdom and the Office of a King, to be of equal extent, and therefore that the Office of a King could not be contained under a Mediatory Kingdom, as a part is contained in the whole; Whereas every Puny in Divinity knows, that a *Mediatory Kingdom* is of a larger extent than the meer Office of a King, and contains the Prophetical and Priestly Offices under it: Which is like another of his mistakes, that because (as he observes from Doctor Jackson and Doctor Hammond) Christ was consecrated to his Priestly Office by his Sufferings and Death, therefore he was not consecrated to his Mediatory Office (as I assert) by being anointed with the Holy Ghost and with Power; as if Christ might not have a general Consecration to his Mediatory Office, and a particular Consecration to the particular parts of it: though Doctor Hammond only says, That the Death of Christ was his Consecration

to his *Melchisedechian* Priesthood, but was it self an act of his *Aaronical* Priesthood.

But I see the most innocent expressions shall not escape the severest Censures, when we have to deal with men, who can understand nothing, which is out of their common road of phrases: Mr. Ferguson draws up a very severe Charge against me upon this score, as if I confounded the Offices of Christ, and denied his Priesthood, and his Expiation and Sacrifice: and yet would have the World believe, that if he had not been in a very good humour, he could have handled me after another rate: Truly what his humour is I cannot tell, but I am sure that either his Understanding, or his Conscience, is not very good. He takes a great deal of laudable pains to prove, *that the Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, though they be not separated in their Subject, the Person of Christ, yet they are in their Natures, Objects, Acts, and Effects distinguished one from the other*: But do I any where deny this? Because I say, *that they are several Parts, and different Administrations of his Mediatory Kingdom*, does it hence follow, that they are not several Parts and different Administrations? That they do not differ in their Natures, Acts, and Effects? As for instance, the Paternal Go-

vernment consists of very different parts, as the Education of Children, providing Food and Raiment for them, correcting them when they do amiss, and encouraging their Vertues, placing them with prudent Masters and Governours, and providing for their future subsistence, and the like: Now will any man say, that there is no difference between feeding Children, and correcting them, and sending them to School, and putting them out to serve an apprenticeship to a Trade, whereby they may get their Livings, because all these do equally belong to a Fathers care, and are contained under the general notion of Paternal Government? Thus when we say, that Christ is a Saviour, or which is the same thing, a Mediatory King, and that the Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, are but the several Parts, and different Administrations of his Mediatory Kingdom, that is, they are all essential to the Office of a Saviour, and included in the notion of it, and necessary to the same end, the Salvation of Mankind; can any man hence reasonably infer, that they do not differ in their particular Natures, Acts, Objects, and Effects?

But Mr. *Ferguson* proves, that I make no difference between Christs Priestly and Kingly

Kingly Office, because I say, *that Christs offering himself a Sacrifice for Sin, was an Act of Kingship.* But I say no such thing: My words are these; *when he offered himself a Sacrifice for Sin, he acted like a King.* Now can our Author perceive no difference between these two expressions, that *Christs offering himself a Sacrifice for Sin, was an Act of Kingship;* and, *when he offered himself a Sacrifice for Sin, he acted like a King?* The first signifies, that the nature of his Sacrifice and Oblation consists in the exercise of a Regal Power, which indeed confounds his Priestly and Kingly Offices; the other only signifies, that at the very same time, and in that very Act, when he offered himself a Sacrifice for Sin, he exercised the Power of a King too; that is, as I explained it, that his Life was not taken from him by external force and power, but his laying down his Life was an Act of Authority; *He had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it again:* And I wonder Mr. *Ferguson* should think it any derogation from our Saviours Power and Authority, that he adds, *This Command have I received from my Father;* for I would fain know of him, what Authority and Power that is, which Christ, as Mediator, has not received from his Father, and does not ex-

ercise by his Command, and in subordination to him: A Mediatory Kingdom is a received and subordinate Power, it is Obedience with respect to God, and Authority and Power with respect to Men. And had this Author been so honest, as to have considered, what I immediately subjoyn, he could not have suspected me of *Socinianizing*, or of confounding the Priestly and Kingly Office, *viz. Herein Christ differs from other Kings, that he laid the Foundation of his Kingdom in his own Blood, that he purchas'd and redem'd his Subjects with the Sacrifice of himself.*

P. 395.

Such another mistake one may observe in our Author, when he makes me to say, *That the Sacerdotal Office is only a part and different Administration of the Regal:* Whereas I never thought, that the Sacerdotal Office was part of the Regal Office, but that the Priestly and Kingly and Prophetical Offices were several Parts and different Administrations of the Mediatory Kingdom: And when I affirm, that they were *several parts of the Mediatory Kingdom*, I had not so little wit in the same breath to affirm, that they were parts of each other, which is a down-right contradiction: but I see, our Author, with all his Learning, cannot distinguish between a Kingly

Kingly Office, and a Mediatory Kingdom.

In the like manner he arraigns me for a *Socinian*, for asserting that *Intercession signifies the Administration of Christs Mediatory Kingdom, the Power of a Regal Priest to expiate and forgive sins*: Though either our Author is very ignorant, or cannot but know, that what I there assert, has no affinity with the *Socinian* Notion; for I expressly attribute the Virtue and Efficacy of his Intercession, to the Expiation and Sacrifice of his Death, and cite *Heb. ix. 12.* to that purpose, which I am sure no *Socinian* can own.

The proper notion of an Advocate or Intercessor is one, who offers up our Prayers and Petitions, and procures an Answer, which was represented by the High Priests offering Incense in the Holy of Holies, which signified the Prayers of the Congregation; and therefore we find that while the Priest offered Incense in the Holy Place, the People used to pray without, that their Prayers might ascend together with the Incense, *Luke i. 10.* So that Christs Intercession is founded on the virtue of his Sacrifice, but it is not the *representation of his Meritorius Sacrifice*, as Mr. *Ferguson* imagines, but the Recommendation of our Prayers and Persons to God by virtue of his meritorious Sacrifice: and there-

therefore the Intercession of Christ is described by his being able to save all those to the uttermost, who come unto God by him, Heb. vii. 25. And since we have such an High Priest, who intercedes for us, and is sensible of our Infirmities, we are exhorted to come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need, Heb. iv. 16.

The death of Christ upon the Cross was a Sacrifice for Sin, was an Act of his Aaronical Priesthood, to make Atonement for Sin by the Sacrifice of himself; but when he ascended into Heaven, and had presented his Blood in the holy Place, he was no longer then a Priest after the Order of Aaron, but after the Order of Melchisedeck, as the Apostle proves at large in the Epistle to the Hebrews; his work is not to offer himself any more in Sacrifice, for he hath by one offering for ever perfected them who are sanctified; but his Office is to bless the People in Gods Name, as Melchisedeck blessed Abraham: God hath sent his Son to bless us, in turning of us from our iniquities: He hath exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.

So that now in virtue of his Death and Sacrifice, Christ doth not intercede, like
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some meaner Advocates, by Prayers and Intreaties, having all power both in Heaven and Earth committed to him, but doth by his Power and Authority, which he received from God, as the Purchase and Reward of his Death and Sufferings, bestow all those Blessings on us which we want, and pray for in his Name.

For this Reason, I asserted, That Christs Intercession is the Power of a Regal Priest, to expiate and forgive sins; not to make atonement for them, which he did by his Death and Sacrifice, (as Mr. Ferguson would pervert my words) but to apply this Expiation and Atonement to us, in the actual forgiveness of our sins.

And this is so plain and evident a Truth, that Mr. Ferguson himself cannot deny it, though he quarrels with me for asserting it, being willing, it seems, to find fault, if he knew how: His Words are these: *Indeed his Intercession, as upon the one* P. 391
hand it is founded on his Oblation and Sacrifice, being nothing but the representation of his meritorious Passion, and a continuation of his sacerdotal Function (which, as I observed before, is a mistaken notion of Christs Intercession, as confounding his Sacrifice with his Intercession, which is indeed founded on his Sacrifice, and receives all its virtue and efficacy

efficacy from it, but yet is of a distinct nature and consideration) *so on the other hand, it hath its effects towards us by virtue of the interposition of some Acts of his Kingly Office: For these Offices being all vested in the same Person, and having all the same general End, and belonging all to the work of Mediation, it cannot otherwise be, but that their Acts must have a mutual respect to each other; but yet the Priestly Office, to which Intercession appertains, is formally distinct from his Kingly.* In which words he acknowledges, that Christs Intercession, as it respects us, and consists in bestowing those Blessings on us, which we want, and which he hath purchased, is an Act of Kingly Power and Authority; which is as much, as I asserted, or ever intended to assert: And as for what he adds, that *still his Priestly Office is formally distinguish'd from his Kingly,* I readily grant it, so far as it respects his Sacrifice and Expiation, which is an Act of his *Aaronical* Priesthood; but as it respects his Intercession, which is an Act of his *Melchisedechian* Priesthood, his Kingly and Priestly Offices are so closely united, that he is rather to be considered as a Regal Priest, than as either Priest or King, because it is the exercise of that Power and Authority which is founded on his Sacrifice.

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And by this time, I hope, every ordinary Reader will see what a vain and malicious attempt it was, for this Author to endeavour to represent me as a *Socinian*; of which Candor and Ingenuity, I shall give several other Instances hereafter; and that he might have spared his pains in proving, that the Kingly and Priestly Offices in Christ are distinct, and that Christ is not a Metaphorical, but a proper Priest.

But to return to our *Looking-Glass-Maker*, he quarrels still, that I say, *That Christs preaching the Gospel was the exercise of his Regal Power in publishing his Laws: Our Author can understand, that to enact Laws is an exercise of a Regal Power, but not to publish them, which would make every inferior Herald a King:* This is a very wise Objection, which shews his Skill in Laws and Government: It is not indeed necessary for a King to publish his Laws in his own Person; this was a peculiar condescension of our Saviour, to come in Person to us to publish his Laws; but yet the publication of Laws must be made by the same Authority, which Enacts them; for publication is of the very essence of a Law, and by wiser men than our Author, put into the definition of it, and therefore is the proper exercise of Regal Power.

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I doubt my Readers will be quite tired with my taking notice of such impertinent Cavils, and therefore I shall add but one or two more, which are very remarkable, and dismiss our Author for the present: *I commend the Wisdom and Honesty of our Church, for teaching her Children a Religion without Art or Subtilty*: Our Author disproves this, by shewing that no Child can understand the Church-Catechism without great art and subtilty: he cannot understand what it is to be a *Member of Christ*, without understanding the various significations of the Name Christ, and whether he must be made a Member of the Church, or of the Person of Christ; and then he must know what this Church is, which requires great subtilty, &c. Now by the same argument I can prove, that a Child cannot understand the easiest thing in Nature, without unridling all the Mysteries of Philosophy; as for instance, at this rate a Child cannot understand what Bread is, unless he first understand what Matter is, and then he must understand all the difficulties of Quantity, and whether it consist of Divisibles or Indivisibles, and must understand the differences of Matter, and the reason, why he can bite one sort of Matter with his Teeth, but can
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Speculum,
P. 31.

make no impresson upon another: and how the parts of matter hang together, and the like. There is a more general indistinct apprehension of things, which is sufficient to govern our Actions, though we do not understand all the Niceties and Philosophy of them. But if our Author can find such subtilties in those plain matters, which are taught Children in the Church-Catechism, (which are objections that will indifferently lie against the plainest Instructions) what does he think of those sublime matters of the Eternal Decrees and Counsels of God, Election and Reprobation, and such-like Mysteries, which are so familiarly thrust into Catechisms? What subtilty is required in Children to understand these deep Points, and to comprehend the subtil and artificial Schemes of Orthodoxy?

This is much like another Cavil against the intelligibleness of our Union with Christ: *I am sure* (says our Author) *that our Union with Christ is an Union*: No doubt Sir; and if it be so, it cannot be very easie to be understood, because the *Metaphysical notion of Union is as difficult as any other transcendental term*: Why then let the Metaphysicians dispute it out; but for all that, I can easily understand, and I believe any
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P. 36.

one else can, what it is to be related to Christ, as Subjects are to their Prince, and Disciples to their Master, and Wives to their Husbands, &c.

This is enough to give the Reader a taste of our Authors Skill; and should I add any more, it might bring my own discretion into question: for next to making foolish and cavilling Objections, it is an argument of a very little Wit to answer them.

Vind.
P. 1.

And therefore to proceed, Dr. Owen observes, that I have writ against his Book, *which was writ and published near twenty years since*: I confess I do not well understand the force of this Objection, unless he imagine that his Book is now grown venerable for its antiquity; but where-ever the force of it lies, I am sure it answers another grand Objection against me (which is so often repeated) that *I am a Young Man*, a defect which time will mend, and which Industry will supply: However I suppose the Doctor was not very old twenty years ago, and it argu'd some Modesty in the *young Man*, rather to attack a Book writ by the Doctor, when he was a young Man too, than rudely to assault his Writings of a later date, which may be presumed to be the effects of a more mature Judgment

ment, and riper years; and I hope this consideration will plead my excuse with him, for not undertaking that task, which he has so kindly allotted me, right or wrong, to answer all his late voluminous Treatises, which I think I may as soon be perswaded to do, as to read them; that magnificent Title of *Exercitations*, which used to be prefixed before some learned Discourses, invited me to take a little taste of them, till I found my self mistaken, and deceived with some jejune or trite Observations; which has so put me out of conceit with flattering Titles, that I shall never again believe the Titles of Books or Chapters, for his sake.

But this Book has had the approbation of as Learned and Holy Persons, it may be, as any the Doctor knows living in England, or out of it, who owning the Truth contained in it, have highly avowed its Usefulness, and are ready yet so to do. I fear that either the Doctor's Acquaintance with Learned and Holy Men, is not very great, or that this is not true; for I cannot conceive, how very holy men should so approve a Book which is so little a Friend to Holiness, or that learned men should be pleased with such loose and inconsequent Reasonings; but let that be as it will, I am sure there are as learned

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and as holy men, who do as little approve it; unless the Doctor thinks, that Learning and Holiness are confined to his own Party, or that the approbation of his Writings is the only sure test of Mens Learning and Holiness.

But the great charge of all, which runs thorow his whole Book, is, that I have mis-represented his words, and perverted his sense, which sometimes he attributes to ignorance, sometimes to malice, sometimes he calls it an *impudent falshood*, sometimes *flagitiously false*, and shows very great Skill at varying phrases, which he is much better at, than at writing Controversies.

Whether this Charge be true or not, shall be examined particularly, as far as I can reduce the several particulars of this Charge into any order: But to abate the wonder a little, I must inform my Reader, that this is Dr. Owen's way of answering Books, to deny those Doctrines which he dares not own, or cannot vindicate; I am not the first who have been charged with such falsifications; Mr. Baxter was taxed with it long since, in a whole Book written for that very purpose, intituled, *Of the Death of Christ, and of Justification, the Doctrine concerning them formerly deliverd, vindicated*
from

from the *Animadversions of Mr. R. B.* where this grave man is corrected as magisterially, as if he had been such another Strippling as my self. Towards the conclusion of that Discourse, I meet with a very excellent Prayer: *If I must engage again in the like kind, I shall pray, That He, from whom are all my supplies, would give me a real humble frame of heart, that I may have no need with many pretences, and a multitude of good words, to make a cloak for a Spirit breaking frequently thorow all with sad discoveries of Pride and Passion, and to keep me from all magisterial insolence, pharisaical supercilious self-conceitedness, contempt of others, and every thing that is contrary to the Rule, whereby I ought to walk.* It is great pity that Forms of Prayer are not lawful, for this is too good a Prayer to be used but once in a mans life; which I doubt, is one reason, why we see no better effects of it in the Doctors Writings.

But there is a heavier Charge than all this behind, which is frequently hinted by Doctor Owen, and more expressly managed by Mr. Ferguson, who in his Preface tells his Readers, *That I treat the sacred Writers with as much contempt as I do T. W. and Burlesque the Scripture no less than others have done Virgil's Poems.* This would be a terrible Adversary, were he as good at his
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proofs, as he is bold and daring in his Charge. This is a crime of a very high nature to *burlesque Scripture*, and the foulness of the imputation might justly have provoked a tamer man than my self, did not his weak and ridiculous proofs more deserve contempt, than any serious resentment.

He waves the proof of this in his Preface; but in his second Chapter, where he entertains his Readers with a tedious impertinent Discourse about Metaphors and Allegories, and very gravely states the difference between a Metaphor and Allegory, and Parable, &c. as if he were reading a Rhetorick Lecture to his School-boys; and very strongly proves, that it is lawful to use Metaphors, and that the Spirit of God in Scripture does so, (it being his peculiar Talent to prove that which no body denies) at length he comes to the business, to show *that some of the expressions reflected on in the Writings of the Nonconformists, are such as the Holy Ghost himself hath preceded them in the use of, and that to the very same ends and purposes for which they produce them. And that he may not be thought to design the disparagement of any party of men, by quoting Testimonies from divers of their Authors, who rather than not strain up the dregs*

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P. 376.

of their choler against the Fanaticks, for their Phraseologies, have even written in derogation of Scripture-phrases; and made the Spirit of God the subject of their derision, as well as the Nonconformists; to avoid this, he confines himself to me alone. This is true Fanatick-Charity: He will by no means, good man! disparage any party of men, only he informs his Readers that there are a sort of men, who write against the Fanaticks (and it is pretty well known who they are) that make the Spirit of God the subject of their derision: And why so I pray? because they laugh at the Fanaticks for their ridiculous abuse of Scripture-Phrases and Metaphors: Though they prate Nonsense in Scripture-phrase, yet because it is the phrase of Scripture which they thus abuse, every one, who laughs at them for it, if we will believe Mr. Ferguson, makes the Spirit of God the subject of his derision.

And yet our Author, when he is in a better mood, tells us, *But let them and all such Persons, of what communion and persuasion soever they are, who turn the Gospel thus into a Romance, and subvert the Mysteries of Faith, by transforming them into Phantastick Allegories, be treated with the derision and contempt of all, who pretend to Wisdom and Modesty.* So that it seems, some men may turn

The Interest of Reason in Religion,
p. 311.

the very Gospel it self into a Romance, and abuse the Phrases and Expressions of Scripture to very evil purposes ; and then it is not a *deriding the Spirit of God*, but that which is consistent with *wisdom* and *Modesty*, to expose them to derision and contempt. Thus contrary is our Author to himself, when he opposes the Quakers, and vindicates his own dear Brethren, who have abused Scripture-expressions as grossly, though in many cases with less wit, and to worse purposes, than the Quakers themselves ; as he is forc'd to acknowledge of *T. W.* that *maybe*, in some things he ** hath prevaricated*, which is in plain English to say, that it maybe, he hath either play'd the Fool or the Knave, for which character *T. W.* is very much beholden to *Mr. Ferguson*.

But he hath taken care, that no other Person shall be able to answer this Charge ; for though he very charitably accuses all men, who write against the Fanaticks, yet he names no man, nor gives any particular instances of this prophane derision of the Holy Spirit ; only *I* am singled out to bear the fury of his assault ; and I am very well contented with it, provided that if I acquit myself, his bare Testimony may not be taken against any man, till the

* Ibid.
P. 384.

the Cause be first heard and tried.

The plain state of the Controversie is this : I charge them with drawing a New Scheme of Religion, such as is no where to be found in express terms in Scripture, from a pretended Acquaintance with Christs Person ; I foresaw an easie and obvious objection against this, that there are no men, who stuff their Books and Discourses with more frequent quotations of Scripture, than they do ; right or wrong they have a Scripture-proof for every thing they say ; and does it not look like a calumny then to charge them with fetching their Religion from any other Fountain than the holy Scriptures ? In answer to this, I made it appear, that they expound Scriptures according to their own fancies, and in compliance with their pre-conceived opinions ; that they do not fetch their notions from the Scriptures, but wrest the Scriptures from their proper and genuine sense, to make them countenance their own fancies. Now because I produce those Scripture expressions which these men pervert and burlesque (to use his own word) by their wild and fanciful applications, *Mr. Ferguson* had no way to be even with me, but to charge me with burlesquing the Scripture it self.

As for instance: They tell us, That all we have to do in order to our salvation, is *to get into Christ, and to be united to him*, for then his Fulness, and Beauty, and Riches, and Righteousness, and Merits, and All, is ours; and in order to this Union (which what it is, they could never yet explain) we must first *come to Christ, and then receive him, and apply his Merits and Righteousness to our selves, and then lean, and rest, and rolbour Souls upon him, and trust to be saved wholly by his Merits, without any Righteousness of our own*: and all this they learnedly prove from those Scripture-expressions of *coming to Christ, and receiving him, &c.* which signifie no more than believing in Christ, or undertaking the publick Profession of Christianity; but because I show how far these Scripture-phrases are from countenancing their Gibberish, Mr. *Ferguson* challenges me with *burlesquing* the Scripture. *Coming to Christ*, signifies, according to the Eastern Dialect, to believe in Christ, or to become his Disciple; but because it is called *coming*, hence these men of fancy dream of I know not what spiritual progress of the Soul to Christ; and explain believing, by *coming to Christ*, which in their Divinity is one of the first Acts of Faith.

Now because I say, That it falls out
luckily

luckily, that Faith is called *coming*, I am charged with deriding the Scripture; whereas it is plain, that if I deride any thing, it is only their foolish Explications of Scripture-phrases: for all their Mystical Divinity had been spoiled, and they must have been forc'd to have spoke plain sense, like other men, or to have spoke Nonsense without the least pretence of the authority of Scripture, had it not been for such *Eastern* Phrases, which were intended by the Holy Ghost to another purpose, but are capable of being perverted by *such English* Divines, to the countenancing of a *New-fashion'd English* Divinity; and I think still, that this fell out very *luckily* for them. Thus with an equal skill and ingenuity, he accounts it deriding the Scripture, to say, *That coming and going are very intelligible explications of believing*; whereas *coming* must be explained by *believing*, not believing by *coming*, unless we will in a proper sense burlesque the Scripture.

Thus because I reject their fanciful and presumptuous trust and confidence in Christ, *viz. to be saved by him for no other reason, but because they trust to be saved by him*; I am charged with deriding all trust and dependence on Christ, for the performance

mance of his Promises, or the influences of his Grace; and because I reject their proof of this from St. Paul's trusting in God in the faithful discharge of his Apostolical Office, notwithstanding all the Persecutions he suffered from Jews and Heathens, *2 Tim. 1. 12.* I am accused of *involving the Scripture in the same condemnation, and bringing St. Paul himself under the same imputation*: Certainly these men think themselves all Apostles, and that they expound the Scriptures with as infallible a Spirit as first indited them; for otherwise they would not be so impudent, as to charge every man, who laughs at their ridiculous applications of Scripture-phrases, with deriding the Scriptures, and the holy Spirit.

And yet this is the true Reason of all this noise and out-cry about *burlesquing* the Scripture; for he directs his Readers to page 62, 63, &c. of my Book, for an example of my *sacrilegious abuse of the words of Scripture, to make my Readers sport, and to render my Adversaries ridiculous*: and whoever consults the place, will only find a Scheme of their Divinity, expressed in their own canting phrases, without any Art to make it look ridiculously, but only a true and naked representation of it; and though I cannot

cannot deny, that it is a famous Example of burlesquing the Scripture, yet Mr. Ferguson ought to have laid the Saddle upon the right Horses back, and then I doubt his own dear Friends must suffer under this Imputation.

There is nothing I more heartily designed, than to rescue the Scripture from such Abuses, as appears from what I immediately added, *That the whole Mystery of this, and a great deal more stuff of this nature* (not of * *Fanaticism*, as he cites my words, purposely to create the greater odium, which is very familiar with him, and agreeable enough to the *purity of his Christian Morals*) *consists in wresting metaphorical and allusive expressions to a proper sense: when the Scripture describes the Profession of Christianity, a sincere Belief and Obedience to the Gospel, by having Christ, and being in Christ, and coming to him, and receiving him; these men expound these phrases to a proper and natural sense, to signify I know not what unintelligible Union and spiritual Progress and Closure of the Soul with him; an Union of Persons, instead of an Agreement in Faith and Manners.* If this be to burlesque Scripture, to deliver it from the Freaks of an Enthusiastick Fancy, and to expound it to a plain and easie sense, such as is agreeable to the Understandings of men,

Knowledg
of Christ,
p. 108.

* Interest
of Reason
&c. p. 276.

men, and worthy of the Spirit of God, I acknowledge the Charge, and am afraid my Adversaries will never be guilty of that Crime.

Thus when I shew how convincingly these men prove their darling Opinions from a fanciful Exposition of Scripture-Metaphors, and Types and Figures, and among the rest observe, how many pretty Resemblances of Christ, Mr. *Watson* has discover'd in the *brazen Serpent*, (wherein Mr. *Ferguson* himself acknowledges he has *prevaricated*) I am charged with deriding the Type it self, and making scornful Reflections upon the main scope and design of the comparison: *T. W.* among other things tells us, that *as the Serpent was lifted up to be look'd upon by the stung Israelites, which looking implied a secret hope they had of cure; so if we do but look on Christ fiducially, we shall be cured of our sins*: by which comparison he would prove, that because the Israelites were miraculously cured only by looking upon the brazen Serpent, that therefore there is nothing more required of us to be cured of our Sins, but only looking *fiducially* on Christ, that is, confidently hoping to be saved by him; this, Mr. *Ferguson* says, is parallel to the words of our Saviour, and the true intendment and meaning

ing of them, *John iii. 15, 16. And as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*: And now I will acknowledge that I have done very ill in ranking this comparison of *T. W.*'s, among the rest of his *Prevarications*, if Mr. *Ferguson* can prove, that this *believing* signifies no more than this *fiducial looking on Christ*, which I am sure he can never prove, except it be in Mr. *Watson*'s way.

What he adds about Mr. *Tho. Vincent* is sufficiently answered already, and shall be considered in another place. This is the sum of his Charge against me, for *burlesquing* Scripture; in which I cannot think he was serious, but only said this, because he must say something, and had nothing wiser to say: Or as it is with some scolding people, who wanting wit to make proper and sudden Repartees, chuse rather than to say nothing, to say the same things, which were said to them; though the impropriety of the application, and the dullness of it, serve only to make mirth for the by-standers.

This, I perceive, is Mr. *Ferguson*'s peculiar Talent; and to give him his due, he is very dexterous at it, as will appear in

two or three instances more of a like nature.

I charge some of the Nonconformists (for I never thought them all guilty of it) with perverting the Scripture by expounding *allusive* and *metaphorical expressions* to a *proper sense*; Mr. Ferguson dares not deny this Charge, for the matter of fact is too evident; but he shews great Skill in retorting it, and gives several instances, how I pervert Scripture in the same manner.

Thus he tells his Readers, "That whereas other Expositors of Scripture have expounded Christs being called *The Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, Heb. i. 3. in a plain and proper sense, and have accordingly argued from it for the Deity of Christ against the Socinians, Mr. Sherlock by Christs being stiled the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, &c. understands no more but those Discoveries which Christ hath made of God, being as true a Representation of the Divine Nature and Will, as any Picture is of the Person it represents. When he says I understand no more by it, he expressly contradicts my own words, which are these: Upon which account too (as well as with respect

to

to his Divine Nature) he is called the brightness of his Fathers glory, &c. So that I acknowledge, that Christ is called *the brightness of his Fathers glory*, as well with respect to his Divine Nature, as to the glorious Revelations of his Will; and for Mr. Ferguson to say I do not, and upon that account to insinuate so foul a Charge as *Socinianism*, others would have called a wilful and maliciouslye.

But suppose the worst, that I had expounded Christs being called *the brightness of his Fathers Glory, &c.* only with respect to those glorious Discoveries he hath made of God, he might have said, it had been a false and dangerous, and Socinian Exposition, or what he pleased; but it is a very unhappy instance of *abusing the Scripture to a metaphorical sense, where the words, according to all Rules of Exposition, will admit a proper one*: for I would desire Mr. Ferguson to tell me, what is the proper sense of *the Brightness of Gods glory, and the express Image of his Person*: What is the proper brightness of a Spirit? Nay, the brightness of the Glory of God, and the Image of an infinite Spirit, which hath no shape? I never met with any Expositor till now, who thought these proper Expressions, but every one hath reckon'd them metaphorical:

Knowledge
of Christ,
P. 32.

cal: But besides this, why does he imagine, that Wisdom, and Goodness, and Power, and Justice, and such-like Perfections of the Divine Nature, are but the *metaphorical Glory* of God? And that those glorious Discoveries, which God hath made of these Perfections in Christ, are but a *metaphorical Brightness of this Glory*? When we never read of any other Glory of God in Scripture, except it were some glorious visible Appearance, which is much more likely to be a metaphorical glory, than the eternal and infinite Perfections of the Divine Nature. And the same answer will serve for what he alleges about Christs being the Image of God.

But he tells us, That *Grotius and Hammond, Persons to whom* (as he well guesses) *I pay a respect, vouchsafe us a much better Paraphrase, on Heb. i. 3.* I shall be very glad to learn from these men, and first let us consult *Dr. Hammond*, and his Paraphrase upon those words, *The brightness of his glory, and the express Image of his Person, is this, who being the means of reflecting to us the sight of him, who is otherwise invisible:* for the explication of which, he refers us to *John i. 18.* *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father,*

ther; he hath declared him: and his Paraphrase on these words, whereby we may know what the Doctor means by *reflecting the sight of God to us*, is this: *God is invisible, and not approachable by us, and so his will, and the knowledge of his Attributes cannot be conveyed to us but by some Intercessor, and of this sort none can be comparable to Christ Jesus, who is next unto the Father, and most dearly beloved by him, and knows most of his mind; and his end of coming into the world was to declare this unto us.* So that *Dr. Hammond* gives no better Paraphrase, but in part the very same, which I do, and must pass for a *metaphorical Interpreter*, and *Mr. Ferguson* for a *proper Slanderer*. And *Grotius* gives the very same account of the words: He expounds the ἀπαύρασμα ἔδξιν, *the brightness of his glory, by repercussus Divinae Majestatis, qualis est Solis in Nube, qui dicitur περιλιθῶ,* “A reflection of the Divine Majesty, such as we may sometimes observe of the Sun in a Cloud: and adds, “That this Divine Glory and Majesty, *cum per se conspici nequeat, cernitur in Christo, sicut Sol, quem directe oculi nostri tueri nequeant, cernitur in Aqua, Speculo, Nube:* “Since “we cannot immediately see it, as it is in “it self, is discovered in Christ; as the “Sun, which we cannot directly view, is “seen

“ seen in Water, in a Glafs, or in a Cloud :
 and for the understanding of this, refers us
 to 2 Cor. iv. 4. *who is the Image of the invis-
 ible God* ; which he thus paraphraseth: *Ni-
 mirum sicut ex imagine hominis species cognosci-
 tur, ita ex iis, quæ egit & locutus est Christus,
 Dei Potentia, Sapientia, Sanctitas, Bonitas.*
 “ As a Man is known by his Image and
 “ Picture, so is the Power, Wisdom, Ho-
 “ linefs, Goodness of God, known and
 “ discerned by those things which Christ
 “ did and spoke, while he was on Earth.
 And the very same account he gives of
 Col. i. 15. What excuse Mr. *Ferguson* can
 make for this, I know not ; though I pre-
 sume, that he, who so often needs Excuse-
 ses, is never without one.

But to requite him for his civility to
Grotius and *Hammond*, I will direct him to
 two other Persons, to whom, I suppose, he
 will pay some respect, who are as *metapho-
 rical* men in this point, as my self, and
 they are no less men than *Calvin* and *Beza*.
 Mr. *Calvin*, though he acknowledges,
 as I do, that those Expressions, *The
 brightness of his Glory, and the express Image
 of his Person*, refer to the Divine Nature
 in Christ, yet he tells us, that we must
 consider this Phrase, according to the
 scope and design of the Apostle: *Neque
 enim*

Vide Cal-
 vin in lo-
 cum.

*enim hic tradere voluit, quid simile intus habeat
 Pater cum Filio, sed quemadmodum dixi, fidem
 nostram edificare cum fructu voluit, ut discamus
 non aliter Deum nobis patefieri, quam in Christo.*
 i. e. “ That the Apostle did not intend in
 “ this place to acquaint us, what internal
 “ similitude or likeness there is, between
 “ the Father and the Son ; but to teach
 “ us that which is for the edification of
 “ our faith, that God cannot be known
 “ any other way, but only in Christ.
 With more to the same purpose.

Beza exactly follows his Master, and
 gives this interpretation of the *brightness
 of his glory* ; *Is in quo resplendet gloria illa ac
 Majestas patris alioqui infiniti & inconspicui, si-
 ve is, in quo uno splendorem suum conspicendum
 præbet Pater, qui propterea Col. i. 15. dicitur
 imago Dei inconspicui, & 1 Cor. iv. 4. idque in
 Evangelio.* That is, “ He in whom the
 “ Glory and the Majesty of the Father,
 “ who otherwise is infinite and invisible,
 “ shines forth, or he in whom alone God
 “ makes his own brightness and glory vi-
 “ sible to us, upon which account, Col. i. 15.
 “ Christ is called *The Image of the invisible
 “ God*, and 1 Cor. iv. 4. with respect to
 “ those Discoveries he hath made of God
 “ in the Gospel : „ And as he proceeds,
 “ We cannot truly contemplate the Fa-
 “ ther,

Beza in
 locum.

“ther, but in the Son, in the Son, I say,
 “incarnate, by whom the Father speaks
 “to us. And he alledges the Authority of
Tertullian, adversus Praxeam, for this Ex-
 position: *Vicarium se Patris Christus ostendit,*
per quem Pater & videretur in factis, & audi-
retur in verbis, et cognosceretur in filio facta et
verba patris administrante: “Christ shewed
 “himself the true Vicar of his Father;
 “for the Father was seen in his Actions,
 “heard in his Words, and made known
 “by that whole Oeconomy, which was
 “administred by the Son. By this we may
 see what credit Mr. *Ferguson* deserves,
 when he talks so confidently of the sense
 of Ancient and Modern Expositors, who
 either is acquainted with none of them,
 or thinks his Readers are not; who ei-
 ther knows not, or cares not, what he
 says.

In the next place he observes, that I ex-
 pound *the Fulness of Christ*, *John i. 16.* to
 signifie a perfect Declaration of the Di-
 vine Will concerning the Salvation of
 Mankind, and he gives this as another in-
 stance of my *turning plain Scripture Testimo-*
nies into Tropes and Figures. Now whatever
 becomes of this Exposition, (of which
 more hereafter) did ever any man before
 Mr. *Ferguson*, imagine, that the *Fulness of*
Christ,

The Inte-
 rest of Rea-
 son in Re-
 ligious,
 P. 287.

Christ, of which we receive Grace for Grace, was
 a proper Expression, without the least
 Trope or Figure? Fulness properly be-
 longs only to space, as filled with matter,
 and is a metaphorical Expression, when
 applied to Spirits, or spiritual things: and
 therefore I thought that instead of turning
 a proper Expression into Tropes and Fi-
 gures, I had expounded a figurative Ex-
 pression to the most proper sense, when by
 the Fulness which is in Christ, I under-
 stood the most perfect Knowledge of the
 Divine Will, and by this Fulness com-
 municated to us, the most perfect Decla-
 rations of the Divine Will in the Gospel,
 which is a Dispensation of Grace and
 Truth.

But let us consider what proper work
 Mr. *Ferguson* makes of it: *By that Fulness in*
Christ, of which we all receive Grace for Grace,
 he understands a participation of renewing san-
 ctifying Grace, according to the plain and proper
 import of the words: So that Christ is in a
 proper sense full of renewing and sancti-
 fying Grace, that is, according to Mr.
Ferguson's notion of it, of infused habits
 of Grace; and we receive this renewing
 Grace out of Christ's Fulness, as Water
 flows out of a Fountain: And thus either
 Grace passes from one Subject to another,

which the Philosopher would have told him, no Habit or Quality can do ; or the very Substance of Christ is communicated to Christians, together with these infused Habits of Grace, which is a more ridiculous conceit than the Popish *Transubstantiation*, or the Lutheran *Consubstantiation* : The inherent Grace of Christ, according to this notion, is of the same identical nature with the infused Habits of Grace in Christians, and the Essential Holiness of Christ is separable from his Person, and may be transmitted into another Subject, and may there be capable of increase and diminution : Mr. *Ferguson* must necessarily allow all this, if he take these words in a proper sense ; for it is not sufficient to say that Christ is endowed with power to renew and sanctifie us, to deliver this Expression from Tropes and Figures, but the very same Grace which is in Christ, must be infused into Believers ; which is an excellent way of expounding Scriptures to a proper sense, by turning them into Nonsense.

But these are but some slight Skirmishes ; in pag. 387. he draws forth his whole strength and force to make good this Charge against me, *That I pervert the Scripture, by turning Plain and Proper Expressions*

pressions into a Metaphorical Sense. Of this he gives two instances, the first is concerning the Priestly Office of Christ, which he says, I confound with his Regal Office, and consequently make Christ only a *metaphorical Priest* ; and then he tells us, *That there is not one Text in the Bible, where Christ is called a Priest, which can be understood in a proper sense, but they must all of necessity be interpreted in a metaphorick, as the Socinians expound them :* Now though I doubt it would puzzle Mr. *Ferguson* to give an intelligible account what he means by a *proper* and a *metaphorical Priest*, yet at least one might reasonably expect from him, that in order to make good this Charge, he should produce some express place where I make Christ a metaphorical Priest, or some express Texts, which I expound to such a metaphorical sense ; but he can do neither of these, and therefore he first perverts my words, as well as sense, and then argues by consequence, that I make Christ only a metaphorical Priest, and then by as good consequence, I must expound those Texts, which concern the Priesthood of Christ, in a metaphorick sense ; and thus by consequence our Author loses his labour : For I have already made it sufficiently appear, how

childishly he has mistaken, or maliciously perverted my words, and sense, whereon this Charge is grounded: only I am very glad to find upon this occasion, that he has so much alter'd his Judgment of *Dr. Stillingfleet*, and his *Discourse concerning the Reason of the Sufferings of Christ*: for time was, when he charged that Learned Person with betraying the Cause, for the same Reasons, for which I am now charged with *Socinianism*: But our Author never commends any one, unless it be to insinuate some commendation of himself, or to reflect some disparagement and odium upon his Adversary.

Ib. p. 453.

His next instance concerns that account which I give of the nature of Justification. And here he first lays down my sense of it, and then makes some few cavilling exceptions against it; & then admirably proves, that I pervert plain and proper expressions of Scripture to a metaphorical sense. As for the first, I own my words, but dislike that blundering method, into which he has cast them; and therefore I shall beg leave to represent my own Conceptions in such order and method, as may more easily and naturally express my sense.

I assert, That our Justification and Acceptance with God, depends wholly upon the
the

the Gospel-Covenant, which does not exact from us a perfect and sinless Obedience, but promises Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, upon the Conditions of Faith, and Repentance, and new Obedience; that this Gospel-Covenant is wholly owing to the Merits of Christ, who by the Sacrifice of his Death hath expiated our Sins, and both in his Life and Death hath given a Noble Demonstration of his entire Obedience and Submission to the Divine Will: for God being well pleased with the Obedience of Christs Life, and with the Sacrifice and Expiation of his Death, entered into a New Covenant of Grace and Mercy with Mankind: that the only way to partake of the blessings of this New Covenant, is by believing and obeying the Gospel of Christ; that is in other words, by acknowledging the Divine Authority of our Saviour, believing his Revelations, obeying his Laws, trusting to the Merits of his Sacrifice, and the Power of his Intercession, and depending on the supplies and influences of his Grace: So that the Righteousness of Christ is not the formal cause of our Righteousness or Justification, but the Righteousness of his Life and Death is the meritorious cause of that Covenant, where-

whereby we are declared righteous, and rewarded as righteous Persons: our Righteousness is wholly owing to the Righteousness of Christ, which in this sense may be said to be imputed to us, because without this Covenant of Grace, which is founded on the Righteousness of Christ, the best man living could lay no claim to Righteousness, or future Glory. The Righteousness of Christ is our Righteousness, when we speak of the Foundation of the Covenant, by which we are accepted; but if we speak of the Terms of the Covenant, *i. e.* What it is that will intitle us to all the Blessings of the Covenant, then we must have a Righteousness of our own, for the Righteousness of Christ will not serve the turn.

This is a plain and easie Account of my sense concerning the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Christ, and to this I will stand. Let us hear then what Mr. Ferguson has to object against it. And first he can by no means understand *how the Righteousness of Christs Life and Death can be the meritorious cause of Gods forgiving our sins and follies*, (he should have said, of that Covenant, wherein God promises to forgive our sins upon certain Conditions) *forasmuch as* (according to what I express elsewhere)

where) *his Essential Goodness obliged him to it.* The words which he cites to this purpose, are these: *That the natural notions, which men have of God, assure them, that he is very good, and that it is not possible to understand what Goodness is, without pardoning Grace.* Now I would know of Mr. Ferguson which of these three he will reject; whether he will deny, that the natural notion of a Deity includes infinite Goodness; or that the notion of infinite Goodness includes Pardoning Grace, when there is a just and honourable occasion for it; or that the Merits of Christs Life and Death have purchas'd the Grace and Mercy of the Gospel: If he believe all these, he is as much concerned to answer this Objection, as I am; if he deny them, he must either turn Atheist or Socinian: But pray, who told him, that the Goodness of God did immediately *oblige* him to pardon Sinners? or that the Goodness of God confers an *antecedent title* on Sinners to Grace and Pardon? May not a good God consult the Reputation of his Holiness, and of his Authority and Government, and dispence his Pardons in such prudent Methods as his own Infinite Wisdom shall direct? And may he not then require the intervention of a Sacrifice, and of a very meritorious

ritorious one too, to purchase and seal his Pardon to Sincers? The Essential Goodness of God only proves, That he may pardon Sin without a Sacrifice, but it does not prove, that either he *will* or *must*.

The next Exception is very surprizing, That because I elsewhere assert, *That the whole Mystery of the Recovery of Mankind consists only in repairing the Divine Image, which was defaced by Sin, that is, in making all men truly good and vertuous, &c. He cannot imagine, how the Covenant of Grace can be so much as necessary to the promising of Remission of Sins, much less that the Death of Christ was needful to procure it to that end. But pray why so? Is not the Promise of Pardon purchas'd and sealed with the Blood of Christ, absolutely necessary to encourage men to be good? Does not the Gospel represent this to be the last and ultimate end of what Christ hath done and suffered to rescue Mankind from the Power of the Devil, and Dominion of their Lusts, and to renew them after the Image of God? If Mr. Ferguson be ignorant in these matters, I can direct him to a * very good Book, which will better instruct him. But suppose he know no other end of Christs Death, but to satisfy a natural vindictive*

* The Design of Christianity.

dictive, inexorable Justice, yet if this must be done, before any thing else can be done, is it not absolutely necessary to the last and ultimate end, which is to transform men into the Image of God, and to bring them to the fruition of him? For the satisfaction of Justice, in what sense soever he pleases to understand it, can only be a means in order to the Recovery of lost Man, not the Recovery it self.

In the next place, he tells us, *That it seems inconsistent with the Wisdom and Sapience of God, to introduce a perfect Righteousness, such as that of his Son was, meerly to make way for his justifying us upon an imperfect Righteousness, such as that of our Obedience is. What force there may be in that phrase of introducing a perfect Righteousness, I cannot tell, but I can discover no inconsistency with the Wisdom of God to accept & reward those, who are sincerely but not perfectly righteous, for the sake of one, who is. If God bestowed so many Blessings on the Posterity of Abraham, for the sake of their Father, who was not perfectly righteous, I wonder our Author should think it any derogation to the Divine Wisdom, to accept and reward our imperfect Obedience for the sake of the perfect Righteousness & Obedience of Christ. Nay, though we should suppose, that*

that God had sent *Christ* into the world upon no other design, but to set a most perfect Example of Holiness & Obedience to the Divine Will; and to give a plain Demonstration, how highly he is pleased with Obedience to his Laws, should not only greatly reward him in his own Person, but should promise for his sake to pardon and reward all those, who imitate (though imperfectly) his Example, (which in our Authors Phrase, is to introduce a perfect Righteousness, meerly that he may justify us upon an imperfect one) this would be no greater blemish to the Wisdom of God, than it is to chuse fit and proper ways of expressing his love to Holiness, and encouraging the Obedience of his Creatures.

But our Author proceeds very Rhetorically: *Nor shall I argue how that the Righteousness of Christs Life, and Sacrifice of his Death, must be imputed to us for Justification, in proportion to our Sins having been imputed to him, in order to his Expiatory Sufferings.* He may argue thus, if he pleases, and I shall perfectly agree with him in it. Let us then consider how he manages this Argument. *Christs Sufferings must not be attributed meerly to Gods Dominion, without any respect to Sin: This I grant; therefore our sins*

sins were imputed to him, not only in the effects of them, but in the guilt: This I so far grant, that the Sufferings of Christ had respect to the guilt of our Sins, otherwise he could not have been a Sacrifice for Sin; but whereas he adds, That it is a thing utterly unintelligible (I hope Mr. Ferguson thinks it never the less true for that) how Christ could be made sin for us, and have our punishment transferred to him, without a previous imputation of sin, and the derivation of its guilt upon him. I am so far of another mind, that I think it unintelligible how it should be so: for (besides that guilt cannot be transferred upon an innocent Person, though punishment may) I cannot understand how Christ should suffer for *our* sins, if the guilt of our sins were transferred upon himself: if he died for *our* sins, it is plain that the guilt is accounted *ours* still, though the punishment be transferred on him: And this is essential to the nature of a Sacrifice, that it dies not for it self, but for another, and therefore not for its own, but for anothers guilt, continuing anothers: Christ was no *sinner* in any sense, but a *Sacrifice for sin*, which differ just as much as bearing the guilt, and bearing the punishment of sin.

Were our sins transferred on Christ in
Mr.

Mr. *Perguson's* way, so that our sins become his, and that he may be called a *sinner*, nay the greatest of *Sinners*, the necessary consequence of this Doctrine would be, that we are not delivered from the guilt and punishment of our sins by the *Death of Christ*, which the Scripture every where asserts, but by the *translation of our sins on him*: When our sins are transferred on Christ, we are *ipso facto* innocent, and his Death cannot deliver us, who are freed already, but must be only to deliver himself from this assumed guilt; we are freed by the transferring of our guilt on Christ, and Christ is freed by undergoing the punishment of sin: As if any man should be so kind as to take my Debt absolutely upon himself, if the Creditor accept of this exchange, I am finally discharged, and am not liable to any farther Arrest or Action at Law; and whenever he pays the Debt, he does not free me, but himself from the Obligation.

So that now his Argument from Proportion falls to the ground, *That if our sins were imputed to Christ, otherwise than merely in the Effects of them, so must likewise the Righteousness of his Life, and the Sacrifice of his Death be otherwise imputed to us, than merely in the Benefits of them*: For as Christ was
not

not accounted a Sinner, by the imputation of our sins to him, so neither shall we be accounted formally righteous, by the imputation of his Personal Righteousness to us.

His next Argument is, *That secluding not only the Righteousness of Christs Life, but the Satisfaction of his Death, as the matter, and the imputation of it, as the formal cause of Justification, it seems repugnant to the Immutability and Essential Holiness of God, to justify us upon an imperfect Obedience, the Law which requireth a perfect, remaining still in force, and denouncing wrath in case of every failure*: The sum of which Argument is this, That it is unjust for God to forgive us our sins, though Christ hath died to make Atonement for them, unless we be made formally righteous by the imputation of his Righteousness to us; which in plain terms overthrows the Gospel of Christ, and makes the Sacrifice of his Death of no value, for if Christ have expiated our sins by his Death, why may not God accept and reward our imperfect Services, without being unjust in doing so?

But that Law which requireth perfect Obedience remains still in force, and denounceth wrath against every failure: But is there any Law which forbids God to pardon sin, though his own Son make atonement for

it by his Death? Where is this Law? And where is the Sanction of it? And who gave it this Sanction? Will nothing satisfy the Law but perfect and unfinning Obedience? Then there can be no Gospel, then God never can forgive sin, and it is a vain thing to talk of it: We may be Righteous by an imputed Righteousness, (were it possible for God to judge otherwise of things, than they are) but our sins can never be forgiven; which is a direct contradiction to the whole Gospel. A Law in force, which will not admit of Pardon and Forgiveness upon any terms, is inconsistent with Gospel-Grace; and therefore had not Mr. *Ferguson* told us, that the *Socinians* assert the abrogation of the Sanction of the Law upon the confirmation of the Gospel-Covenant, I should have been inclined to have thought so too: for I cannot understand how it is possible to reconcile a Law, which requires unfinning Obedience under the pain of Damnation, with the Gospel, which promises Pardon of sin and eternal Life, upon the condition of sincere Obedience, which are at as great a distance as a necessity of Pardon, and a necessity of Innocency. And now I think of it, there is no danger of *Socinianism*, if we do but attribute such an abro-

abrogation of the Law (if it may be so called) as well as the Sanction of the Gospel, to the Merits of Christs Death and Sufferings; and therefore I boldly assert, That there is no such Law now in force, as requires unfinning Obedience under the penalty of Damnation. Not that Christ hath in a proper sense abrogated the Law by his Death, if by the Law we mean those Eternal Rules of Righteousness, which necessarily result from the nature of things, and their mutual relations and respects, that is, that he has not made that to be no sin, which according to the Eternal Rules of Righteousness was a sin; as Mr. *Ferguson* childishly argues, *That then* Ib. p. 415 *it would follow, that by being Believers, we wholly cease to be Sinners; and that the Gospel instead of only making provision for the remission of sins against the Law, hath prevented the breaches of it from being so.* But the only abrogation of the Law is, That we shall not be judged or condemned according to the Rules of a perfect and unfinning Obedience; that Christ having made Atonement and Expiation for our sins, God will now for the sake of Christ pardon the sins of true Penitents, and reward their sincere, though imperfect Obedience. This is the Gospel-Covenant, which was purchased

chased and sealed with the blood of Christ, which does not make that to be no sin, which before was a sin, but only absolves us from the condemnation due to sin, and entitles us to those Rewards which an imperfect Obedience cannot merit.

Perfect Obedience is the Attainment at which we must aim, but not the Rule by which we shall be judged: There is no other Law now in force to Christians, but the Gospel of our Saviour, which is the Christian Law, and is the Perfection and Advancement both of the Law of Nature and the Law of *Moses*; and this Law requires a perfect, but accepts and rewards a sincere Obedience: it does not come short of any Law in the perfection of its Rules, and it excells all other Laws as it is a Dispensation of Grace: For though the Gospel requires both a perfect and sincere Obedience, yet it requires them under very different Sanctions, at least if Promises may be called the Sanction of a Law: The Sanction of Sincerity is the Promise of Eternal Life; nothing less than this, will deliver us from the wrath of God, or procure our admission into Heaven; by this Rule we shall be judged, as to our final state of Happiness
or

or Misery. But the Sanction of Perfection consists in the greater degrees of Glory: He who is sincere, though imperfect, shall be saved according to the terms of the Gospel, but our Reward shall be proportion'd to our different Attainments, and the greatest Glory is reserved for the most perfect Saint. And now I hope Mr. *Ferguson* will be satisfied, that it is not repugnant to the Immutability and Essential Holiness of God, to accept and reward a sincere though imperfect Obedience; since he does not absolve his Creatures from any essential part of their Duty, but is so merciful, as for the sake of Christ to pardon and accept sincere Penitents; and so holy, as to encourage the most perfect Vertue with the promise of proportionable Rewards.

As for what Mr. *Ferguson* adds concerning Christ's *Surrogation* in our room and stead, which makes all his Acts and Sufferings in a Law-sense accounted ours; before he had laid too much weight and stress on this Argument, he ought first to have proved, that Christ acted as our *Substitute*, in all that he did, as well as suffered, and he might have tried his Skill in answering those Arguments wherewith I have already assaulted that Notion; but this is not
K 3 his

Ib. p. 411.
Knowledge
of Christ,
p. 288.
Edit. 2.
p. 201.

his way, it is more agreeable to his Genius and Capacity to dictate Magisterially, than to prove.

Christ indeed died as a Sacrifice for our Sins, and in this sense suffered in our stead, but his suffering in our stead is a plain demonstration, that his sufferings are not accounted ours, any otherwise than as we receive the benefit of them, in the expiation and forgiveness of our sins, which is the proper effect of Sacrifices, and redounds to them for whom the Sacrifice is offered; which is all I can understand by any sufferings, which are not ours, being accounted ours in a *Law-sense*; for any other sense implies a contradiction, that any sufferings, which are not undergone by us, but by another in our stead, should be accounted ours, any otherwise than as we receive the benefit and advantage of them: And this is what the Learned Bishop Davenant understood by *Imputation*;

Davenant
de gratia
habituali.
Cap. 27.

De facto imputantur (extrinseca) quando illorum intuitus & respectus valent nobis ad aliquem effectum, æquè ac si à nobis vel in nobis essent:

“ Then those things, which are without
“ us, and do not properly belong to us, are
“ said to be imputed to us, when with re-
“ spect to them, we are equally intitled to
“ their effects, as if they had been done by

“ us,

“ us, or were inherent in us. But such a Surrogation and Imputation, will not satisfy Mr. Ferguson, who must have the *Righteousness of Christs Life, and the Sacrifice of his Death, otherwise imputed to us, than meerly in the benefits of them*: Though any other imputation is impossible, as implying a *Thwacking Contradiction*, to use his own phrase.

Having thus got rid of these Objections in a fair *Logical way*, according to Mr. Ferguson's desire, and not called, but proved them all to be meer *carvil, and sophistry, and vulgar talk*; I come now to the main Charge which he draws up against me, of *perverting the plainest Scriptures into Metaphors*. And in order to make good this Charge, he premises two things: First, *That to Justifie, is in its proper acceptation a forensick term, signifying to acquit and absolve one that is accused*: This I readily grant.

The second is, *That Justification not only supposeth us to be indicted, but withal imports an absolution from the Charge of that Law, of the breach whereof we are accused*: I don't much care, if I grant this too; but then observe the consequence, the Law, which accuseth us, is the Law of perfect and unfinning Obedience, and therefore if we would be acquitted and absolved from the Accusa-

tion of the Law, we must produce a perfect and unfinning Obedience for our Justification: for to be pardoned is not a proper, but a metaphorical Justification; for in propriety of speech, *neither can an accused Innocent, by being acquitted be said to be pardoned, nor a condemned Criminal, by having the execution of his sentence remitted, be said to be justified*: So that to our proper Justification from the Sentence of the Law, is necessarily required an Imputation of the perfect Righteousness of Christ to us, to make us perfectly righteous; but to place Justification in the Pardon of Sin, (as I do) is to pervert plain Scripture into Metaphors, for then *Justification, as it is opposed to the accusation of the Law, its charging us with guilt, and its passing Sentence of Condemnation against us thereupon, doth not admit a proper sense in the whole Scripture, but must every where be construed metaphorically; and that the import of it is, that we are not properly and in a Law-sense justified, but that such Benefits accrue to us by remission of sin, as if we were so.* And now I pity our Author with all my heart, for he hath run himself into a labyrinth, out of which all his Art and Sophistry can never deliver him.

The only Foundation he has to bear up the weight of this Charge, is, That the
Law

Law of perfect and unfinning Obedience is still in force; but I have already shewed the weakness and vanity of this pretence, and how inconsistent it is with the Gospel-Covenant; and therefore I need add no more in vindication of my self: for take away this Law of perfect Obedience, and Mr. *Ferguson* himself acknowledges that according to my notion, *in reference to the demands of the Gospel, we may in a proper* P. 4:6. *sense be said to be justified.* So that I am whole again all on a sudden, and the only difference between Mr. *Ferguson* and my self is, that he contends for the necessity of a legal Righteousness and Justification, and I contend for an Evangelical Righteousness; he is for being justified by the Personal Righteousness of Christ, I am for being justified according to the gracious terms and conditions of the Gospel, which are founded on the Merits and Righteousness of Christ.

But let us suppose for once, that this Law of perfect and unfinning Obedience, is still in force, and does accuse us, and that our Justification must respect the Sentence of the Law; what then? Why then, to place Justification in pardon of sin, is to make it not a proper but metaphorical Justification; and what then?

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If this be the Scripture-notion of it, I matter not, whether it be proper or metaphorical: the abuse of Scripture-expressions does not consist in expounding Scripture either to a proper or to a metaphorical sense, but in wresting metaphorical and allusive expressions to a proper sense, when they ought to be taken metaphorically, and proper expressions to a metaphorical sense, when they ought to be expounded to a proper sense. And this Mr. *Ferguson* himself acknowledges, when he gives some Rules for the Exposition of Scripture, which are generally good, when he transcribes them out of other men: *I call that (says he) the literal sense of Scripture, which God doth intend in the words, whether the words be taken properly or tropically. That which ariseth from a figurative acceptation of the words, is as truly a literal sense, as that which flows from their proper acceptation.* And therefore he ought to have prov'd, not only that I take Justification in a metaphorical sense, but that the Scripture, when it speaks of the Justification of a Sinner before God, uses that word in a proper sense, for *Acquitting the Innocent*, which is a pretty odd way of Justifying a Sinner. But here our Author is very silent, and cannot give one instance of it, only he

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tells us, *That in this sense it must be taken, when declarative of the Act of God towards us, as our Judge, or when set in opposition to condemnation, or the curse of the Law to which we are obnoxious: But what need of that? Does it not as much belong to a supreme and unaccountable Judge to pardon, as to absolve? And is not Pardon as properly opposed to Condemnation, as Absolution is?*

But to let all this pass, it is worth considering, how our Author in his way can explain Justification in a proper sense: He tells us, that the proper notion of Justification, is *to acquit and absolve the Innocent*; suppose this to be true, (though it may admit of some dispute, whether this forensic use of the word be its proper sense) I would willingly learn of our Author, how a Sinner can be justified in this proper sense; that is, how he, who hath broken the Laws of God, can be acquitted and absolved as innocent; how God, who cannot lie, can declare, that that man hath never broken his Laws, nor done any thing amiss, who is a Sinner: Yes, says our Author, this may be done very well by the imputation of the perfect Righteousness of Christ to Sinners, which makes them perfectly innocent; suppose this to be true,

true, yet is this the proper notion of Justification, that a Sinner is innocent and righteous by *Imputation*? Is there no difference then between an *imputed*, and an *inherent and personal* Righteousness? Justification in a proper sense requires a Personal Righteousness and Innocency, and I doubt it will require some good lusty tropes to make an imputed Righteousness the matter of our Justification in this Law-notion. So that for ought I can see, the imputation of Righteousness in his gross notion, is as metaphorical a Justification as the Pardon of sin, though not half so good sense.

But I have not thus done with our Author; There are three things more, which I would desire him to consider at his leisure, and to answer when he is able.

The first is this, That Pardon of Sin, whether it be a proper or metaphorical Justification, is the true Scripture-notion of the Justification of a Sinner: Justification indeed in its full extent and latitude, signifies the acceptation of our Persons, and the restoring us to a state of Grace and Favour with God, which is somewhat more than bare Remission; but the first Act of Justification on Gods part, and that which draws all the rest after it, is the
Pardon

Pardon of our Sins; this is a Sinners Righteousness, wherewith he must appear before God: This is the Commission which Christ gave to his Disciples, *To preach Remission of Sins in his Name*; this is the great Priviledge of the Gospel, that now by Christ all that believe, are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses, Act. xiii. 39. That is, that now Christ hath made atonement and expiation for those sins, for which the Law of Moses did appoint no Sacrifice: Where to be justified, signifies to be delivered from the guilt and condemnation of Sin, that is, to be pardoned.

But not to heap up many Testimonies, I shall principally insist on the Fourth Chapter to the *Romans*, as being the proper Seat of this Controversie. There St. Paul enquires by what means our Father *Abraham* was justified before God? And in answer to it he tells us, that *Abraham* was not justified by Works, but by Faith: Where by Works, the Apostle does not mean only the Works of the *Mosaical* Law, an External and Ceremonial Righteousness, for he proceeds to that in the tenth verse, but he seems principally to intend a perfect and unfinning Righteousness:

ness: Let us then examine what the Apostle means by Justification by Faith, what this Righteousness of Faith is, as it is opposed to a Righteousness of Works; and there are four expressions whereby this Righteousness is described, which signify one and the same thing. That it is an imputed Righteousness, *vers. 3, 6.* that it is a Righteousness without Works; that it is a Justification of the ungodly, *vers. 5.* that it consists in the Pardon of Sin, *vers. 7, 8.*

I shall begin with the last, because this is Mr. Ferguson's grand Charge against me, That *I place Justification in the forgiveness of sin*; but so does our Apostle, and alleges the Authority of the Prophet David for it: *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of that man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin,* *vers. 6, 7, 8.*

This is the Justification of Faith, in opposition to Justification by Works, that those who heartily believe in God as Abraham did, though they have been formerly guilty of many sins, and are still subject to many infirmities and defects, yet God for Christ's sake will forgive their past sins,
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and their present imperfections, and will reward them above the Deserts and Merits of their Works. A Righteousness of Works consists in Innocency and Perfection, but a Righteousness of Faith in Sincerity and Pardon.

Upon this account it is called an imputed Righteousness, Faith was *accounted and reckoned to Abraham for Righteousness, and blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth Righteousness*: Which signifies, that this is matter of Grace, not of Debt; *for to him that worketh, is the reward reckoned not of Grace, but of Debt.* When a man is justified by Works, he is absolved because he is innocent, and rewarded because he hath merited a Reward, (which is the Justification for which Mr. Ferguson pleads, in a direct opposition to St. Paul) but Justification by Faith requires the favour and acceptance of God, because though it includes an honest and sincere mind, and a readiness to do our best to please God, yet it is consistent with a great many infirmities, and miscarriages, and defects, which cannot pass the trial of strict Justice: and this is imputed Righteousness, when God accepts of that for our Righteousness and Justification, which in a strict sense is not Righteousness: Whatever is imputed to
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us for Righteousness, must be good, but imperfect: If it be not good, it is no part of Righteousness, and therefore cannot be imputed instead of the whole; and if it be perfect, there is no need of this gracious acceptation; it is then a strict and proper, not an imputed Righteousness.

Upon the same account it is called a *Righteousness without Works*, *vers. 6.* Which must not be understood in such a loose sense, as if God would justify a man, who does nothing which is good, as if he would account that man righteous, who does no Righteousness, which is expressly contrary to the Doctrine of *St. John, 1 Epist. iii. 7.* But the meaning is, either that God sometimes accepts of great and generous Acts of Faith, instead of Works, when there is no occasion or opportunity of Action; which was the case of *Abraham*, when he believed *in hope against hope*, that he should have a Son in his old Age; to which the Apostle principally refers in the 5th verse, when he tells us, *That to him that worketh not, but believeth, his Faith is counted for Righteousness: Or else a Righteousness without Works*, signifies a Righteousness without the Perfection of Works; and therefore the Apostle makes a Righteousness
without

without Works, the same with an imputed Righteousness, and both of them to consist in forgiveness of sins; *even as David also describeth the blessedness of that man, to whom the Lord imputeth Righteousness without Works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* So that forgiveness of sins, which supposeth an imperfect and defective Righteousness, if we will believe our Apostle, is a description of Righteousness without Works.

Upon the same account it is called Justifying the Ungodly, *vers. 5.* which can by no means signify, that God will justify a wicked man, while he continues wicked; for this is a plain contradiction to the whole Gospel; but it signifies, that God will justify those, who though they have been wicked (which was the case of *Abraham* and the Gentile-World) yet return to him by a hearty Repentance, and a true lively Faith. Justification by Works requires a perpetual Innocency and Blamelessness of Life; for a man, who ever was a Sinner, can never be justified by Works in this sense, because he can never be innocent again; it being impossible that that should never have been, which has been: But now the Righteousness of
L Faith,

Faith, which consists in the forgiveness of sins, makes him Righteous, who has been a Sinner, and is still an imperfect Saint; not that such a man never was a Sinner, but that God doth not impute his sins to him.

This is the Apostles account of Evangelical Righteousness and Justification, that it is an imputed Righteousness, a Righteousness without Works, a Justifying the Ungodly, or which is the sum of all, that it consists in the Pardon of Sin: And now let our Author tell the Apostle, That this is to turn plain Scripture into Metaphors, and that it is inconsistent with the *Immutability and Essential Holiness of God*.

But secondly, I have something more to say to Mr. *Ferguson*, which I suppose will be of some weight with him, *viz.* That all the Reformed Churches are for that Metaphorical Justification which he rejects; that is, they place our Justification in the forgiveness of sin. Thus the *French Church* declares in her Confession, which *Beza* presented to *Charles IX.* in the Name of that Church: *Credimus totam nostram justitiam positam esse in peccatorum nostrorum remissione, que sit etiam, ut testatur David, unica nostra felicitas: i. e.* “ We believe that

“ our

Comp.
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“ our **WHOLE RIGHTEOUSNESS** consists in the pardon of our sins, which also, as *David* witnesseth, is our **ONLY Blessedness**: — *In sola Jesu Christi obedientia prorsus acquiescimus, quæ quidem nobis imputatur, tum ut tegantur omnia nostra peccata, tum etiam ut gratiam coram Deo naniscamur.* *
“ And we rest wholly in the Obedience of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to us, both that all our sins may be covered, and that we may obtain grace and favour with God. By which last words we learn, what they and other Protestant Churches mean by the Imputation of Christs Righteousness, and resting on the Obedience and Righteousness of Christ; not that his Righteousness is so imputed to us, as to make us formally righteous, and to answer the demands of the Law, which exacts an unfinning Obedience; but it is so imputed to us, that for the sake of Christ, God forgives our sins, and receives us into favour.

Thus the *Helvetian Confession* tells us, *Confess. Helvet.*
Justificare significat Apostolo in disputatione de Justificatione, peccata remittere, à culpa & pœna absolvere, in gratiam recipere, & justum pronunciare. “ To justify, according to the Apostles sense of it in his dispute of Justification, signifies to forgive sins, to

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“absolve from guilt & punishment, to receive into a state of favour, and to pronounce such a person just and righteous: that is, not just as an innocent, but as a pardon'd man.

Scoticana
Confess.

Nor is the *Scotch-Confession* more Orthodox in this point: For giving an account of those benefits we receive by the Satisfaction and Righteousness of Christ, it sums them up in this: *Deus Pater nos in corpore Jesu Christi Filii sui intuetur, imperfectam nostram obedientiam quasi perfectam acceptat, omniaque opera nostra, quæ in se multis maculis sædantur, perfecta justitia filii sui tegit. i. e.* “God the Father beholds us as Members of Christs Body, accepts our imperfect Obedience, as if it were perfect, and covers all our works, which in themselves are defiled with many spots and blemishes, with the perfect Righteousness of his Son. So that according to the sense of this Church, to which our Author ought to pay some Reverence, we are not acquitted and absolved as innocent Persons, by the Imputation of Christs perfect Righteousness, but for Christs sake God accepts our imperfect Obedience, as if it were perfect: and covers all the imperfections and defects of our Works with the perfect Righteousness of his Son; that
is,

is, pardons all our sins, for the sake of Christs perfect Righteousness.

The *Augustan Confession* is very express in this matter, and so is their Apology: *Consequi remissionem peccatorum est justificari, juxta illud, beati quorum remissa sunt iniquitates:* “To obtain the pardon of sin, is to be justified; according to that saying, “*Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven.*

Apol. pro
Confess.
August.

Thus the Churches of *Bohemia* declare their sense: *Per Christum homines gratis fide in Christum, per misericordiam justificari, salutem & remissionem peccatorum consequi:* “That to be justified, is to obtain the pardon of sin, and salvation freely by “Christ.

Bohemica
Confess.

Thus we read in the *Dutch Confession:* *Credimus omnem felicitatem nostram sitam esse in peccatorum nostrorum remissione, quæ est in Christo Jesu, eaque unica totam nostram justitiam coram Deo contineri:* “We believe, that “our whole Happiness consists in the forgiveness of sins, which is by Jesus “Christ, and that in this alone consists “our WHOLE Righteousness before “God.

Belgica
Confess.

And to conclude with our own Church, in the Homily of Salvation, we are taught, that our *Justification consists in the forgiveness*

of sin; and that this Justification and Righteousness, which we so receive of Gods Mercy and Christs Merits, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full Justification.

I do not urge the Consent of Reformed Churches, as if I thought their Authority sufficient to determine us in this matter :
 † they had no Authority but Reason and Scripture, nor did they pretend to any
 * other ; which is the true Principle of the Protestant Reformation.

There are but three sorts of Authority of any moment in Religion, *viz.* The Authority of Divine Inspiration, the Authority of Testimony, and the Authority of Discipline and Order.

The Authority of Divine Inspiration is peculiar to Christ and his Apostles, who spoke by an Infallible Spirit, and is now confined to the holy Scriptures, which are the only Infallible Rule of Faith and Manners: The Authority of Testimony is proper only to those Ages which immediately succeeded the Apostles; for it may reasonably be presumed, that those Persons who convers'd with the Apostles themselves, or convers'd with those who convers'd with the Apostles, who understood the Phrase and Dialect of
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that Age, and those particular Controversies and Disputes which were then on foot, may be able to give us a better account of the traditionary sense of Scripture, and of the practice of the Apostles, than those who lived in after-Ages; and upon this account the Writings of those who lived in the first Centuries, have always had a just Esteem and Authority in the Christian Church; but still the more Ancient they are, the greater is their Authority; and the farther they are removed from the Fountain of Tradition, so their Authority lessens.

The Authority of Discipline and Order, is that Authority which every particular Church has over her own Members; or which the Universal Church, represented in General Councils, has over particular Churches: For while we live in Communion with any Church, we oblige ourselves to submit to its Government, and at least so far to receive those Doctrines which she owns, as not to disturb Publick Peace and Order by our Private Disputes.

But in all other cases, he has the greatest Authority, who has the best Reason, and it is a childish thing to urge the bare Authority of any Man or Church, when it

hath neither Scripture nor Reason to support it.

So that I do not urge the consent of these Reformed Churches upon account of any inherent Authority, but to make it appear how vainly Mr. *Ferguson* brags, when he charges me with opposing the received Doctrines of Protestant Churches. For indeed those Doctrines, which I oppose, are meer Novelties, and were never publickly owned by any Reformed Church, and never had any greater Authority, than what an Assembly of Divines, and an Ordinance of Parliament could give them.

He who understands, what notion the first Reformers had of justifying Faith, that it is *fiducia misericordiae propter Christum*, a firm and stedfast belief and hope, that they should find mercy with God for Christs sake, can never imagine that they once dreamt of such an Imputation of Christs Righteousness to them, as should make them stand in no need of Mercy; or of such a *Justification as is the Off-spring of Justice, and imports one transacting with us in a Juridical way, without the infringement of Law or Equity*, in opposition to *Pardon and Remission, which is the result of Mercy, and the act of one exercising favour*; which is Mr. *Ferguson's*

Ferguson's Account of it, in his own words.

But thirdly, As this Notion of Imputation has no Foundation in Scripture (as I abundantly proved in my former Discourse, of which our Author takes no notice, and it was very wisely done of him, for I am sure he cannot answer it) so it overthrows the principal Doctrines of the Gospel, and contradicts its main design. I shall briefly name some few.

First, Justification by a perfect Righteousness is inconsistent with pardon and forgiveness: Mr. *Ferguson* acknowledges, *That to justify and to pardon, are wholly distinct in their Natures and Ideas, and always separated in the cases of such as are arraigned at humane Tribunals, — and that thus it is in the actions of God too*: Now I wonder he did not consider, that by the same reason, the same subject is not capable of both: He who is universally justified in our Authors notion, that is, who is acquitted and absolved in a Juridical way, *i. e.* as perfectly innocent and righteous, needs no pardon, nor is he capable of it, because he has no sins to be pardon'd; and he who is pardon'd, cannot be justified in this sense, because Pardon supposes him a Sinner, and Justification supposes him innocent, which hath

Knowledge
of Christ,
P. 235. &c.
& p. 279.
Edit. 2.
P. 164. &
175.

Interest
of Reason
& c. P. 416.

hath some little appearance of a Contradiction. So that the Gospel-way of Justification, which is by Pardon and Forgiveness, is quite discarded, and we are justified by a legal Righteousness, or by the Works of the Law; that is, by a perfect and unfinning Obedience, though the Apostle tells us, *That by the Works of the Law no flesh shall be justified*: for though this perfect Righteousness whereby we are justified, be not our own, but the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, yet it is the Works of the Law still, which is an express Contradiction to the Apostles Doctrine: And I wonder, what our Author thinks of all those Promises of Pardon, which are contained in the Gospel, and which are the greatest support and comfort of Sinners, when it is impossible to find any place for them in his New-Gospel.

Secondly, This notion of Justification overthrows the Necessity and Merit of Christs Death and Sacrifice: the vertue of a Sacrifice consists in the expiation and forgiveness of sin; but now if Justification excludes Pardon, there is no need of a Sacrifice; if nothing will satisfy the demands of the Law, but a perfect and unfinning Obedience, then there can be no Sacrifice for sin, or at best it is to no purpose

pose, for it cannot satisfy the Law, and therefore not expiate our sin; and if Christ have satisfied the Law by his perfect Obedience, there is no reason why he should suffer the penalty; for no Law can oblige us both to obey it perfectly, and to endure the Penalties for the breach of it, though we do perfectly obey it: So that if Christ died for our sins, and if remission of sins must be preached in his name, then we are not perfectly righteous by the imputation of his Righteousness, but must obtain the pardon of our sins through Faith in his Blood.

Thirdly, This notion of Justification destroys the Grace and Mercy of God in the Justification of a Sinner: This Mr. *Ferguson* expressly owns, *That Pardon indeed (if there could be any such thing) is the result of Mercy, but Justification is the Off-spring of Justice, and imports Gods transacting with us in a Juridical way, without the infringement of Law or Equity*: And I know not any assertion, which more expressly destroys the Grace of the Gospel: Whereas St. Paul attributes our Justification as well as Pardon, to the Grace of God: *We are justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus*. Nor will it relieve him to say, that our Justification is an Act of
Grace,

Grace, because though we are justified in a proper Law-notion by a perfect Righteousness, yet this Righteousness is not inherent, but imputed, which is an act of Grace: for besides that this implies a contradiction, to be justified in a *proper* Law-sense, by an imputed, that is an *improper* Righteousness, and that God proceeds in a *Juridical* way, without the *infringement of Law*, and yet admits of such a Righteousness as not the Law, but only Grace can accept; I say, besides this, we may for the very same Reason say, that Pardon is an act of Justice, because it is purchas'd by the Death of Christ. And therefore if our Author would make good his notion, he must shew how Pardon is more an act of Grace, than Justification; and how Justification is more the Offspring of Justice, than Pardon; and if he dare stand to this notion, there needs not many words to prove, that he overthrows the whole Grace of the Gospel.

Fourthly, There is another very ill consequence of this notion, that it destroys the necessity of an inherent Righteousness, or of a good Life: For what necessity can there be, that we should have a Righteousness of our own, when we are perfectly righteous with the imputed Righteousness

ness of Christ? The Law demands a perfect and unfinning Righteousness, and it is impossible it should demand any more; we answer this Charge by the perfect Righteousness of Christ; and when this is done, we are innocent and righteous, and have a title to the Rewards of a perfect Obedience, and what can be desired more from us? Mr. Ferguson indeed supposes that the Law requires a perfect Obedience, and that the Gospel over and above this requires Faith and a sincere Obedience: and that Christ was our *Substitute to make Satisfaction to the Demands of the Law, and not of the Gospel: And that by his Death he hath only freed us from what we were obnoxious to, upon failure of perfect Obedience; but not at all from what we are liable to, in case of Unbelief, and want of sincere Obedience:* Ibid. Now though this be true in some sense, that is, that Christ by his Death hath expiated our sins, and thereby delivered us from the condemnation of the Law, upon the failure of perfect Obedience, and hath sealed the Covenant of Grace in his Blood, which accepts and rewards a sincere though imperfect Obedience; yet as it is applied by him, it is down-right nonsense: for if we perfectly answer the Demands of the Law, by the imputation of Christ's

Christ's perfect Righteousness, there is no need of the Gospel, nor any place for it: Perfection includes Sincerity, as the greater includes the less, and therefore if the Righteousness of Christ answers the Demands of the Law, as to a perfect Obedience, it shuts out any farther Demands of the Gospel. He who is perfectly righteous, is sincere too, and he who can answer the Demands of Justice, needs not the allowances of Grace and Mercy: So that the Imputation of Christ's perfect Righteousness does supercede our own Endeavours, and makes our own Righteousness needless: for this Reason I charged them before, and do so still, with setting up the Person of Christ in opposition to his Laws and Religion; with magnifying his Personal Righteousness, so as to evacuate all the Obligations of Duty. And now methinks I can deal with any thing in Mr. *Ferguson*, but his Brow and Confidence, who is of the true breed, and can stare the Sun in the face without blinking: for after all this he declares, That *let me but once justify my Charge of their making the Personal Righteousness of Christ our Personal Righteousness; or that they maintain, Christ to have fulfilled all Righteousness in our stead, &c he does assure me, that he will not only be*

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ready to allow my severest Reproofs, but to commend and second them. Now unless by *Personal*, he means *inherent*, nothing in the World can be more plain, then that he himself makes Christ's *Personal* Righteousness our *Personal* Righteousness: for we are Personally Righteous with the Righteousness of Christ, and answer all the Demands of the Law with it, and then I conceive it must be a Personal Righteousness, not by inhesion indeed, with which I never charged them, but by imputation. And as for Christ's fulfilling Righteousness in our stead, unless he has some secret quirk in that phrase *our stead*, Doctor *Owen* does not only profess this, but endeavours to prove it by several Arguments, that Christ did not keep the Law for himself, *but for us*, and that not for our good only, but that we might be righteous with his Righteousness, and fulfil the Law in him. He keeps the Law as our Mediator, and Surety, and Representative; and I think that is so *for us*, as to be *in our stead*: this I have discours'd at large in my former Book, and thither I shall refer my Reader.

Having thus justified my self in a proper Law-notion from the Accusations of this Author, I shall farther consider, how he

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he justifies his dear Friends the *Nonconformists*, from that Charge of toying with Scripture-Metaphors and Phrases, and turning them into *Burlesque*: And truly he is the most wretched Apologist that ever I saw; sometimes he acknowledges the Charge with respect to particular Persons, who *through ignorance, inadvertency, or wantonness, prevaricate in this matter*; but would not have *the whole Party* (which was never done by me) *traduced for the folly of a few*; but if we should enquire, how few those are who thus prevaricate in this matter, and judge of it by their late Writings, I doubt it would appear by computation, that they never had so many *Prevaricators at Cambridge*, since the first Institution of that Order; and then let any one judge, how well this agrees with what he asserts in the same breath, that *he knows none more observant of these Rules* (which he had before laid down) *in the sensing and applying of Metaphors, than those who are stiled Nonconformists*; which proves nothing, but that he has very little good Acquaintance.

But indeed Mr. *Ferguson* has taken the best course he could: I had shewed in particular instances, how they had abused Scripture-Phrases and Metaphors, but he did

did not think fit to descend to particulars, but instead of that, collects a great many good Rules out of *Glassius* and *Vossius*, and tells us how they ought to expound and use Metaphors, and then without any farther proof concludes, that they do so: Whereas should we suppose that all the *Nonconformists* understood the Rules of Rhetorick as well as our Author (though I fear many of them never read so much Rhetorick in their Lives before, and I wish reading this may do them some good) yet it is a very different Art to understand the Rules of Rhetorick, & to practise them; whether they have any Skill in the first, or no, I know not; but I am sure, if they have, they are as saving of it as ever men were, as if they were afraid it would waste by too common a use.

Just after the same manner he *vindicates* P. 62.
the Nonconformists from those Aspersions lately cast upon them, as if they were Defamers of Reason, disclaiming it from all Concern in Religion, &c. To wipe off this Reproach, which was not cast upon them, but which they brought upon themselves by their perpetual Declamations against Reason; our Author writes a large Chapter to shew the Use of Reason in Matters of Religion, and this must pass for a Justification of the

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Nonconformists ; and now they will be thought the only Rational Divines : Whereas in truth had he managed this Argument with as much accuracy as he pretends to, he had been so far from justifying the *Nonconformists*, that he had given a fatal blow to those ridiculous People, who declaim against the Use of Reason : But for ought I see they may talk at their old rate still, for all Mr. *Ferguson*.

Definit in piscem mulier formosa superne.

But to wave this, only wishing that some young Sophister (and there are many of them that are equal Matches for this Fanatick Professor) would undertake to correct his insolent humour, and teach him to treat *Des-Cartes* with greater Reverence : I shall only inform him at present against he writes next, what he should write about ; for I find he has abundance to say, when it is nothing to the purpose, but either does not, or will not understand, what he should oppose, nor what he should vindicate.

I was not so silly, as to oppose a sober use of Metaphors, no not in matters of Religion, as Mr. *Ferguson* would fain insinuate ; nor did I concern my self about
their

their slovenly and *Kitchin-Metaphors*, though it is a great prophanation of sacred things, to make such gross and fulsom representations of them, as must needs disgust more refined and spiritual minds, and expose Religion to the Scoffs and Drollery of Atheistical Wits : But my Quarrel with them is, that they confound and darken the most plain and material notions in Religion by metaphorical Descriptions, and turn the Scriptures themselves into an Allegory or Romance : and of this they are guilty several ways.

First, By thrusting Metaphors into Definitions ; this Mr. *Ferguson* himself does in express words condemn, and therefore I would desire him in behalf of himself and his Friends, to give me a Definition of Justifying Faith, agreeable to their Principles, without a Metaphor in it : Could I once see this, I doubt not but all our Disputes about Faith and Justification would be at an end ; and yet this he is bound to do, if he will be true to his own Rules : for he acknowledges, that every P. 320.
thing spoken metaphorically is spoken obscurely, with respect to expressing the nature of things. And accordingly in assigning the definitions of things, metaphorical terms are to be avoided, because as Aristotle says, (as Mr. Ferguson
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might learn from many Modern Authors, without ever seeing *Aristotle*, though he should be so ingenuous as to own his Masters) they do not declare, *ὅσα πὶ ὅσιν, ἀλλὰ ποῖον*, what a thing is, but only what it is like to; when any thing is manifested by a Metaphor, the thing it self is not fully expressed, but only some similitude betwixt it and another. And what he adds, is so great and useful a Truth, that it is sufficient to expiate all the Fooleries of his Book, because it will confute them all; *That there is not any thing relating to Doctrine or Manners delivered in the Scripture metaphorically, which is not somewhere or other either explicitly or implicitly expressed in terms that are proper, (one place being a Key to the unlocking another.)* And yet after all this, I never could yet hear any thing but Metaphors from these men in their Definitions or Descriptions of Justifying Faith.

Justifying Faith is either *a coming to Christ, or receiving Christ, or embracing Christ, or a looking fiducially on Christ, or leaning, and resting, and rolling on Christ and his Righteousness for Salvation*: Now what are all these, but Metaphors taken from material and sensible things? Which can never give us any intelligible notion of Faith, though they may serve for illustration,

tion, when we first understand its nature.

And yet, as if this were not sufficiently obscure already, most of them make each of these distinct acts of Faith, which in order of nature precede each other: *We must first come to Christ, and then we must receive him, and then we must look fiducially on him, and then we must lean, and rest, and roll our Souls on him, and then we must lay him in our Bosoms, and embrace him in our Arms*: and when we have done all this, we shall be very understanding Believers, if we have but a good Fancy to distinguish between the Legs, and Hands, and Arms, and Eyes, and Bosom of Faith. I do not speak this in Mirth and Drollery, but with a just Indignation to see the Religion of our Saviour transformed into a Work of Fancy, and with a hearty pity for those deluded People who are fed with such thin and airy Notions.

The plain notion of Justifying Faith, stript of all Metaphors and Figures, can be no other than this; Such a firm and stedfast Assent to all the Revelations of the Gospel, as governs our Hearts and Lives by the Laws of it: Or to give a larger Explication of it, It is such an Assent to whatever Christ hath revealed

concerning the Nature and Will of God, or his own Nature, Offices, and Mediation, the Rules of Life and Practice, and the Rewards and Punishments of the next Life, as does effectually determine our Wills to the Obedience of his Holy Laws.

To receive Christ in all his Offices, when it is explained, comes to the very same sense; To believe all the Revelations of Christ, as he is our Prophet, to acknowledge the Vertue and Merit of his Sacrifice and Intercession, as he is our Priest; and to expect our acceptance with God for his sake, upon condition of our obeying his Laws, and submitting to his Government, as he is our King.

But these men could never be persuaded to talk without Metaphors, which would spoil all the *Shiboleths* of their Party, and make them look like dull Moralists; and yet I shall once more challenge Mr. *Ferguson*, in compliance with his own Rules, to give me a Definition of Justifying Faith, agreeable to his notions of Justification, without a Metaphor; and if he cannot do this, (as he will be a wonderful man, if he can) I would desire him to consider how dangerous it is to transcribe good Rules out of good Books, with-

without understanding the Consequences of them.

Secondly, Another fault which they are guilty of in the use of Metaphors, is, that they expound one Metaphor by another; this Mr. *Ferguson* very justly condemns: For Metaphors properly signifying one thing, and being applied to signify another, only because of some resemblance, we are therefore in our sensing of Metaphors to remove the metaphorical term, and to substitute in its room that word which properly signifies the thing, whereof we conceive the former to have been only a figure. To paraphrase Metaphors in metaphorick terms, is instead of making them intelligible, to continue them dark and mysterious. Now if this be a fault, as I perfectly agree with Mr. *Ferguson* that it is, he would do well to correct those men (which might be taken more kindly from him) who do not only explain one Metaphor by another, but pursue a single Metaphor, till they have forc'd it into an Allegory: I gave one short instance of this in my former Discourse, with respect to the Marriage between Christ and Believers. And whereas our Author justifies such Discourses from the Book of *Canticles*, which describes the love of Christ to his Church in such an allegorical manner; in return to this

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I would offer several things to his consideration.

As first, I suppose he understands, that there is a vast difference between Poetical Descriptions, such as the Book of *Canticles* is; and Practical Discourses for the Government of our Lives: the first requires more Garnish and Ornament, and justifies the most mysterious flights of Fancy; the second requires a plain and simple dress, which may convey the Notions with ease and perspicuity to the Mind. And therefore that which is not only justifiable, but commendable in a Divine Song, which ought to have something Great and Mysterious, and to describe every thing with Pomp and Ceremony, is not only a ridiculous affectation, but a very hurtful vanity in a Preacher, whose business is to instruct the Rude and Ignorant, not to amaze and astonish his Hearers with Poetick Raptures.

And secondly, Though I do no more quarrel with Allegories, than I do with Metaphors, which may be of good use in their fit and proper places, yet I would desire our Author to consider, that there is some little difference between an Allegorical Description of things, and an Allegorical Exposition: It is justifiable
enough

enough in some cases to describe plain things in Allegories and Parables; but it is a mad way of expounding Religion by turning it into Allegories, which must of necessity make it obscure and mysterious. Allegories are of no use till they are expounded, and are of a very doubtful signification, when we want the true Key of Exposition; because they being a work of fancy and imagination, may by men of different fancies be expounded to very different and contrary purposes; which makes the Song of *Solomon* it self, though the most divine and spiritual thing that ever was penned under the Jewish Church, of much less use to us, than otherwise it might be, as appears from the variety of interpretations, which are given of it: And this is a plain Argument, how injurious these men are to Religion, who instead of expounding the Mysteries of it, turn them into Allegories, which must either be expounded again, or continue obscure, and expose Religion to all the Freaks of an Enthusiastick and Allegorical Fancy.

And thirdly, Our Author may consider farther, that Allegories are much more improper now under the Gospel, than they were under the Law; Under the Law
God

God instructed the Jews by dark and obscure Types and Figures, but did not think fit to unveil his Glory, and give them a distinct and clear knowledge of his Will, and therefore an Allegorical Song was very allowable under the Typical and Ceremonial State of the Church: But since Christ hath appeared, who is the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person, who hath given us a plain and perfect Revelation of the Will and Nature of God, an Allegorical Religion is as improper as Jewish Types and Ceremonies. It disappoints one great end of Christs coming in the Flesh, to make his Religion obscure and mysterious, and to wrap it up in Types and Allegories: And I wonder very much, that these men, who are so afraid of a significant Ceremony, for fear of returning to a Jewish Bondage and Pedagogy, should be so fond of an Allegorical and Metaphorical Religion, which is as obscure and unintelligible, as the Jewish Types were. We are not now under a *Canticle*-Dispensation, but live under the bright and clear Light of the Gospel, which is equally clouded by Jewish Types and mysterious Allegories.

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But to return: It is very easie to give many other instances of their expounding Metaphors by Metaphors, and I have given several in my former Discourse: thus Faith is call'd Coming, Receiving, Embracing, &c. If you enquire, How all this must be done? They tell you, That you must come to Christ on the Legs of Faith, or be carried to him in the Chariots of Faith, or swim to him on the Stream of the Promise, and receive him by the Hand of Faith, and embrace him in the Arms of Faith, as good old *Simeon* did: and thus Faith becomes an Instrument of Justification, and receives Christ, who is the Gift of God, as a poor man receives an Alms: Whereas Legs, and Hands, and Arms, and Instruments, are as obscure Metaphors, and need as much explication as Coming and Receiving, &c. and yet you must never expect any better explication from them; if you press them hard, they will tell you, that coming and receiving, &c. signifies believing; but then if you ask them what believing signifies, they are forced to ring the Changes backward, and tell you, that believing is coming and receiving.

Thirdly, Another abuse of Metaphors is, to argue and reason from them, and to erect

ere & such Doctrines on them, as are no where to be found in exprefs words in Scripture: Thus I shewed in my former Discourse, how they prove the imputation of Christs Personal Righteousness to us, from the Laws of Marriage, of Suretiship, and the Mediatory Function. “ The Church is Christs Spouse, and as the “ Wife by vertue of her Marriage Union “ is entitled to her Husbands Estate, thus “ are Saints by their marriage to Christ “ entitled to all his Personal Fulness, “ Beauty, Righteousness: And as a Wife “ under covert is not liable to an Arrest, “ or Action at Law, but all must fall upon “ her Husband; so you being married to “ Christ, this supersedes the Process of “ the Law against you, if it be not satisfied, it must seek its reparation at the “ hands of your spiritual Husband, Christ “ himself, &c.

Thus Mr. *Shephard* argues very comfortably: *That the Husband is bound to bear with the wife, as the weaker Vessel, and shall we think that God will exempt himself from his own*

Ibid. p. 68. Edit. 2. P. 48. Rules, and not bear with his weak Spouse? That is, one who hath no strength, no grace, no nor so much as sense of Poverty.

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And Mr. *watson* argues at the same rate, That *sin it self cannot dissolve our Union to Christ, because we are the Members of his Body, and Christ will never lose a Member.*

And thus they argue from Christs being our Surety, that as in the Law, the Debtor and the Surety are but one Person, so it is with Christ and us; for he took our Debt upon himself, and upon this Christ and we are but one Person before God, and accordingly he deals with us; for he makes over our sins to Christ, and Christs Righteousness and Satisfaction to us.

At the same rate they argue from Christs being our Mediator, That Christ fulfilled all Righteousness as he was Mediator; and that whatever he did as Mediator, he did it for them whose Mediator he was, or in whose stead, and for whose good he executed the Office of a Mediator before God, and hence it is, that his compleat and perfect Obedience to the Law, is reckoned to us.

Now when I had plainly shown them how weak and fallacious this way of Reasoning is, from the Laws of earthly Marriages and Suretiship, &c. the only answer I can get from Dr. *Owen* and his Friends, is,

is, That Christ is not such a Husband, and Surety, and Mediator, as men are, but is all this in an eminent manner; that there is something peculiar in him, which cannot be affirmed of any other. Now this is the answer I desired, but could not hope that they had so little wit as to give it: for this is plainly to acknowledge that all their Arguments are fallacious; for if there be such a vast difference between the Notion of a Husband, and Surety, and Mediator, and the several Duties and Offices of these Relations, as applied to men, and as applied to Christ, then we cannot argue from one to the other: this is plainly to give away the best Arguments they have for the Imputation of Christs Personal Righteousness in their sense, and with them to yield up the Cause. For now before they argue from Christs being our Husband, that therefore we have a title to his Personal Righteousness, as a Wife has to her Husbands Estate, they must prove from express Texts of Scripture, that this is the Law of our spiritual Marriage; before they argue from Christs being our Surety, that therefore we are but one Person with him, and that whatever he did as our Surety, is accounted as much ours, as if we had done it ourselves,

selves, they must prove that this is the Scripture - notion of Christs Suretiship: and had they taken this course, I dare say I might have looked long enough for an Answer, before it had come.

And here, as not finding a fitter place for it, I shall briefly take notice of that Defence which Dr. Owen has made for his way of Reasoning, from Christs being our Mediator, to prove the Imputation of his Personal Righteousness to us: Though I must recal that word *Defence*, for indeed he has made none, but appeals to the ingenuity of his Readers, and leaves his Book to defend it self; which it may be supposed to be very well able to do at the age of twenty years, especially against a young Adversary.

And first he would willingly insinuate, that I had not truly or fairly related his words, but then on a sudden he takes courage, and roundly asserts, whatever I had charged him with, *That the Lord Christ fulfilled all Righteousness as Mediator, and that what he did as Mediator, he did it for them whose Mediator he was, or in whose stead, and for whose good he executed the Office of a Mediator before God.* And here he first very nicely distinguishes between these two Propositions, *Christ as Mediator fulfilled all Righteousness*

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ousness in our stead; and, *Christ being Mediator in our stead, fulfilled all Righteousness for us*; and very truly observes, that I do not understand the difference between them; and it would have been charitably done of him to have shown the difference, for I am still so dull as not to perceive it: If *Christ as Mediator in our stead fulfilled all Righteousness for us*, then he must fulfil it *in our stead*; for he is therefore supposed to fulfil Righteousness *for us*, because he acted *in our stead*; which can be no reason, unless he acted in our stead in fulfilling Righteousness, which I think is much the same with fulfilling Righteousness in our stead. And indeed the Doctor himself does expressly assert this in so many words, *That this Obedience was performed by Christ, not for himself, but for us, and in our stead*: So that it seems He himself did not understand the difference of these expressions then, and I am sure can show no difference now.

Though I cannot blame the Doctor for being willing to shift off this expression, *That Christ fulfilled all Righteousness in our stead*, as fore-seeing the consequence of it, that this must needs discharge us from the Obligations of a Personal Righteousness: For if *Christ have fulfilled the Righteousness*

ousness of the Law in our stead, the Law can no more exact Obedience from us, than it can inflict Punishment on us; a perfect Righteousness is all the Law can require of us; and since we have perfectly obeyed the Law in *Christ our Mediator*, it can make no farther Demands of us. *Which is to set up the personal Righteousness of Christ, in opposition to his Laws and Religion.*

Now as bad a consequence as this is, if *Dr. Owen* would speak consistently with his own Principles, he can never avoid it; for the foundation of all his Arguments, to prove, that *Christ's Righteousness is made ours in a Law-sense*, is, that *Christ as our Surety and Mediator fulfilled all Righteousness in our stead*; for take away this, and there is no more reason why the Righteousness of *Christ* should in his sense be reckoned ours, than why the Righteousness of *Abraham*, or *Moses*, or *St. Paul*, should be imputed to us.

And yet supposing this true, *That Christ fulfilled all Righteousness in our stead*, it necessarily overthrows their fundamental Notion of our Justification by the *Imputation* of *Christ's Righteousness* to us; for if he did it in our stead, it becomes *ours* without an Imputation: It would be necessary in-

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deed, that God should accept of Christ as our Surety and Mediator, to act in our stead, which may be reckoned an act of favour, and accordingly that Christ should fulfil all Righteousness in our stead, but when this is done, there needs no imputation to make it ours. Whatever is done in our stead by a Proxy or Substitute appointed and allowed to act for us, becomes ours according to strict Law and Justice, and needs not the acceptation of Grace and Mercy (which is the Scripture-notion of Imputation) to make it so: Christ's Righteousness would become ours by his acting in our stead, without any consequent Imputation.

And yet (to see how Absurdities multiply!) suppose we take it in Dr. Owen's sense, that Christ is only a Mediator in our stead; this is a manifest contradiction, for it supposes that the Middle may stand in the place of either of the Extreams: for a Mediator is a middle Person between two contending Parties, and therefore his Office is to act between them both, and not in the stead of either. And to say that Christ is a Mediator in our stead, supposes that we ought to have been Mediators, that is, middle Persons between God and our selves; nay indeed that we are so in the

the Person of Christ: for otherwise, though he may be a Mediator on our behalf, and for our good, yet he cannot mediate in our stead.

In the next place I made it appear, that we cannot argue from the general notion of a Mediator, that his Personal Righteousness shall be imputed to those for whom he is Mediator; for a Mediator is one who Knowledge of Christ, p. 297. Edit. 2. p. 207. interposes between two differing Parties, to accommodate the difference, but it was never heard of yet, that it was the Office of a Mediator to perform the terms and conditions himself, which I shewed particularly in the example of Moses. And here the Doctor observes first, that I give an instance in Moses, who is called a Mediator in receiving the Law, but did therein no way interpose himself between differing Parties, to reconcile them: But was this the only Office of Moses, to receive the Law? Did he not frequently interpose between God and the People, and by his intercessions divert his anger from them? Secondly, he observes, that I would describe the nature of the Mediation of Christ, from the nature of the Mediation of Moses, which he calls a Socinian Fiction; but pray who told him so? I only argue from the general notion of a Mediator, which must equally agree to all Mediators, whatever other

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differences there may be in the nature of their Mediation: and therefore if *Moses* as a Mediator were not bound to fulfil the Righteousness of the Law for the whole Congregation, neither could *Christ* as a Mediator be bound to this; at least we cannot prove, that he was from the general nature of Mediation; and therefore now the Doctor quits this way of reasoning, and pretends only to argue *from the special nature of the Mediatory Office and work of Christ*, and so I have obtained all I designed by that Argument, *viz.* That the general consideration of *Christ's* being our Mediator, cannot prove that his Righteousness is imputed to us.

In the next place I fairly state what that Righteousness is, which the Doctor says, *Christ* fulfilled for us: this he calls *wonderfully perplexing my self in gathering up sayings backward and forward in his Discourse, to make some advantage to my purpose*: and I confess any man, who reads the Doctors Books with a design to understand them, and to make sense of them, will find it a very perplexing work: But however I first shewed, that the Doctor rejects the *habitual Righteousness of Christ as Mediator, in his humane nature, from being imputed to us.* Secondly, he rejects the Obedience which
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Edit. 2.
P. 299.

he yielded to the peculiar Law of the Mediator, which respected himself meerly, and contains all those Acts and Duties of his, which were not for our IMITATION, and instances in his Obedience, which he shewed in dying: though I observed, that *St. John the Divine* tells us, that we must imitate him in this too, must lay down our lives for the Brethren, as *Christ* died for us, 1 John iii. 16. To which the Doctor answers, *That we are not so to die for any one, as Christ died for us*: But what of that? May we not imitate that which we cannot equal? But then thirdly, the Righteousness which is imputed to us, is his Righteousness, as a man subject to the Law, and now whatever was required of us by virtue of any Law, that he did and fulfilled, and this is that actual Obedience of *Christ*, which he performed for us.

Now before I came particularly to examine the Doctors Proof of this, I observed by the way, "That this is very strange, "that what he did as Mediator (in Obedience to the peculiar Laws of his Mediation) is not imputed to us, but what he did not as Mediator, but as a man subject to the Law, that is imputed to us, and reckoned as if we had done it, "by reason of his being our Mediator. Here the Doctor charges me, either with

a wilful or ignorant mistake, for making him to say, that what Christ did *not as Mediator*, but as a man subject to the Law, is imputed to us; whereas he asserts, that what Christ did as a man subject to the Law, he did as Mediator; *for Christ was made a private man, as Mediator*. But the Doctor might have observed, that I did not report that as his words, but as their natural interpretation, that what Christ did *not as Mediator*, but in a private capacity, as a man subject to the Law, is imputed to us: for soon after I take notice of the reason, whereby the Doctor proves, that Christ did that *as Mediator*, which did not belong to the peculiar Laws of his Mediation, but was required from him in a private capacity, as a man subject to the Law; the sum of which came to this, that he did it as Mediator, because he was a Mediator who did it; which as the Author of the *Speculum* observes, may pass for a *quâ reduplicativè*; but yet I think the subtlest Schoolmen never argued from one to the other, that whatever a Mediator does, he does as a Mediator, because he is a Mediator who does it.

But *Christ was made a private man as Mediator*: This I deny; as Mediator he was a publick Person, and nothing belongs to his
Media-

Vind.
P. 217.

Mediation, but what he did as a publick Person: But he was made a man then, as Mediator; yes, he was a Mediator in Human Nature, but his taking Human Nature on him, was no part of his Mediatory Office, but a necessary preparation for it: And now what follows? That whatever he did as a man, he did as a Mediator? By no means: He was a Mediator in our Nature, but it does not therefore follow, that whatever he does in our Nature, belongs to his Mediatory Office; there is no way to prove this, that I know of, but to return to the old Sophism, that he obeyed the Law as Mediator, because he was a Mediator who did it.

So that the whole proof, that Christ fulfilled Righteousness for us, as our Mediator, depends upon this, whether he acted as our Mediator in his private capacity, as a Man subject to the Law: The Doctor acknowledges, that the general notion of a Mediator includes no such thing, and that this does not belong to the peculiar Laws of his Mediation; for his Obedience to the peculiar Law which required the Publick Acts of his Mediation, cannot be imputed to us: And therefore it all resolves it self into his Obedience to the Law, as a private man; that is, that he is

our Mediator as a private man, acting in a private capacity; *i. e.* as obeying those Laws of Righteousness, which concern private men. Which is so strange at the first hearing, that we may well require good proof of it.

But then I observed farther, *That it is as strange to the full, that Christ should do whatever was required of us, by vertue of any Law, when he was neither Husband, nor Wife, nor Father, Merchant, nor Tradesman, &c. that he should discharge the Duties of these several Relations for us, when he never was in most of these Relations, and could not possibly be in all.*

Ibid.

To this, the Doctor answers, *That he has frequently smiled at this Argument, when he has met with it in the Socinians, who are perking with it at every turn; but here it ought to be admired.* I wish the Doctor be Orthodox at his heart, for he seems to have read none but *Socinians*; and I fear has a design to promote *Socinianism*, by giving away all good Arguments to them: but to antidote my Readers against this, I can assure them, that this Argument is used by very Orthodox Writers, and derided by *Antinomians*: Though it is some question, whether the Doctor smiled at the Argument, or at his own Answer; however I had rather

rather he would *smile* still, than *admire*, which would be the more effectual Confutation of the two.

But his Answer is worth considering: *That the Grace of Duty and Obedience in all Relations is the same, the Relations only administering an external occasion unto its peculiar exercise. And what our Lord Jesus Christ did in the fulfilling of all Righteousness in the Circumstances and Relations wherein he stood, may be imputed to us for our Righteousness in all our Relations, every act of Duty and Sin in them respecting the same Law and Principle.* The meaning of which Answer is this, That Christ is said to fulfil all Righteousness for us, not because he did fulfil all Righteousness, but because he would have done it, had he been in such Circumstances and Relations as had required it: and thus he has found out a way how Christ may fulfil all Righteousness, without doing any thing at all: for by the same Reason that he may be said to fulfil the Righteousness of any particular Duties and Relations, without doing it, he may be said to fulfil the Righteousness of all Duties and Relations, without doing any thing: *for the Grace of Duty and Obedience is the same in all: and that does not consist in external Actions, (for then it will equally oblige to every*

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ry particular act of Righteousness, as to any) but in an inward Principle: and thus the Doctor must return to what he had before expressly rejected, That *the habitual Righteousness of Christ as Mediator in his Human Nature*, is the only Righteousness which can be imputed to us: Christ did not fulfil all the particular Duties of Righteousness in his actions, because he was not in such circumstances and relations as required it: and therefore those at least, who are in any condition or relation, in which Christ never was, (as the generality of Mankind upon one account or other are) must of necessity be justified not by the imputation of Christs actual, but habitual Righteousness.

And now let me reason a little with the Doctor in his own way: "Why should Christ live here in the World so long as he did, in perfect Obedience to all the Laws of God? Had he died before (as soon as he had been born) there had been perfect Innocency and perfect Holiness by his habitual Grace: and this made him fit to be a Sacrifice to expiate our sins, and would as well serve for a perfect Righteousness to cover them: and should he have lived to the end of the World, unless he could have run through
all

all the several Relations and Conditions of Life, he could never actually fulfil all that Righteousness which is required of all Mankind, and therefore the perfect habitual Righteousness of his Nature may as well serve for the whole as for a part.

The Doctor in the place, to which I now alluded, can find no other reason why Christ should live so long in the World, in a perfect Obedience to the Laws of God, but only a necessity of an actual fulfilling all Righteousness for us, which supposes that an habitual Grace is not enough; and yet when he is told that Christ could not and did not fulfil all Righteousness for us, because he could not discharge the Duties of our several Relations for us, when he never was in most of these Relations, & could not possibly be in all; he answers, that there is no need of it, because *the Grace of Duty and Obedience is the same in all*: and now how the Doctor can reconcile these two, that it is necessary actually to fulfil all Righteousness, and that it is not necessary actually to fulfil all Righteousness, let him consider; for I am sure there must be the same necessity of fulfilling all Righteousness, that there is of fulfilling any; and he himself describes that Righteousness which Christ was to fulfil for us, as our
Medi-

Mediator, to be, *whatever was required of us by virtue of any Law*: though I suppose, when he thus stated it, he had not met with this *Socinian* Objection, which he will never be able to answer otherwise than by *smiling or admiring*.

In the next place I considered those Arguments, whereby the Doctor proves that Christ fulfilled all Righteousness for us, as our Mediator. And the first is, That Christ was under no Obligation to obey those Laws himself, and he instances both in the Law of Creation, and in the Ceremonial Law given to the Jews.

First to begin with the Law of Creation, that is, all those Duties which necessarily result from the frame and constitution of Human Nature; and because the Doctor in his Vindication hath represented the force of his Argument in fewer and plainer words, I shall quit the advantages which his perplext and intricate arguments in his Book of * *Communion* give an Adversary (which I dare venture any man to make sense of, without a comment) and deal with him at the fairest Weapon.

He proves then, that Christs Obedience to the Law of Creation was *designedly for us*, by two Arguments: *First, because the way*

way whereby the Lord Christ in his own Person became obnoxious and obedient to the Law of Creation, was by his own voluntary antecedent choice, otherwise than it is with those who are inevitably subject unto it, by natural generation under it: The meaning of which is, that he considers Christ antecedently to his Incarnation, when it was in his choice whether he would become Man, or no, and so consequently whether he would be subject to the Laws of Human Nature; and I say still, the force of this Argument is no more but this, *That Christ had not been bound to live like a man, had he not voluntarily chose to become man*; and the reason of that is this, that he could not have lived like a man, had he not been a man.

It was in his choice whether he would become Man, but when he had chose this, it was not at his liberty to choose whether he would submit to the Laws of Human Nature; and it is a new way of reasoning to argue, that Christ was not bound to obey those Laws for himself, because he voluntarily chose such a state, which necessarily and without any further choice brought him under those Obligations: Which is just as if I should prove, that no man is bound upon his own account to discharge the Duties of a Husband, because

cause it was at his own choice, whether he would have entered into that Relation, which, when he is in it, necessarily exacts such Duties from him.

The discharge of his Mediatory Office, necessarily required, that he should become man, that he might be our Prophet, and Example, and Guide, our Priest, and our Sacrifice, our King and Governour; and when he was Man, his Nature required that he should obey the Laws of Creation, and live like a reasonable Creature.

But the Doctor adds, That *the Hypostatical Union in the first instant whereof the Human Nature was fitted for Glory, might have exempted him from the Obligation of any outward Law whatever.*

What he means by *outward Laws*, I cannot tell, for the Laws of Creation are intrinsic and essential to human Nature; and if the Hypostatical Union do not destroy the Human Nature, it cannot exempt it from those natural and necessary Obligations: He might as well say, that the Hypostatical Union exempts the Human Nature of Christ from the Laws of Reasoning, as from the Rules of Life, both which are equally the Glory and Perfection of a Reasonable Nature.

And

And though we should suppose the Human Nature in Christ, in the very first instant of its Union to the Divine Nature to be fitted for Glory, yet I cannot see, how this exempts the Human Nature from the Obligation of those Laws which are essential to Human Nature, unless he thinks that Human Nature in Glory is under no Obligations. Had Christ been immediately translated to Heaven, he had not been obliged to those particular instances of Obedience, which are proper to an earthly state, for glorified Saints themselves are not; but while Christ is a perfect Man, as well as God, it will always become him in whatever state he be, to live agreeably to Human Nature: For though he be advanced to the Right Hand of God, he is still as man inferiour to his Father, and therefore can never, as man, be exempted from the necessary Laws of Human Nature.

But to proceed to the Ceremonial Law:
 “The Doctor proves, that Christ as an innocent man, under the Covenant of Works, could not be obliged by this Law, which came upon us by reason of Sin, especially not to such institutions as signified the washing away of sin, and repentance from sin, as the Baptism of
 “ *John*

“ *John* did, and therefore he fulfilled this
 “ Righteousness for us.

* P. 310.
 Edit. 2.
 P. 217.

To this I answered in my former * Dis-
 course, “ That though it were granted,
 “ that these Laws at first were coman-
 “ ded upon occasion of sin, yet an inno-
 “ cent man may observe them to good and
 “ wise purposes, as publick and solemn
 “ acts of Worship, or external and visible
 “ expressions of Devotion, as a publick
 “ Profession of Righteousness and a vertu-
 “ ous Life ; to which purposes among
 “ others, the Sacrifices and Ceremonies
 “ of the Law, and the Baptism of *John*
 “ served, &c.

To which the Doctor returns no an-
 swer, but makes me say what I never
 thought, and *abuses his credulous Readers*
with an apprehension that I had talked like him-
self, at such a rate of Nonsense as any one in his
Wits must needs despise, to borrow some of
 his own Elegancies. For thus he reports
 my sense, or words, or both, as he would
 persuade his Readers, that I say, that an
 “ Innocent Person, such as Christ was abso-
 “ lutely, may be obliged for his own sake,
 “ to the observation of such Laws and In-
 “ stitutions, as were introduced by the oc-
 “ casion of sin, and respected all of them
 “ the personal sins of them that were obli-
 “ ged

Vindicat.
 P. 223.

“ ged by them. And now he desires to be
 left to his *liberty, nay to the necessity of his*
mind, not to believe Contradictions: I wish he
 had been under this necessity a little soon-
 er, or were yet under a necessity of not
 making contradictions: for what he be-
 lieves, no man can tell.

I plainly acknowledged, that Christ be-
 ing an Innocent Person, could not observe
 any of these Judaical Ceremonies, with
 respect to personal sins ; but I say, as they
 had other significations, so he might ob-
 serve them to other purposes. Circumci-
 sion in its first Institution was a seal of that
 Covenant which God made with *Abra-*
ham, and therefore did very well become
 him, who was not only of the Seed and
 Posterity of *Abraham*, but that very Seed,
 which was promised in the Covenant,
 whereof Circumcision was the Seal. The
 Baptism of *John* was a publick Profession
 of a vertuous Life, which becomes the
 most innocent man ; but it was a professi-
 on of Repentance, and signified the wash-
 ing away of sin, only when the baptized
 Person had been a Sinner ; and yet the
 Baptism of our Saviour was designed for a
 nobler purpose, as a Publick Inauguration
 of him to his Prophetical Office. The
 Passover was an Eucharistical Sacrifice, in

commemoration of the Deliverance of their Fore-fathers out of *Agypt*, and therefore might be observed by the most innocent man; but I challenge the Doctor or any of his Friends to prove, that Christ offered any *Sin or Trespass-Offering*, which respect only *personal Offences*, or that he observed any Ceremony, which could signifie nothing else but personal guilt; and till he can prove this, his Argument is worth nothing.

His second Argument to prove that what Christ did as Mediator, (that is, the actual Obedience of his Life) he did for us, and in our stead, I represented thus :

Knowledge of Christ, P. 311. Edit. 2. P. 218.

That there can be no other reason assigned of Christs Obedience to the Law, but only this, that he did it in our stead : Here the Doctor, according to his usual way, charges me with mis-representing his Argument; for his words are, *That the end of the active Obedience of Christ cannot be assigned to be, that he might be fit for his Death and Oblation.* These I acknowledge to be his words, but not his Argument, for the force of his Argument consists in the dis-junction, as I expressly observed, that either Christ fulfilled all Righteousness to fit him for his Death and Oblation; or he did it for us, and in our stead; because otherwise, as he himself

ex-

expresses it, *if the Obedience Christ performed be not reckoned to us, and done upon our account, there is no just cause to be assigned, why he should live here in the World so long as he did in perfect Obedience to all the Laws of God :* and therefore in answer to this, I made it appear, that though the Righteousness of Christ were supposed not necessary to qualifie him for his Death, (which he can never prove) yet there were other great and necessary Reasons, why he should live so long in the World in a perfect Obedience to the Divine Will.

His third Argument to prove that Christ performed all Righteousness for us, is, *the absolute necessity of it :* for this is the term of the Covenant, *Do this and live ; so that we being unable to yield that compleat & perfect Obedience, which the Law requires, as the condition of Life and Happiness, it is necessary that Christ our Mediator and Surety should fulfil the Law for us.* The sum of which Argument (as I told him before) is this, " That there never was, nor ever can be a Covenant of Grace; that God still exacts the rigorous perfection of the Law from us, and that we must not appear before him without a compleat and perfect Righteousness of our own, or of another : " Now this is the thing in question, whether

Communi. P. 182.

Knowledge of Christ, P. 315. Edit. 2. P. 220.

“ther we must be made righteous with
 “the perfect Righteousness of Christ im-
 “puted to us, or whether God will for the
 “sake of Christ dispense with the rigor of
 “the Law, and accept a sincere and Evan-
 “gelical Obedience, instead of a perfect
 “and unfinning Righteousness; *so that he*
 “*only confidently affirms what was in dispute,*
 “*and this goes for an Argument:* This Argu-
 ment he silently passes over, only he tran-
 scribes the last clause, without taking any
 notice of the reason of it, and huffs it off
 with an Appeal to his Reader.

Any man may easily guess by the ma-
 nagement of this whole Discourse, that
 the Doctor had no mind his Readers
 should know what was in dispute, or what
 Arguments were alledged on either side;
 and I do readily believe what he says,
That he is weary of every word he is forced to
add, for it is enough to tire any mans heart
out, to be forced to say something, and
not to have one wise word to say.

But to return from this long Digression,
 it were very easie to give several other in-
 stances of this way of arguing from Meta-
 phors; as when they prove, that we are
 wholly passive in our first Conversion, be-
 cause we are said *to be dead in trespasses and*
sins,

sins, from whence they infer, that we can
 contribute no more to our own Conver-
 sion, than a dead man can to the quick-
 ning of himself; and that we are born
 again, and are made new Creatures, and
 created to good Works, and the like: but
 to discourse this fully, would take up too
 much time, and possibly may fall under
 consideration in a proper place. What I
 have already discours'd, is sufficient to ac-
 quaint Mr. *Ferguson* that I am no Enemy to
 a sober use of Metaphors; and that he
 and his Friends do very much corrupt Re-
 ligion, and perplex and entangle the plain-
 est notions of it by the abuse of Scripture-
 Metaphors.

C H A P. III.

Concerning the DOCTRINE of
the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

THose Objections (if they may be so called) of which I have taken notice in the former Chapter, are but some slight Skirmishes, but the main Battel is still behind: the great out-cry is, That I have contradicted the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, contained in her Articles and Homilies: This (I confess) were a very great fault, if it were true, and if it be not, it is a very great calumny: And yet whether it be true or false, every one may believe as he pleases; for the Doctor is not at leisure to make good the Charge; this he leaves to the Bishops and Governours of our Church to consider, which is very wisely done of him. But *all that he takes leave to say, is, That the Doctrine here published, and licensed so to be, either is the Doctrine of the pre-*

*sent Church of England, or it is not: If it be so, what then? Why then the Doctor shall be forced to declare, That he neither has, nor will have any Communion therein. But I thought there had been no need of declaring this now: If this be all the hurt my Book has done, to force the Doctor to renounce the Communion of our Church, after so many years actual separation from it, the matter is not great. But why so much haste of declaring? Why as for other Reasons (at which you may guess) so in particular because he will not renounce or depart from that which he knows to be the true ancient Catholick Doctrine of this Church: What a mighty Reverence has the Doctor for the Church of *England*! That he will rather separate from the present Church of *England*, than renounce the Ancient Catholick Doctrine of the former Church of *England*! That he will not renounce any thing, which he knows to have been the True Ancient Catholick Doctrine of this Church! But does he indeed speak as he means? Does he account the Authority of the Church of *England* so sacred, as to make it the Foundation of his Faith, and a sufficient Reason to renounce any Doctrines which she condemns, and to own what she owns? If he does not, I would*

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desire him to explain the force of this reason, and if he does, I would beg of him for the sake of his Reason to renounce his Schism; though upon second thoughts I fear, this is no good Argument with the Doctor.

Well, *but if it be not so*, that is, if the Doctrine here published, be not the Doctrine of the present Church of England, *as he is assured with respect unto many Bishops, and other learned men, that it is not*; What then? What account will he now give of Renouncing the Communion of this Church? Nay, not a word of that, but he has a little Advice to the Bishops and Governours of it: *It is certainly the Concernment of them who preside therein, to take care, that such Discourses be not countenanced with the Stamp of their Publick Authority, lest they and the Church be represented unto a great disadvantage with many.* What a blessed change has my Book wrought in the Doctor! He is now mightily concerned for the Honour and Reputation of the Bishops and Church, and fears lest they should be disadvantageously represented to the World. Who could ever have hoped for this, who had known the Doctor in the blessed times of Reformation! And yet I vehemently suspect, that after all his Courtship to the Church

Church and Bishops, the Doctor designs a little kindness to himself and his Friends in it, to perswade the Reverend Bishops not to suffer any Books to be Printed against them, which they cannot answer, which *may represent them to a great disadvantage with many.*

The *Looking-Glass-Maker* transcribes several passages out of the Homilies, to what end he himself knows best; for I should not readily have guessed my self concerned in them, had it not been for that ingenious Reflection, *How ill Mr. Sherlock hath fitted his Cloth to this Pattern, he that is not very blind, may see*: So that now every one must acknowledge for the credit of his eye-sight, that I have contradicted the Homilies: by which artifice, as I have heard, some waggish Fellows have perswaded silly People to confess, that they have seen some strange Prodigies, which they did not see, and which indeed were not to be seen.

But to gratifie the ill nature of these men, let us for once suppose, that which they cannot prove, that I have contradicted the Doctrine of the Church of England: what then? Why then I have contradicted the Doctrine to which I have subscribed; if I have done so, it is very
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ill done of me, but what then? Why then this is a sufficient Answer to my Book: But I pray why so? Do they believe the Church of *England* to be infallible? Do they think it a sufficient proof of the Truth of any Doctrine, that it is the Doctrine of the Church of *England*? Why then do they reject any of the Articles of our Church? Why do they renounce Communion with us? If they attribute so much to the Judgment and Authority of our Church, is it not as good in one case, as it is in another? Every one, I suppose, knows, what *Obedient Sons* they are of the Church of *England*, how they reverence the Authority of their Mother; and is it not a plain Argument, how hard they are put to it, when they are forc'd to take Sanctuary in the Authority of that Church, which they so much reproach and vilifie; when they dare not trust to any other Weapon to defend their Cause, but the despised name of the Church of *England*? Those I am sure must be very blind, who cannot see through so transparent a Cheat.

The meaning then of all this noise about the Church of *England*, is no more but this: They are conscious to themselves of a bad Cause, which they can no longer

longer defend by plain Scripture and Reason, and therefore shelter themselves in the Authority of the Church, and would fain perswade the Bishops and the Church of *England* to defend them, since they cannot defend themselves; and having little else to say, they make long Harangues about Articles and Homilies, and pretend a mighty Zeal for the *True Ancient and Catholick Doctrine of the Church of England*: And now methinks the Church of *England* and the Reverend Bishops are very much beholden to me, for they have not had so many good words from these men in many years before, and must never expect the like again, but upon such another occasion; and I hope the People will begin to consider, what a Church they have forsaken, whose Authority is much greater than all other Arguments with their own Teachers.

But I see it is very dangerous to be too much in love with any thing; for this great zeal and passion for the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, has betrayed the Doctor, and his good Friend the Author of the *Speculum*, to some hasty Sayings, of which, it may be, they may see cause to repent, when they are better advised. They are great Friends, you must know,

to Liberty and Indulgence, and take it very ill, if they may not only think and act as they please in matters of Religion, but make Parties and Factions too, and controul the Commands of Secular Powers; and yet these very men, who so much extol and magnifie an Indulgence, and so much need it, give plain intimations how far they would be from granting that Liberty to others, which they challenge to themselves.

Vindicat.
P. 82.

The Doctor tells me, *There is great reason to pity the People committed to my Charge, what regard soever ought to be had unto my self: i. e. though I should starve for want of my Rectorship, as he expresses himself elsewhere,*

P. 117.

— Had this man in their days treated this Doctrine with his present scoffing petulancy, he had scarce been Rector of St. George Buttolph-Laxe, &c. Nor should I be so now, could he hinder it: But what becomes of Liberty and Indulgence then, in matters of Religion? Must the Conscience be set free in matters of External Order and Government, but tied up in Doctrines and Opinions? This indeed is the Doctors avowed Principle. as great a Friend as he is to Liberty: He would be excused himself from subscribing Three of the XXXIX Articles, but as for the other XXXVI, he would have no man suf-

suffered to live in *England* who will not subscribe them; and the Doctor can remember when he proposed this very unseasonably.

The Author of the *Speculum* desires his Spec. p. 68. Friend to bid me consider, whether if the Parliament should meet, they might not find leisure enough to censure my Discourse, as they did Mr. Mountague's, who in vain pleaded for himself that he had writ against the Puritans; and was left alone to suffer, though others had instigated him to write: The Commons of England will scarce endure to find the Doctrine of the Church of England struck at, though it be through the sides of Dr. Owen and Dr. Jacomb. But now suppose the Commons of England should think it as reasonable to secure the Government and Discipline, as the Doctrine of the Church, what would become then of Indulgence? Would not our Author then change his Note, and repent of such Intimations as these? Or if the Commons of England should happen to have other thoughts of that Discourse, than our Author has, and should think it necessary to prevent the Debauching of Mens Minds by such corrupt Doctrines as are there opposed, what would become of most of the Conventicles in *England*? Could he with any Confidence then cry
out

out of Persecution, when he himself hath sounded the Alarm to it? This it is to fence with a two-edged Sword, which cuts both ways, and may wound a Friend as soon as an Enemy.

This is sufficient in answer to my Adversaries, who are well skill'd at drawing up a Charge, but have no faculty at proving it. But I think my self upon this occasion concerned to vindicate the Doctrine of the Church of *England* from the mis-representations of these men, as if it favoured such uncouth and absurd notions, as besides the ill consequences of them, have no foundation in Scripture or Reason, which I doubt may represent the best Church in the World *to great disadvantage with many*, I mean with all wise and considering men.

The principal thing which these Men object against me, is the Doctrine of Justification, as it is explained in the Articles and Homilies of our Church. And I am contented the Controversie should be put upon this issue, whether they or I speak most consonantly to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, in this matter.

The Doctrine of Justification is contained in Article XI. which is this:

We

We are accounted Righteous before God, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own Merits and Deservings. Wherefore that we are Justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.

The Article is plain, and expressed in a few words, without any Scholastical Subtilties; we are not clogged here with the several Modes of Causality, with the Efficient, Formal, Material, Instrumental Causes of Justification, which fill up every Page in the Books of Modern Divines. All that our Church requires us to profess, is only this, that we are accounted Righteous before God, only by Faith, and for the Merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; that neither Faith nor Works are the Meritorious Cause of our Justification, but that all the Merit of it is to be attributed to Christ, who died for our sins, and fulfilled the Law; so that whoever acknowledges the Merits of Christ, and denies the Merits of Good Works, answers the end and design of this

this

this Article: For this was the great Controversie of those days, between the Papists and Protestants, whether we were Justified freely by the Grace of God, and the Merits of Christ, or by the Merits of our own Works; and the principal design of this Article was to oppose the Popish Doctrine of the Merit of Good Works.

But we are referred to the Homily of Justification for a larger Account of this Doctrine, and thither I willingly appeal: And to proceed with all possible ingenuity, I readily acknowledge, that there are several Expressions in that Homily, which seem to favour that notion of our Justification by the Imputation of Christs Personal Righteousness; (though that phrase of the Imputation of Christs Righteousness, is nowhere used throughout the whole Homily) but if we will take that Explication, which the Homily it self gives of them, it will evidently appear, that there was no such thing intended by them: I shall produce these expressions in their proper places, and in the management of this Argument, shall

First explain the sense of our Church concerning the Doctrine of Justification, out of the Homilies of *Salvation, Faith, Good Works, and Repentance.* And

Secondly,

Secondly, Show you how the state of the Controversie is altered at this day, and what a just reason this is for a more particular explication of those Expressions, which occasioned the corruption of the wholsom Doctrine of our Church.

First I shall enquire what is the true sense of the Church of *England* concerning the Doctrine of Justification.

And first, I observe, that our Church places the nature and essence of Justification in the *forgiveness of sins*. This is evident from the very first words of the Homily: *Because all men be Sinners, and Offenders against God, and Breakers of his Law & Commandments, therefore can no man by his own Acts, words, and Deeds, (seem they never so good) be justified, and made righteous before God: but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another Righteousness or Justification, to be received at Gods own hands, that is to say, the forgiveness of his sins and trespasses, in such things as he hath offended: And this Justification or Righteousness (the forgiveness of sins) which we so receive of Gods Mercy, and Christs Merits, embraced by Faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God, for our perfect and full Justification.* So that our full and perfect Justification consists in the forgiveness of our sins, whereby God over-looking what we have

P

done

done amiss, deals with us, as with Righteous Persons; that is bestows Eternal Life on us.

The Homily takes notice of two ways of Justification:

The first is by our own Works; when we live so innocently and vertuously as to be acquitted and absolved by God, according to the strict Rules of Law and Justice: But in this way no Sinner can be justified; for the Law justifies no man, who is a Transgressor of the Law: and therefore since we are all Sinners, and can neither expiate our past sins, nor perfectly keep the Law for the future, it is impossible that we should be justified by our own Acts and Deeds.

It remains therefore, that no Sinner can be justified, or accounted Just and Righteous before God, without the pardon and forgiveness of his Sins: this is the Justification and Righteousness of a Sinner, that God forgives his wilful sins, and covers all the defects of his good Actions; for when the sin is pardoned and covered, the man is innocent and righteous.

Now this Account, I am sure, cannot please Dr. Owen and his Friends, who look upon the forgiveness of sin but as one part of our Justification, and that the most in-

considerable

considerable too, which only makes us innocent, and delivers us from the condemnation of the Law, but cannot entitle us to future Happiness; besides Innocency (as they tell us) there is required a perfect Righteousness, the first is owing to the Death of Christ, which expiates our sins, the second to the Imputation of Christs perfect Righteousness to us, which makes us perfectly just and righteous: this is a down-right contradiction to the Doctrine of our Church, which teaches us, that God accepts and allows of this forgiveness of sin for our *full and perfect Justification*.

And indeed, forgiveness of sins is a true Evangelical way of Justification, in opposition to a Legal Justification, which consists in perfect and unsinning Obedience; the first our Church requires, but the Doctor and his Friends exact the latter, a perfect Righteousness of Works: for as the Doctor observes, *Life is not to be obtained, unless all be done that the Law requires; that is still true, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: they must be kept by us, or by our Surety*: All the difference the Doctor knows between the Law and the Gospel, is only this, that the Law required a perfect Righteousness from every man in his

Commun.
P. 193.

Knowledg
of Christ,
P. 314.
Edit. 2.
P. 220.

own Person, the Gospel accepts of a perfect Righteousness in the Person of our Mediator; but still we are justified by a Legal, not Evangelical Righteousness; that is, by a Righteousness of Works, not by pardon and forgiveness.

And it has been before observed by some learned men, that to place our Justification in the forgiveness of our sins, as our Church doth, and in the Imputation of Christs Personal Righteousness to us, as others do, are not very consistent. For by the Imputation of Christs Righteousness to us, we are Legally Righteous, or have a perfect Righteousness of Works; and Forgiveness of sins, and a perfect Righteousness, destroy each other: for if we are perfectly Righteous, whether in our own Persons, or by Imputation, we need no Forgiveness; and if we need Forgiveness, it is plain that God does not so much as impute a perfect Righteousness to us. So that when our Church places the whole nature of our Justification in the Forgiveness of sins, it is a good Argument that she never thought of a Legal Righteousness of Works, of the Imputation of Christs perfect Righteousness and Obedience, to make us righteous before God.

But

But for a fuller Explication of this Doctrine of Justification, we are taught in that Homily, that there are especially three things which must go together in our Justification: upon Gods part, his great Mercy and Grace; upon Christs part, Justice, that is, the Satisfaction of Gods Justice, or the price of our Redemption by the offering of his Body, and shedding his Blood, with fulfilling of the Law perfectly and throughly; and upon our part, true and lively Faith in the Merits of Jesus Christ, which yet is not ours, but by Gods working in us. This is a much more intelligible way of explaining the Doctrine of Justification, than by the Material, Formal, Efficient, Instrumental Causes, and such-like terms of Art, which need more explication than the Doctrine it self; and therefore I shall follow this method, and reduce the Doctrine of the Homilies under these three Heads: What is Gods part, what is Christs part, and what is required on Mans part in the business of Justification.

First, Let us consider what is Gods part in the Justification of a Sinner; and that is, the Mercy and Grace of God, which expresses it self first in providing a Ransom for us, as it is expressed in the Homily, *That our Justification doth come freely by*

the meer Mercy of God, and of so great and free mercy, that whereas all the world was not able of themselves to pay any part towards their Ransom, it pleased our heavenly Father of his infinite mercy, without any our Desert or Deserving, to prepare for us the most precious Jewels of Christs Body and Blood, whereby our Ransome might be fully paid, the Law fulfilled, and his Justice satisfied. There is no Controversie between us about this matter, that it was an expression of the undeserved Goodness of God, to send Christ into the World to save Sinners.

And secondly, The Mercy of God is seen in the very Act of Justifying us, in accepting this Atonement, and in forgiving our sins. Thus we are informed in the second part of that *Sermon of Salvation*.
 "Justification is not the Office of Man,
 "but of God: for Man cannot make him-
 "self righteous by his own Works, nei-
 "ther in part, nor in the whole, for that
 "were the greatest arrogancy and presump-
 "tion of Man, that Antichrist could set
 "up against God, to affirm, that a man
 "might by his own Works take away and
 "purge his own Sins, and so Justifie him-
 "self. But Justification is the Office of
 "God only, and is not a thing which we
 "render to him, but which we receive of
 "him ;

"him ; not which we give to him, but
 "which we take of him, by his free Mer-
 "cy, and by the only Merits of his most
 "dearly beloved Son, our only Redeemer,
 "Saviour, and Justifier, Jesus Christ. By
 which words, it is very plain, what is un-
 derstood by Justification being Gods Act,
 and not Mans ; that is, that it is an Act
 of Favour and Grace, not of Merit and
 Desert.

Though God may be said to Justifie an
 Innocent Man, when he pronounces him
 Just and Righteous according to Law,
 which is the proper office of a Judge, *i.e.* to
 acquit an Innocent Man, when he is ar-
 raigned ; yet in this case an Innocent
 Man may be said to Justifie himself, be-
 cause he is Justified by his own Actions,
 and God only like a Just and Righteous
 Judge, pronounces the Sentence of Justifi-
 cation, that is, acquits and absolves him,
 as his actions deserve, which strict Justice
 requires : But in the Justification of a
 Sinner, who dares not stand the trial of
 strict Justice, but appeals to the Grace and
 Mercy of God, Justification is properly
 Gods Act, and not Mans, is owing to the
 Divine Grace and Mercy, not to Mans
 Merit and Desert.

Upon the same account, we are told in the same place, that *not our own Act to believe in Christ, or that this our Faith in Christ which is within us, doth not justify us, (for that were to count our selves to be justified by some Act or Vertue that is within our selves.)* Which I confesse sounds very like what some men say, That Faith doth not justify us, as our own Act, but as it apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, and applies it to us, by which Righteousness thus apprehended by Faith we are justified; but there is nothing less meant in this place, as will appear from considering the whole Sentence, which is this: "So that the true understanding of this Doctrine, We be justified freely by Faith without Works, or that we be justified by Faith in Christ only, is not, that this our own Act to believe in Christ, or this our Faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us, and deserve our Justification unto us, (for that were to count our selves to be justified by some Act or Vertue that is within our selves) but the true understanding and meaning thereof is, that although we hear Gods Word, and believe it, and do never so many Works thereunto, yet we must renounce the Merit of all our said Vertues, of Faith,

of Hope,

of Hope, Charity, and all other Vertues and good Deeds, which we have done, shall do, or can do, as things that be far too weak, and insufficient, and imperfect, to deserve Remission of our Sins, and our Justification, and therefore we must trust only in Gods Mercy, and that Sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Christ Jesus the Son of God, once offered for us upon the Cross, to obtain thereby Gods Grace and Remission, as well of Original Sin in Baptism, as of all Actual Sin committed by us after Baptism, if we truly repent, and turn unfeignedly to him again. The meaning of which is plain, that we are not justified by Faith as our own act, as we are not justified by Hope and Charity, as our own acts, that is, that they cannot merit our Justification, or the Forgiveness of our sins; When we have done the best we can, we must still fly to the Mercy of God, through the Merits of our Lord Jesus Christ: that distinction of Faiths justifying, not as our own Act, but as it apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, and cloaths us with the perfect Robes of his Righteousness, for which God accounts us perfectly Righteous, is of a later date than these Homilies, and very inconsistent with the Doctrine

Grine contained in them. Thus you see what Gods part is in the Justification of a Sinner, viz. To provide a Ransom, and to forgive sins in vertue of that Ransom; that is to justifie those who according to the strictness and rigor of the Law, are not Just and Righteous Persons. Thus to conclude this in the words of the Homily, *You have heard the Office of God in our Justification, and how we receive it of him freely by his Mercy, without our Deserts.*

Sermon of
Salvation,
part 3.

Let us now consider what is Christs part in our Justification, and that is expressed by Justice, that is, the satisfaction of Justice, or the Price of our Redemption, by the offering of his Body, and shedding of his Blood, with fulfilling of the Law perfectly and throughly: The plain meaning of which is, that we are justified for the sake of Christs Merits, that his Obedience in doing and suffering the Will of God, in dying for our sins, and in fulfilling the Law, is the meritorious cause of our Justification: that is, did deserve at Gods hands, that for Christs sake he should pardon all humble, penitent and believing Sinners. This is all the Imputation of Christs Righteousness which our Church acknowledges, that the Righteousness of Christ is the meritorious Cause of our Justification.

Thus

Thus we are told, "That Infants being baptized, and dying in their Infancy, are by this Sacrifice washed from their sins, brought to Gods favour, and made his Children, and Inheritors of his Kingdom of Heaven: And they which in act or deed do sin after their Baptism, when they turn again to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this Sacrifice from their sins, in such sort that there remaineth not any spot of sin, that shall be imputed to their damnation: Which is to the same sense with that of St. John, that if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, (if we are holy as God is) we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin, 1 John i. 7. And to this sense our Church expounds those Texts, Rom, iii. All have offended, and have need of the Glory of God, but are justified freely by his Grace, by Redemption which is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to us for a Reconciler and Peacemaker, through faith in his Blood, to shew his Righteousness: And in the Tenth Chapter, Christ is the end of the Law unto Righteousness, to every man that believeth: And in the Eighth Chapter, That which was impossible by the Law, in as much as it was weak by the flesh, God sending his own Son in the similitude of

Sermon of
Salvation,
part 1.

of sinful flesh, by sin damned sin in the flesh, that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, which walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit: Which Texts are alledged by our Modern Divines, to prove the Imputation of Christs Righteousness to us, as the formal cause of our Justification; but our Church expressly tells us, that she understands these Texts to signifie no more on Christs part, but Justice, or the Satisfaction of Gods Justice. And whereas these new Divines make such a difference between the Active and Passive Righteousness of Christ, that by his Death and Sufferings he expiated our Sins, and by his Active Obedience makes us righteous: Our Church knows no difference in this matter, but assures us, that they both concur to the same effect, to make satisfaction for our sins; *He made satisfaction to Gods Justice, by the offering of his Body, and shedding his Blood, with fulfilling the Law perfectly and thoroughly.* Which account I expressly gave of it in my former Discourse, p. 330. & Edit. 2. p. 231. In this sense we are taught, that Christ is now the Righteousness of all them that truly believe in him; he for them paid their Ransom by his Death, he for them fulfilled the Law in his Life; So that now in him and by him every true Christian Man may be called a fulfiller of the

the Law: forasmuch as that which their infirmity lacked, Christs Justice hath supplied. Which last clause the Looking-Glass-Maker thought fit to leave out, for he had so much wit in his anger, as to see, that it did not make to his purpose: for the meaning of it is this, that Christs active and passive Righteousness is imputed to us, to procure the pardon of our sins, & thereby to supply the defects of our Righteousness, not to make us formally righteous: though our Righteousness be imperfect and defective, yet Christ by his Righteousness having obtained the pardon of our sins, we may be said in him to fulfil the Law, in as much, as that which our Infirmity lacked, Christs Justice (his Merit and Satisfaction, as it is before explained) hath supplied. And once for all, our Church tells us, what she means by being justified by Christ only: *We put our Faith in Christ, that we be justified by him only, that we be justified by Gods Mercy, and the Merits of our Saviour Christ only, and by no vertue and good works of our own, that is in us, or that we can be able to have or to do, to deserve the same: Christ himself being the only cause meritorious thereof.* So that the plain sense of our Church is, that Christs part in our Justification is only to be the meritorious cause of it, to merit Pardon and Justification

Serm. of
Salvation
part 3.

tion for all those, who heartily believe in him. And who-ever of our Communion have affirmed any more, they have in so doing plainly deserted the Doctrine of our Church: And therefore Doctor *Prideaux* himself does expressly disown the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ in any other sense than that of Merit: *Justificamur per justitiam Christi (non persona, quâ ipse vestitus est, sed meriti, quâ suos vestit) nobis imputatam*: that is, "We are justified by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, not by his Personal Righteousness (as Dr. *Owen* affirms) with which he is clothed himself, but with the Righteousness of Merit, with which he cloaths those who belong to him: And in answer to a passage out of *Bellarmino*, he adds, *Quis unquam è nostris, nos per justitiam Christi imputatam, formaliter justificari asseruit*: that is, "Who among us ever affirmed, that we were formally justified by the imputed Righteousness of Christ. And as the learned *Forbes* observes, it sounds very like a contradiction to assert, that the Righteousness of Christ is both the meritorious and the formal cause of our Justification. *Nequit enim fieri, ut eadem res simul sit causa efficiens, ad quam meritum reducitur, & formalis ejusdem effecti, quia sic simul & de essentia*

Leſt. 5. de
Justifica-
tione.

Confide-
rationes
modestæ,
p. 52.

essentia effecti foret, & non foret, cum causa formalis interna sit, & non in lætâ), *efficiens autem externa tantum, ut constat*: that is, "It cannot be, that the same thing should be both the efficient (as Merit is) and the formal cause of the same effect; for so it must both be of the essence and not of the essence of the effect; for a formal cause is internal, and belongs to the nature and essence of the thing, but an efficient is an external cause, as every one knows: And therefore when the Learned Bishop *Davenant*, asserts the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, to be the formal cause of our Justification, and explains it by our being justified *ex intuitu meritorum Christi, & propter Christum*, with respect to the Merits of Christ, and for Christs sake, though he uses a different phrase, which too many since have abused to bad purposes; yet he seems to mean no more by it, than we do, who say, that the Righteousness of Christ is the meritorious cause of our Justification, for that must be explained by the same phrases of being justified for Christs sake, and with respect to the Merits of Christ: and indeed the only difference the Bishop makes between the Righteousness of Christ being the meritorious and the formal cause of our Justification

De Justi-
tia habi-
tuali &
actuali.

fication is no more but this, that in the first case he considers the Merits of Christ absolutely, as the price of our Redemption; in the second he considers those same Merits of Christ applied to particular persons for the pardon of their particular sins, which still makes it no more than a meritorious cause. His words are these: *Eadem & unica justitia Christi in se & suo valore considerata est meritoria causa humana justificationis, considerata autem quatenus imputatur, donatur, applicatur, tanquam sua singulis credentibus, & in Christum insitis, subit vicem causa formalis.* And that he intends no more by a formal cause, than what others express by a meritorious cause, is plain in this, that he acknowledges the imputation even of Christs active Righteousness only in the sense of Merit. He expresses his agreement with *Vasques* in this matter, who acknowledges the imputation of the Merit of Christs active Obedience: *Cum dicimus Merita Christi nobis imputari, idem de justitia & sanctitate illius existimamus; nam cum Merita Christi ex sanctitate ejus dignitatem accipiant, eodem sensu quo Merita nobis dicuntur imputari, ipsa etiam Justitia Christi imputari dicitur:* that is, "When we say, that the Merits of Christ are imputed to us, we understand the same thing of his
"Holi

"Holiness and active Righteousness: for
"since his Purity and Holiness gave worth
"and dignity to his Merits, in the same
"sense, wherein his Merits are said to be
"imputed to us, his active Righteousness
"and Obedience is imputed also. So that
the Bishop never thought that the Obedience and Righteousness of Christ is so made ours, that we are accounted by God to have done the same things, to have performed all that Righteousness which Christ performed, which is the modern notion of Imputation; but it is so imputed to us, that upon account of the Merits of Christs Life and Death, God forgives the Sins, and accepts the Persons of those who heartily believe in him, as the same Learned and Reverend Person excellently explains it soon after: Where he tells us, that we are delivered from the Law by Faith in Christ; *whosoever believes in him shall not perish, and shall not come into condemnation, or into Judgment, as he reads it, John v. 24. and adds, what Judgment is this, from which Believers are delivered by Christ? Proculdubio strictum illud, ubi juxta normam legis aliquis examinatur, & prout deprehenditur huic norme respondere justus aut injustus pronuntiatur, &c.* "No doubt that strict Judgment, where men are examined according
"ding

ding to the Rule of the Law, and are pronounced just or unjust, as they are found to agree with that Rule: *Justificatio igitur & salus credentium non ex eo dependet, quod habent in se qualitatem novae justitiae, quam audent legali examini & stricto Dei judicio subicere, sed quod per & propter Merita Redemptoris, non subituri sunt tale judicium, sed perinde cum illis agetur, ac si haberent in seipsis exactam justitiam legalem:* "Therefore the Justification and Salvation of Believers does not depend on this, that they have such an internal Righteousness as they dare submit to a legal Tryal, and to the strict and rigorous Judgment of God; but that by and for the Merits of their Redeemer, they shall never undergo such a Judgment, but shall be dealt with as if they had an exact legal Righteousness of their own. And this he tells us he means by the Merits of Christ being the formal cause of our Justification; and in this sense I heartily own it, though the abuse of that Phrase is a sufficient Reason to alter it.

Let us now consider in the third place, what is required on our part, in order to our Justification by Gods Mercy, and by Christs Merits, and that is plainly expressed in the Homily: *And upon our part,*
true

true and lively Faith in the Merits of Jesus Christ, which yet is not ours, but by Gods working in us.

That we may the better understand this, we must enquire, What is meant by this Faith in the Merits of Christ? And what is meant by a true and lively Faith in Christs Merits? And what our Church attributes to this Faith in the Work of Justification?

First, What is meant by Faith in the Merits of Christ?

Now the general Notion of Faith is, Homily of Faith; part 1. that it is a persuasion and belief in mans heart, whereby he knoweth that there is a God, and agreeth unto all Truth of Gods most holy word, contained in the holy Scripture: This is such a Faith as Devils and wicked Men may have: But then a Faith in Christs Merits, or a true justifying Faith, such as no wicked men can have, is not only the common belief of the Articles of Faith, but it is also a true trust and confidence of the Mercy of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a stedfast hope of all good things to be received at Gods hand: and that although we through infirmity or temptation of our ghostly Enemy, do fall from him by sin, yet if we return again to him by true Repentance, that

" he will forgive and forget our offences
 " for his Sons sake, our Saviour Jesus
 " Christ, and will make us Inheritors with
 " him of his everlasting Kingdom; and
 " that in the mean time, till that King-
 " dom come, he will be our Protector and
 " Defender in all perils and dangers,
 " whatsoever do chance: and that though
 " sometimes he doth send us sharp adver-
 " sity yet that evermore he will be a lo-
 " ving Father unto us, if we trust in him,
 " and commit our selves wholly unto him,
 " hang only upon him, and call upon him,
 " ready to obey and serve him. That is,
 a Faith in the Merits of Christ, is a sure
 Hope and Confidence in God, a certain
 Expectation of all temporal and spiritual
 good things from God, for the Merits of
 our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, upon
 the condition of Repentance, and a new
 Life: or as it is excellently expressed a
 little after in the same Homily: " For the
 " very sure and lively Christian Faith is,
 " not only to believe all things of God,
 " contained in holy Scripture, but also is
 " an earnest trust and confidence in God,
 " that he doth regard us, and that he is
 " careful over us, as the Father is over the
 " Child whom he doth love, and that he
 " will be merciful to us for his only Sons
 " sake,

" sake, and that we have our Saviour
 " Christ our perpetual Advocate and
 " Priest, in whose only Merits, Oblation,
 " and Suffering, we do trust that our Of-
 " fences be continually washed and pur-
 " ged, whensoever we (repenting truly)
 " do return to him with our whole heart,
 " stedfastly determining with our selves,
 " through his Grace, to obey and serve
 " him in keeping his Commandments, and
 " never to turn back again to sin.

So that Justifying Faith (according to
 the sense of our Church) is not a perswa-
 sion that our sins are actually pardoned, or
 that God for Christs sake will forgive our
 sins, without requiring any more of us,
 than to believe, that he will forgive them.
 But it is a firm perswasion that God will
 forgive our sins for Christs sake, if we re-
 pent of our sins, and forsake them, and
 determine through his gracious assistance
 never to return to them again.

But we shall understand this the better,
 if we consider, secondly, what is meant
 by a *true lively* Faith in Christs Merits: for
 our Church distinguishes between a dead
 and a lively Faith: *A dead Faith is by the* ^{Homily}
holy Apostle St. James compared to the faith of ^{of Faith,}
Devils, which believe God to be true and just, ^{part 1.}
and tremble for fear, yet they do nothing well,
 Q 3 but

but all evil. And such a manner of Faith have the wicked and naughty Christian People, which confess God (as St. Paul saith) in their mouth, but deny him in their deeds, being abominable, and without the right faith, and to all good works reprovab^{le}.—— And, Forasmuch as Faith without works is dead, it is not now Faith, as a dead Man is not a Man: This dead Faith therefore is not the sure and substantial Faith, which saveth Sinners.

Let us now consider what a lively Faith is, and the description of that follows in these words: Another Faith there is in Scripture, which is not (as the foresaid Faith) idle, unfruitful, and dead, but worketh by Charity (as St. Paul declareth, Gal. v.) which as the other vain Faith is called a dead Faith, so this may be called a quick or lively Faith.—— This is the true, lively, and unfeigned Christian Faith, and is not in the mouth and outward Profession only, but it liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart. And this Faith is not without hope and trust in God, nor without the love of God and of our Neighbours, nor without the fear of God, nor without the desire to hear Gods Word, and to follow the same in eschewing evil, and doing gladly all good works. This Faith (as St. Paul describes it) is the sure ground and foundation of the benefits which we ought to look for, and trust to receive of God, a certificate and sure looking for them.

Heb. 12.

them, although they yet sensibly appear not unto us, &c. This I think is as plain, as words can make it, that the only Foundation of our Hope and Trust in God, and of our expectation of all temporal and spiritual good things from him, is a lively and working Faith; and upon these terms I will dispute with no man; I never asserted more my self, nor desire any other man should.

But to make it more evident what the sense of our Church is, concerning the necessity of Good Works, we are taught in these Homilies three things concerning Faith:

First, That it is essential to true Faith to be fruitful in good Works, when it hath the Opportunities of Action: This Faith doth not lie dead in the heart, but is lively and fruitful in bringing forth good Works: That as the Light cannot be hid, but will shew forth it self at one place or other; so a true Faith cannot be kept secret, but when occasion is offered it will break out, and shew it self by Good Works. And as the living Body of a Man ever exerciseth such things as belong to a natural and living Body, for nourishment and preservation of the same, as it hath need, opportunity, and occasion: even so the Soul that hath a lively Faith in it, will be doing alway some good Work, which shall declare

Ibid.

that it is living, and will not be unoccupied. Therefore when men hear in the Scriptures so high commendation of Faith, that it maketh us to please God, to live with God, and to be the Children of God. If then they phantasia that they be set at liberty from doing all good Works, and may live as they lust, they trifle with God, and deceive themselves; and it is a manifest token that they be far from having the true lively Faith, & also far from knowledge what true Faith meaneth. And then follows that excellent Description of Faith, which I have transcribed above.

P. 76.

From this it is very plain, that our Church accounts a holy Life as essential to a true Faith, as Action is to Life: and that true Faith is discovered by a holy Life, just as an inward Principle of Life is discovered by external and visible Actions.

This is farther proved in the Homily, from the examples of all good men in former Ages, whose Faith was fruitful in good Works, such as *Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c.* and from the Testimony of the holy Scripture, especially of the 1 *Epist.* of *S. John*, where there are so many express testimonies to this Truth: and by refuting the several pretences of those men, who fancy that they believe in God, and love him,

Sermon
of Faith,
part 2.

him, though they either live in sin, or neglect to obey his Laws: & the conclusion of all is in these words, *So they that be Christians,* Part 3. *and have received the knowledge of God, and of Christs Merits, and yet of a set purpose do live idly, without good works, thinking the name of a naked faith to be either sufficient for them, or else setting their minds upon vain pleasures of this World, do live in sin, without repentance, not uttering the Fruits that do belong to such an high Profession, upon such presumptuous Persons, and wilful Sinners, must needs remain the great vengeance of God, and eternal punishment in Hell, prepared for the unjust and wicked Liverers.*

The second thing which we are taught of Faith, is, That Faith is the only Principle of Good Works, acceptable and pleasing to God; that without it can no good work be done, accepted and pleasant unto God: *for as a Branch cannot bear Fruit of it self (saith our Saviour Christ) except it abide in the Vine, so cannot you, except you abide in me. — And without Faith it is impossible to please God. — And whatever work is done without Faith is sin. Faith giveth life to the Soul, and they be as much dead to God, who lack Faith, as they be to the world, whose Bodies lack Souls.* This is a true account why no Works, though they may appear never so good, can be accepta-

Sermon
of Good
Works,
part 1.

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ble to God without Faith, because Faith is the only Principle of a new and spiritual Life, which makes us alive to God, which gives us such a sense of God, and reverence for his Authority, as makes us careful in all things to please him, which is the very life and soul of Religion, and all Vertue; and as it is observed in that Homily from St. Chrysostom: *As men that be very men indeed, first have life, and after be nourished, so must our Faith in Christ go before, and after be nourished with good works: A Life may be without Nourishment, (that is, for some short time) but Nourishment cannot be without Life: A man must needs be nourished by good works, but first he must have Faith: He that doth good Deeds, yet without Faith, he hath no Life.*

Much to the same purpose it is observed from St. Augustine, *That the intent maketh the works good, but Faith must guide and order the intent of Man,----- So that he which doth not his good works with a godly intent, & a true Faith, that worketh by Love, the whole Body besides, (that is to say) all the whole number of his works is dark, and hath no light in them: for good Deeds be not measured by the facts themselves, and so discerned from Vices, but by the ends and intents for which they were done.*

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The meaning then of our Church is no more, but this, That whereas without Faith no man can love and reverence God, or design to please him in all things, whatever materially Good Works such men may do, yet they are not properly Acts of Religion, as not being referred to God, and therefore cannot be acceptable to God, as such, nor avail any man to eternal Life.

Upon this account it is, that God so much prizes Faith, because it is the Seed and Principle of Universal Obedience: that when there is such a sincere Principle in us, and wants an opportunity of exerting it self, it is accepted by God without Works; as is observed in the same place from St. Chrysostom: *I can shew a man that by Faith without Works lived and came to Heaven, but without Faith never any man had Life: the Thief that was hanged when Christ suffered, did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him: (though, as Bishop Davenant observes, his Faith produced a great many good Works in a very short time) but then it follows; if he had lived, and not regarded Faith, and the works thereof, he should have lost his Salvation again; but this is the effect, that I say, that Faith by it self saved him; but works by themselves never justified any*

any man: Where he prefers Faith above Works, because Faith being a Universal Principle of Obedience, is accepted by God without Works, when there wants time or opportunity to act them, though in no other case; but no Works can be pleasing and acceptable to God, unless they proceed from a true and hearty Faith: *Neither Faith is without Works, having opportunity thereto, nor works can avail to everlasting Life without Faith.*

The third thing noted of Faith, is, What manner of Good Works Faith produces; and the Good Works of Faith are not some external Acts of Hypocrisie, or some worthless and flattering Devotions, not some Arbitrary Superstitions, &c. but are the substantial Duties of Religion, which consist in the love of God, and of Men, which make us like to God, and useful to the World, as is excellently discoursed in the Second and Third parts of the Homily of Good Works.

So that according to the sense of our Church, Justifying Faith is not an idle and unactive Principle, but is fruitful in Good Works, and no other Faith can justify us, but such a lively Faith as abounds in all the Fruits of Righteousness, according as it hath occasion and opportunity of doing good.

But

But to make this still more evident, I observe farther, that whereas our Church seems to lay the greatest stress upon one particular Act of Faith in the matter of Justification, *viz.* our trust in the Mercy of God, and our apprehending the Promise of Forgiveness through the Merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, she also makes a good Life, or at least a firm and steadfast Resolution of a good Life, antecedently necessary to this Justifying Act of Faith, or to our Trust and Affiance in the Mercy of God, through the Merits of our Lord and Saviour: This is evident from that Reason, which is assigned, why no wicked men can have a sure Trust and Confidence in Gods Mercy: *For how can any man have this true Faith, this sure confidence in God, that by the Merits of Christ his sins be forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God, and to be partaker of the Kingdom of Heaven by Christ, when he liveth ungodly, and denieth Christ in his Deeds? Surely no such ungodly man can have this Faith and trust in God. For as they know Christ to be the only Saviour of the world, so they know also that wicked men shall not enjoy the Kingdom of God: They know that God hateth Unrighteousness, that he will destroy all those that speak untruly, that those who have done good Works (which cannot be done without a live-*

Serm. of
Salvation
part 3.

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ly Faith in Christ) shall come forth into the Resurrection of Life, and those that have done evil, shall come unto the Resurrection of Judgment: Very well they know also; that to them that be contentious, and to them that will not be obedient unto the Truth, but will obey Unrighteousness, shall come indignation, wrath, and affliction, &c.

The plain meaning of which words is this, that no wicked man can have a true Faith in Gods Mercy, because the Promise of forgiveness is made upon the Conditions of Repentance and a New Life; whereas God hath threatned eternal damnation against all wicked Livers; and therefore for any man, while he lives in wickedness, to hope to be pardoned by God for Christs sake, is an expresse contradiction to the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel, and surely no man shall be justified for believing a lie.

Thus in the first part of the Sermon of Faith, the design of which is to prove, that a true, lively, justifying Faith is fruitful in Good Works, we are expressly taught, "That he that believeth that all that is spoken of God in the Bible is true, and yet liveth so ungodly, that he cannot look to enjoy the Promises and Benefits of God; although it may be said,

"said, that such a man hath a Faith and Belief to the Words of God, yet it is not properly said, that he believeth in God, or hath such a Faith and Trust in God, whereby he may surely look for Grace, Mercy, and everlasting Life, at Gods hands, but rather for indignation and punishment, according to the merits of his wicked Life.

This contains the very same Doctrine which was expressed in the former Paragraph, & farther gives us an account, what distinction our Church makes between *Crederere Deo, & Credere in Deum*; to believe God and to believe in God: the first signifies to believe whatever is contained in the Word of God to be true, the second is to yield such Obedience to the Revelations of the Divine Will, as may encourage us to trust in God for the Accomplishment of all those gracious Promises of Pardon and Eternal Life: This is all the fiducial Reliance which our Church teacheth, to trust to the Mercy of God through the Merits of Christ, for Pardon and Eternal Life, upon our faithful discharge of all Gospel-Obedience.

The same Doctrine is more expressly taught, if it be possible, in the Second Part of the Sermon of Faith: "*verily,*
"*verily,*

“*verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in*
 “*me hath everlasting Life*: Now forasmuch
 “as he that believeth in Christ hath ever-
 “lasting Life, it must needs consequently
 “follow, that he that hath this Faith
 “must have also Good Works, and be stu-
 “dious to observe Gods Commandments
 “obediently: For to them that have evil
 “Works, and lead their Life in Disobe-
 “dience and Transgression, or breaking
 “Gods Commandments, without Repen-
 “tance, pertaineth not everlasting Life,
 “but everlasting Death, as Christ himself
 “saith, *They that do well shall go into Life*
 “*eternal, but they that do evil, shall go into*
 “*everlasting fire, &c.* What can be more
 expressly said, to prove the inseparable
 Union of Good Works with Faith, in the
 Act of Justification?

In the Homily of Repentance this Do-
 ctrine is so plainly taught, that there can
 be no possible evasion: We are there told,
 “That the true Preachers of the Gospel
 “of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the
 “glad and joyful tidings of Salvation,
 “have always in their godly Sermons and
 “Preachings unto the People, joynd
 “these two together, Repentance and
 “Forgiveness of sins, even as our Saviour
 “Jesus Christ did appoint himself, say-
 “ing,

“ing, *So it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise*
 “*again the third day, and that Repentance and*
 “*Forgiveness of Sins should be preached in his*
 “*Name among all Nations.*

Forgiveness of sins (as I observed be-
 fore) is Evangelical Justification, and the
 necessary condition of Forgiveness is Re-
 pentance: This is proved in that Homily
 by many Scripture-Promises and Exam-
 ples, and therefore we must consider what
 our Church means by Repentance, and the
 explication of this is reduced to *four prin-*
cipal Points: From what we must return, to
whom we must return, by whom we may be able
to convert, and the manner how to turn to
God.

First, From whence, or from what things we
must return: and that is, “From all our
 “sins, not only grosser vices, but the fil-
 “thy lusts and inward concupiscences
 “of the Flesh. — All these things must
 “they forsake, that will truly turn unto
 “the Lord, and repent aright. For sith
 “for such things the wrath of God com-
 “eth upon the Children of Disobedience,
 “no end of punishment ought to be look’d
 “for, as long as we continue in such things.
 “But this must be done by Faith: for sith
 “that God is a Spirit, he can by no other
 “means be apprehended and taken hold

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“upon.

“ upon. That is, God being a Spirit, we cannot see him with bodily Eyes, nor go to him on our Legs, nor take hold of him with an Arm of Flesh, and therefore this Metaphor of returning to God, and going to him, and taking hold of him, must be expounded to a spiritual sense, is the work of Faith, which discovers him who is invisible, and unites our Souls and Spirits to him.

And, “ We have need of a Mediator for to bring and reconcile us unto him, who for our sins is angry with us; the same is Jesus Christ, who being true and natural God, *etc. took our nature upon him,* that so he might be a Mediator between God and us, and pacifie his wrath.

In the second part of the Homily, we have this general Description of Repentance, That “ it is a true Returning unto God, whereby men forsaking utterly their Idolatry and Wickedness, do with a lively Faith embrace, love, and worship the true living GOD only, and give themselves to all manner of good Works, which by Gods Word they know to be acceptable unto him. And we are there informed, “ That there are four Parts of Repentance, the first is Contrition of the Heart: For we
“ must

“ must be earnestly sorry for our sins, and
“ unfeignedly lament and bewail, that we
“ have by them so grievously offended
“ our most bounteous and merciful God,
“ &c.

“ The second is an unfeigned Confession and acknowledging of our sins to God.

“ The third is Faith, whereby we do apprehend and take hold upon the Promises of God, touching the free pardon and forgiveness of our sins, which Promises are sealed up unto us, with the death and blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Reason of this, is, because Contrition and Confession will avail us nothing, unless we stedfastly believe, and be fully persuaded, that God for his Son Jesus Christs sake, will forgive us all our sins; for though we be never so earnestly sorry for our sins, and acknowledge and confess them, yet all these things shall be but means to bring us to utter desparation, except we do stedfastly believe that God our heavenly Father will for his Son Jesus Christs sake pardon and forgive us our Offences and Trespases, and utterly put them out of remembrance in his sight: therefore they that teach Repen-
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“ tance

“ tance without Christ, and a lively Faith
 “ in the Mercy of God, do only teach
 “ *Cains*, or *Judas* Repentance: That is,
 they teach men to be sorry for their sins,
 without any hopes of Pardon and For-
 giveness, which is only to be obtained
 through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The fourth part of Repentance is “ an
 “ amendment of Life, in bringing forth
 “ fruits worthy of Repentance: for they
 “ that do truly repent, must be clean al-
 “ ter’d and changed, they must become
 “ New Creatures, they must be no more
 “ the same that they were before: As ap-
 “ pears from *John* the *Baptists* Exhortation
 “ to the Scribes and Pharisees, “ whereby
 “ we do learn, that if we will have the
 “ wrath of God to be pacified, we must in
 “ no wise dissemble, but turn unto him
 “ again with a true and sound Repentance,
 “ which may be known and declared by
 “ good Fruits, as by most sure and infalli-
 “ ble signs thereof.

This I think is as plain as words can
 make it, that Repentance, which consists
 in a hearty sorrow for all our sins, and in
 a humble Confession of them to Almighty
 God, and in a sincere Faith and Trust in
 the Mercies of God through our Lord Je-
 sus Christ, together with an actual amend-
 ment

ment of our lives, is according to the sense
 of our Church absolutely necessary to ob-
 tain the pardon of our sins, that is, *Justifica-*
tion by the free Grace of God.

This has often made me wonder, that
 any one should affix such a Doctrine as this
 to the Church of *England*, That *Repentance*
it self is not antecedently necessary to our Justifi-
cation; I am sure the Learned Bishop *Dav-*
enant was of another mind in this point,
 for he expressly asserts, that there are some
 Works, *sine quibus Justificatio nunquam fuit*
ab ullo mortalium obtenta, nunquam obtinebitur,
 “ without which Justification never was,
 “ and never shall be obtained by any mor-
 “ tal man; „ among which he reckons
 “ true Repentance and Faith, and the love
 “ of God and of our Neighbour: *Hæc &*
hujusmodi opera cordis interna sunt omnibus justifi-
catæ necessaria, non quod contineant in se effica-
ciam seu meritum Justificationis, sed quod juxta
ordinationem divinam vel requiruntur, ut con-
ditiones præviæ seu concurrentes, sicuti parere
& credere, vel ut effecta à fide justificante neces-
sario manantia, ut amare Deum, &c. i. e. These
 “ and such-like internal Works of the
 “ Heart are necessary to all that are justi-
 “ fied, not that they are meritorious Cau-
 “ ses of Justification, but because accor-
 “ ding to the Divine Appointment, they
 “ are

“are required either as previous or con-
 “curring conditions, such as Repentance
 “and Faith; or as effects, which necessa-
 “rily flow from a justifying Faith, such as
 “to love God, &c. Where this Learned
 Prelate doth expressly assert, that *Repent-*
tance, as well as Faith, is a *previous Condi-*
tion of our Justification; and I fear will
 hereafter be accounted one of our Inno-
 vators.

And that distinction, which the Bishop
 makes between those Works which are
 required as previous Conditions of Ju-
 stification, as to repent and believe; and
 those Works which are necessary Effects
 of justifying Faith, which must always be
 present in the justified Person, as to love
 God, &c. gives a plain and easie answer
 to the grand Exception against the ante-
 cedent necessity of Repentance to our Ju-
 stification: *viz.* Because then it must pre-
 cede Faith it self, (I suppose because eve-
 ry true Believer is actually justified in the
 first instant of his being a true Believer)
 whereas all good Works, (and therefore
 Repentance and Contrition, which are
 certainly good Works) are the Effects and
 Fruits of Faith, and so consequently must
 follow our Justification by Faith, unless
 we will place the Effects before their
 Cause;

Cause: But this is absolutely false, that
 all good Works are the effects and fruits
 of justifying Faith: for there are some
 good Works which are essential to justify-
 ing Faith, and it is not justifying Faith
 without them, such as Repentance and
 Contrition, without which no Faith is a
 true justifying Faith; and therefore we
 may observe in our Homilies, that some-
 times Faith is made an essential part of
 Repentance, sometimes Repentance is
 made essential to a justifying Faith, as
 appears from what I have discoursed
 above.

The reason of the mistake is this, That
 these men do not distinguish between the
 general notion of Faith, and *Justifying*
Faith; Faith in general, as it signifies a
 belief of the Being and Providence of
 God, and the Truth of the Scriptures,
 &c. is necessary to produce any good Acti-
 ons, *for without Faith it is impossible to please*
God; but this bare Assent of the Under-
 standing is not justifying Faith, till it ex-
 cite in us a hearty sorrow for our sins, and
 sincere purposes of a New Life, and a
 great Trust and Affiance in the Mercy of
 God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: So
 that Repentance, and the Purpose of a
 New Life, are at least essential to justify-
 ing

ing Faith, and not the fruits and effects of it; but the actual performance of these Vows and Promises, and the faithful discharge of our Duty to God and Men in a holy and blameless Life, may be called the effects of justifying Faith, not that they are not as necessary to a justifying Faith as Repentance is, but because our Justification is begun without them, (God in infinite Grace and Mercy receiving us into favour upon our first return to him) though these good Works must necessarily follow, to compleat and perfect our Justification, as it is expressly observed from *St. Chrysostom* in the Homily of Good Works, concerning the Thief upon the Cross, that *if he had lived and not regarded Faith, and the works thereof, he should have lost his Salvation again.* And in this sense we are told in the Homily of Salvation, That *Faith doth not shut out the justice of our Good Works, necessarily to be done afterwards,* (that is after our Justification) *of Duty towards God.* And upon the same account our Church in her XII Article teaches us. **That Good Works are the Fruits of Faith, and follow those who are Justified.**

And this gives an easie and plain account of the XIII Article of our Church, which

which rejects those Works which are done before Justification, that is, before a *Justifying Faith*, as is plain from the Article: **Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ; neither do they make men meet to receive Grace or** (as the School-Author says) **deserve Grace of Congruity, yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but that they have the nature of Sin.** The plain meaning of which is this, That Works done before Justifying Faith are not pleasing to God; that is, whatever Works we do before we repent of our sins, and purpose to live a New Life, and trust in the Mercy of God, and Merits of our Saviour for Pardon and Acceptance, cannot please God, because such are not Good Works: for when we reject Works done before Justification, we must not reject Justifying Faith it self, nor any thing which is necessary and essential to it, for then we run our selves into such a Labyrinth, out of which we shall never find a way.

And indeed I find that some men are very sensible what weight our Church lays up-

on the necessity of Repentance in order to our Justification, and use some little Arts to avoid it: for that Description of Faith which is given us in the first part of the Sermon of Faith, concluding thus; *We do trust that our offences be continually washed and purged, whensoever we repenting truly do return to him with our whole heart, stedfastly determining with our selves through his Grace, to obey and serve him in keeping his Commandments, and never to turn back again to sin:* Which maketh Repentance of our sins, and a sincere and stedfast purpose of a new life, antecedently necessary to the justifying Act of Faith: they use this evasion, that the Homily adds, [*whensoever we repenting return to him*] either with respect to future sins, to the forgiveness of which we all acknowledge Repentance to be necessary, or else to distinguish a saving from a counterfeit and sudden Faith, not as if true Evangelical Repentance had any influence upon the very Act of Justification, as Faith has.

The first account is the strangest, that ever I met with; for there can be no imaginable reason assigned, why Repentance should be necessary to obtain the Pardon of those sins, which we commit after Justification, and not necessary to our first Justification: I am sure neither the Scri-

pture,

pture, nor the Articles and Homilies of our Church, nor the Confessions of any Reformed Churches, which I ever yet saw, ever made such a distinction. The Commission which our Saviour gave to his Apostles, was to preach Repentance and Forgiveness of sins in his Name, to the unconverted and unjustified Jews and Heathens; and both the Homilies of our Church, and the Augustan-Confession, do in express words found the Doctrine of Repentance upon that first Commission given to the Apostles, and do thence conclude the necessity of Repentance in order to Forgiveness: for since Justification consists in the forgiveness of our sins, a repeated Forgiveness is but a repeated Justification of a Sinner, and why that should be necessary to the after-acts of Justification, which was not necessary to the first, is beyond my Understanding.

The second account is much better, that it is to distinguish between a saving and a counterfeit Faith: but then this very distinction confirms the antecedent necessity of Repentance to Justification: for the difference between a saving and counterfeit Faith, according to this Account, is, that a saving Faith supposes Repentance, or includes it in its very nature,

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Art. XX.
Homily
of Repen-
tance.

but a counterfeit Faith does not: as for what they add, that Evangelical *Repentance* hath not such an influence upon our Justification, as Faith has, is none of our present dispute; if it be but acknowledged to be antecedently necessary, we will consider the rest hereafter.

And now it is time to proceed to the last thing I proposed, to consider what our Church attributes to Faith in the matter of our Justification: And to state this matter plainly, I shall first enquire, in what sense our Church rejects Works from the Office of Justifying, and attributes it to Faith alone. And secondly what the Office of Faith is in the Justification of a Sinner.

First, In what sense our Church rejects Works from the Office of Justifying, and attributes it to Faith alone. And it is easily observed, that our Church acknowledges the antecedent necessity of some Works to our Justification, as we are expressly taught in the first part of the Sermon of Salvation: *And yet that Faith doth not shut out Repentance, Hope, Love, Dread, and the Fear of God, to be joyned with Faith in every man that is justified, but it shutteth them out from the Office of Justifying: So that although they be all present together in him that is justified,*

justified, yet they justify not all together. So that no man must expect this great Blessing of Justification, unless together with Faith, he have Repentance, Hope, Love, Dread, and the Fear of God: which supposes, that a man must be a true Penitent, and a true Lover of God, before he is justified. Though Repentance and Hope, &c. have no actual influence upon our Justification, yet they are *causa sine quibus non*, such causes without which the effect will never follow, which necessarily intitles them to the nature of Conditions: for a Condition which hath no natural or meritorious Efficiency, is only a *causa sine qua non*: and though it is true, that the accidental presence of one thing with another, which produces any Effect, will not entitle it to any degree of Efficiency, yet where there is such a natural Union between two things, that neither of them can act alone, though the effect may more immediately belong to one than to the other, yet they both concur to it: though the hand does immediately apprehend any thing, or lay hold on it, yet the Shoulder and the Arm is naturally necessary to produce this action, because the Hand cannot move of it self: And if they will allow us this similitude, (which they themselves

selfes sometimes use) that Good VVorks be the Shoulder and Arm that upholds Faith, we will allow Faith to be the Hand. And thus it is in Moral Causes, where the presence of two things, of Faith suppose, and Works, is necessarily required in order to the same Effect, there must be a concurrence of both, though it may be in different manners: When our Church asserts the necessary presence of some internal Graces and Vertues together with Faith, in him who is to be justified, she plainly acknowledges that we shall never be justified without them, though not for them, which is all that any one desires, who denies and rejects the Merits of Good Works.

And as these internal Acts of Repentance, Hope, &c. are antecedently necessary to Justification, so Good Works must necessarily follow, as we are taught in the same place: *Nor the Faith also doth not shut out the Justice of our Good Works, necessarily to be done afterwards of Duty towards God (for we are most bounden to serve God in doing Good Deeds, commanded by him in his holy Scripture all the days of our Life) but it excludeth them, so that we may not do them to this intent, to be made good by doing of them: that is, to be justified by them. And this we are taught*

taught is so necessary, that unless these Good Works follow, as the necessary Fruits of Faith, we shall loose our Justification again, as you heard above.

In what sense then does our Church reject good Works, and attribute our Justification to Faith alone? And that we are told over and over in the most plain and expresse words; that it is only to take away the *Merit of Good Works*, and to attribute our Justification to the free Mercy of God, and Merits of Christ, not to our own Works and Deservings. Hence it is that Justification by Works is so often opposed to our Justification by the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ, which are inconsistent in no other sense, but that of Merit: for though Good Works be supposed the necessary Conditions of Justification, yet if they be acknowledged so imperfect as not to merit, we shall still need the Merits of Christ to expiate our sins, and the Mercy of God to pardon them, and to accept of our imperfect Services.

But the words of the Homily are very expresse, where after alledging the concurrent Testimonies of the ancient Fathers, for Justification without Works, by Faith alone, we have this Explication given of them:

*Sermon of
Salvation,
part 2.*

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them: " Nevertheless this Sentence, that
" we be justified by Faith only, is not so
" meant of them, that the said Justifying
" Faith is alone in man, without true Re-
" pentance, Hope, Charity, Dread and
" Fear of God, at any time and season;
" nor when they say we be justified freely,
" they mean not that we should or might
" afterward be idle, and that nothing
" should be required on our parts af-
" terward: neither they mean not so
" to be justified without Good Works,
" that we should do no Good Works at
" all: But this saying, that we be justified
" by Faith only, freely, and without
" Works, is spoken for to take away
" clearly the Merit of our Works, as be-
" ing unable to deserve our Justification at
" Gods hands, and thereby most plainly
" to express the weakness of Man, and the
" goodness of God, the great infirmity of
" our selves, and the might and power of
" God, the imperfectness of our own
" Works, and the most abundant Grace
" of our Saviour Christ, and therefore
" wholly to ascribe the Merit and De-
" serving of our Justification to Christ
" only, and his most precious blood shed-
" ding.

Hence

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Hence for a man to be justified by his
own Works, is expounded as if we should
affirm, *That a man might by his own works
take away and purge his own sins, and so justify
himself:* That is, when they reject Justifi-
cation by Works, they understand by it a
meritorious Justification.

Thus in the third part of the Sermon of
Salvation, we are expressly taught, " That
" the true meaning of this Proposition or
" Saying, We be justified by Faith in Christ
" only (according to the meaning of the old
" ancient Authors) is this: We put our
" Faith in Christ, that we be justified
" by him only, that we be justified by Gods
" free Mercy, and the Merits of our Savi-
" our Christ only, and by no vertue or
" Good Works of our own, that is in us,
" or that we can be able to have, or to do,
" for to deserve the same, Christ himself
" only being the Cause meritorious there-
" of.

This is so expressly the Doctrine of the
Homilies, that I need not multiply Testi-
monies for the proof of it; from whence
it is evident, that our Church owns the
necessity of Good Works to all intents
and purposes, excepting Merit, and in this
sense they reject Faith too, as it is *our own
work.*

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But now because our Church, and all the Reformed Churches, expressly reject Works in the matter of Justification under the notion of Merit and Deserving, in which sense alone they are injurious to the Grace of God, and the Merits of Christ; from whence we argue, that they own the necessity of Works upon all other Accounts, and reject only the Merit of them: Some tell us, that we should rather argue, that they put no difference between Works and the Merit of Works, in the matter of Justification, but equally reject them both: But pray why so? Truly for no Reason that I know, but that it best serves their Hypothesis.

They acknowledge, that there is a difference between Works and the Merit of Works, but will by no means own, that *St. Paul*, or any of the Reformed Churches made any: which is not very honourably said of them, that they should make no difference, where there is one: which argues either a great deal of ignorance, or meer Sophistry. But pray why do they think so? Why because *St. Paul* always opposes our Justification by Works, whatever they are, to Justification by Grace; and therefore by Works he must understand the Merit of Works, because only Merit
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is opposed to Grace: So we say too, but what follows from hence? That the Apostle rejects all Works, though they are separated from the notion of Merit? This is to make the Apostle argue very absurdly, that because he rejects Works, when they are inconsistent with Grace, therefore he should reject Works, when they are not inconsistent with Grace, as by this Argument they are not, when they are separated from the notion and opinion of Merit. And what they add, That it is plain, that the Apostle excludes all sorts of Works, of what kind soever, from our Justification, is very true, but then they are all sorts of Meritorious Works; that is, such a perfect, legal, unfinning Righteousness, as needs not the Grace and Mercy of God, not such an Evangelical Righteousness, as owes its acceptance to the Grace of God, and the Merits of Christ.

The only Argument they have to prove that the Church of *England*, and all the Reformed Churches, make no difference between Works, and the Merit of Works, is because where-ever they reject Justification by Works, they expressly mention their Merit and Deserving; which is the best Argument that can be,
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that they do make a difference, otherwise there had been no need of that Explication, especially when they assert the necessity of Good Works upon all other accounts, as our Church expressly doth.

In the third part of the Sermon of Salvation, we find these words: *Truth it is, that our own Works do not justify us, to speak properly of our Justification, (that is to say) our works do not merit or deserve Remission of our sins, and make us of unjust, just before God: What need had there been of this Explication, to speak properly of Justification, that is to say, to merit and deserve, if our Church had apprehended no difference between Works and Merit, between a proper and improper Justification by Works?*

I am sure the Learned Bishop *Davenant* makes a great difference between the necessity of Works, and the Merit of Works, in the Justification of a Sinner: for in answer to that Question, *Utrum bona Opera dici possint ad Justificationem vel salutem necessaria?* "Whether Good Works may be said to be necessary to Justification or Salvation? In his first Conclusion he tells us, that in dispute with the Papists it is not safe to say so, because they always by necessary, understand necessary as Causes, *vera & propria sua dignitate meritorias*

De Justit.
Habit. &
act. cap.
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ritorias humana salutis, "which by their own proper worth and dignity merit Salvation: What need had there been of this Caution, if the necessity of Good Works to Justification, and the Merit of Works, had been the same?

In the fourth Conclusion he tells us, That no Good Works are necessary to Justification, if by necessary we understand *sub ratione causa meritoria necessaria*, "as necessary meritorious Causes.

And in the fifth Conclusion he expressly tells us, *Bona quadam Opera sunt necessaria ad Justificationem, ut conditiones concurrentes, vel praecursoria, licet non sint necessaria, ut causa efficientes, aut meritoria*; "That some Good Works are necessary to Justification, as previous or concurring Causes, though not as efficient or meritorious. So that it seems, that this distinction between the Necessity and Merit of Works, was known and defended by the great Patrons of our Church; and we have no reason to think, that when our Church does so expressly reject Works only under the notion of Merit, she understood no difference between Necessity and Merit.

And I find in an ancient Book, intitled, *Reformatio legum, Ecclesiasticarum*, which was

composed by Archbishop *Cranmer* and *Peter Martyr*, and some other Bishops and Learned Men of this Church, by the Authority of King *Edward* the Sixth, that where they give an account of those Heresies, which ought to be suppressed, all they say about Justification, is no more but this, *Deinde nec illi sunt audiendi, quorum impietas salutarem & in sacris Scripturis fundatam Justificationis nostrae doctrinam oppugnant, in qua tenendum est, non operum momentis Justitiam hominum collocari: i. e.* “Neither
 “ must we hearken to them, who impious-
 “ ly oppose that saving Doctrine of Justi-
 “ fication, which is founded on the Scri-
 “ ptures, concerning which we must be-
 “ lieve, that the Righteousness or Justifi-
 “ cation of Men does not depend on the
 “ Merits of their Works. So that they
 only reject the Merit of Works in the
 matter of Justification.

The Confessions of Foreign Reformed Churches are as plain and express in this matter, as the Homilies of our Church. In the Apology for the *Augustan*-Confession we are told, That good Works are not *pretium, nec propitiatio propter quam detur remissio peccatorum*: “They are not the price
 “ nor the propitiation for our sins. And
 the reason they assign, why they oppose
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Justification by Works, is, because it detracts from the Glory of Christ, and sets up our Works in competition with Christ, *utrum fiducia collocanda sit in Christum, an in opera nostra*, “Whether we should put our trust
 “ in Christ, or in our own Works: which
 can be understood only in that sense of the
 Merit of Works, and is no Argument a-
 gainst Works, when they are subordinate
 to the Merit and Grace of Christ.

But not to trouble my Readers with ma-
 ny quotations, I shall add but one more, Responsio ad argum. adversar.
 which is their Answer to that Objection
 from *St. James*, who expressly says, That
we are justified by works, and not by Faith only:
Si non assuant adversarii suas opiniones de meritis operum, Jacobi verba nihil habent incommodi, &c. “If our Adversaries would not
 “ annex their own opinions concerning
 “ Merit of Works, there is no inconve-
 “ nience in *St. James* his words. So that
 they were not shy of this expression, of
 being justified by Works, so men would
 not imagine, that their Justification were
 owing to the Merit of Works, which is
 no less than a demonstration, that they
 made a distinction between Works and
 Merit, in the matter of Justifica-
 tion.

But there is one very surprizing Argument to prove that there can be no difference between Works and Merit, in the matter of Justification ; and it is this ; That if we be justified by Works, without respect to their Merit, then we may as well be justified by Works of an indifferent nature, which have no intrinsic worth and goodness in them, as by the most real and substantial Righteousness ; for take away Merit, and it is all one what the nature of the Work be : Now the only difficulty of framing an Answer to this Argument, is to find what there is to be answered : To be justified by Works without Merit, if any men phrase it so, can signify no more but this, that God for Christs sake forgives the sins, and accepts the Persons of those, who though they be guilty of many Infirmities, yet do heartily and sincerely endeavour to please him, and by the practise of a real Righteousness do every day aspire after a greater likeness to him ; now the question is, Why (since these men do not merit such favours) should God prefer them before those, who busie themselves in some external Rites and Ceremonies, or Judaical Observances, which have no real Goodness in them ? And I can give no other account of it, but
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that it is for the same reason, for which God prefers an Evangelical before a Ceremonial Righteousness ; and if there be no reason for this (excepting Merit) I confess the Argument is unanswerable.

Is there no reason why God should prefer the internal Habits of Grace and Vertue, which are a participation of his own Nature, and the beginnings (though but weak and imperfect) of a new and spiritual Life, and the best qualifications for future Glory and Happiness, before some external Rites and Usages, which have no real worth ? Is there no reason, why God should prefer the substantial Acts of Piety and Charity, which are useful to Men, and an imitation of the bounty and goodness of God, before picking up straws, and such useles and ludicrous Employments ? Is there no difference between Works which are imperfectly good, and Works which have no goodness in them ? But I think it is a Work of Supererogation, though not very meritorious, to answer such an Argument.

But now in requital of this Argument against the distinction between Works and Merit, I shall give another for it, and that is, That our Church makes nothing more necessary on our part to our Salvation,
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than to our Justification: and therefore when she rejects Good Works from the Office of Justifying, if she intends to deny the Necessity, as well as the Merit of Good Works, she must be understood to deny the necessity of Good Works to our Salvation also, which is an exprefs Contradiction to her declared Doctrine.

There is no such distinction as this between Justification and Salvation, to be found in any of the Articles or Homilies of our Church, which is a good Argument that our Church knew no such distinction, for if she had, we cannot but think, that she would have made use of it in exprefs terms at one time or other; there being the same occasion for it then, that there is now. The Sermon or Homily of Justification is called the Sermon of Salvation: and these words *Justification* and *Salvation* are promiscuously used in the Homily it self: Thus in the third part of the Sermon of Salvation, we have these words at the beginning: *It hath been manifestly declared unto you, that no man can fulfil the Law of God, and therefore by the Law all men are condemned: whereupon it followeth necessarily, that some other thing should be required for our SALVATION than the Law; and that is a true and lively Faith in Christ, bring-*
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ing forth good Works, and a Life according to Gods Commandments: Where Salvation must of necessity signifie, what at other times is called Justification; for our Church tells us, that we cannot be saved by the Works of the Law, because we cannot fulfil the Law, which is the reason at other times assigned, why we cannot be Justified by the Law. Because all men be Sinners, and Offenders against God, and Breakers of his Law, therefore can no man by his own Acts, words and Deeds (seem they never so good) be justified and made righteous before God: Which are the very first words of the Sermon of Salvation: And what is here required for our Salvation, is the very same, which in other places our Church requires to our Justification, viz. A true and lively Faith in Christ, bringing forth Good Works, and a Life according to Gods Commandments.

Thus in the first part of the Sermon of Good Works, our Church cites those words of S. Chrysostom: *I can shew a man, that by Faith without Works lived & came to heaven, but without Faith never any man had Life: the Thief that was hanged when Christ suffered, did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him: this is an Example of living and going to Heaven by Faith without Works, that the Thief was justified by Faith only; so that*

that to be justified by Faith, and to live and go to Heaven by Faith, it seems are equivalent expressions, as appears also from what follows: *And because no man shall say again, that he lacked time to do good VVorks, for else he would have done them: Truth it is, and I will not contend therein, but this I will surely affirm, that Faith only SAVED him:* So that to be justified, and to be saved by Faith, still signifies the same thing; and in the same sense wherein our Church affirms, that we may be justified by Faith only, she affirms, that we may be saved by Faith only, which therefore must not exclude the Necessity, but the Merit of Good Works; and whenever Faith only will not justify, it will not save neither, as it follows; *If he had lived, and not regarded Faith, and the Works thereof, he should have lost his Salvation again:* That is, his Justification, as appears from the whole Discourse.

The Learned Bishop *Davenant* certainly was not acquainted with this distinction, when he proposed that Question, *Utrum bona Opera sint necessaria ad Justificationem vel salutem*, Whether Good Works be necessary to Justification or Salvation, and answers it without making any difference between their necessity to Justification
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and to Salvation, which is not very reconcilable with our Modern Divinity, in which good Works are so far from being owned necessary, that they are judged dangerous and hurtful in reference to Justification, though they may be necessary to our Salvation.

And indeed this distinction between Justification and Salvation was on purpose invented to mollifie some harsh expressions of later Divines, who rejected good Works and a holy Life, from having any thing to do in the Justification of a Sinner: This gave birth to the *Antinomian* Heresie, which wholly rejects the Law and good VVorks, and under a pretence of advancing the freeness of Gods Grace, delivers Believers from all the necessary Obligations of Duty and Obedience; to prevent the infection of this Doctrine, they invented this distinction between Justification and Salvation; and asserted, that though Good VVorks are not necessary to our Justification, yet they are to our Salvation; which is as much as to say, that though our sins shall be pardoned, and our persons accepted, and accounted perfectly righteous, and have an actual Right and Title to future Glory without Holiness and Obedience, yet we shall never have

an actual Possession of Glory, but upon the condition of an holy Life; which were it true, would be a greater blemish to the Wisdom and Justice of God, than the necessity of Holiness to our Justification, can be to the freeness of his Grace.

Having explained in what sense our Church rejects Good Works from the Office of Justifying, viz. That nothing which we can do is so perfect as to merit and deserve Justification, it is time to consider what our Church attributes to Faith in the Justification of a Sinner, and upon what account she affirms, *That Faith only justifies*: And I cannot better explain this, than in the words of the Homily it self, which are these: *Truth it is, that our own Works do not justifie us, to speak properly of Justification, (that is to say) our works do not merit or deserve remission of our sins, and make us of unjust just before God: But God of his own Mercy through the only Merits & Deservings of his Son Jesus Christ doth justifie us. Nevertheless because Faith doth directly send us to Christ for remission of our sins, and that by Faith given us of God we embrace the Promise of Gods Mercy, and of the remission of our sins, (which thing none other of our Vertues or Works properly doth) therefore Scripture useth to say, That Faith without Works doth justifie; and*
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Sermon of
Salvation,
part 3.

forasmuch that it is all one Sentence in effect, to say Faith without Works, and only Faith doth justifie us: therefore the old ancient Fathers of the Church from time to time, have uttered our Justification with this speech, Only Faith justifieth us; meaning none other thing than St. Paul meant, when he said, Faith without works justifieth us. And because all this is brought to pass through the only Merits and Deservings of our Saviour Christ, and not through our Merits, or through the merit of any Vertue that we have within us, or of any work that cometh from us, therefore in that respect of Merit and Deserving, we forsake (as it were) altogether again, Faith, works, and all other Vertues. For our own imperfection is so great, through the corruption of original sin, that all is imperfect that is within us, Faith, Charity, Hope, Dread, Thoughts, words, and works; and therefore not apt to merit or deserve any part of our Justification for us. And this form of speaking use we, in humbling of our selves to God, and to give all the Glory to our Saviour Christ, which is best worthy to have it.

These words are so plain, that they need no comment; and there are three things contained in them, which do evidently declare the sense of our Church in this matter.

First,

First, That our Church does not attribute our Justification to Faith, upon account of any Merit or Desert in Faith above other Vertues and Graces: for *in respect of Merit and Deserving*, we are taught to forsake again Faith it self, as well as Works, and all other Vertues: As our Works do not merit or deserve remission of our sins; no more does Faith.

Secondly, That the reason why our Church attributes our Justification to Faith only, is to declare that we owe our Justification wholly to the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ: *That God of his own Mercy, through the only Merits and Deservings of his Son Jesus Christ doth justify us.* And thus immediately before we are told, *That the meaning of this Proposition or saying, we be justified by Faith in Christ only, (according to the meaning of the old ancient Authors) is this, we put our Faith in Christ, that we be justified by him only, that we be justified by Gods free Mercy, and the Merits of our Saviour Christ only, and by no vertue or good Works of our own, that is in us, or that we can be able to have or to do, for to deserve the same; Christ himself only being the Cause meritorious thereof.* So that whoever attributes the Justification of a Sinner wholly to the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ,

Christ, without any other intervening Merit or Desert, though he may differ in the phrase and manner of expression, yet does acknowledge all that our Church means, by being justified by Faith only, and cannot justly be charged with deserting or opposing the Doctrin of our Church.

And therefore, Thirdly, the true Reason why our Church attributes our Justification to Faith only, and not to Justice, or Charity, or the Love of God, or any other Grace or Virtue, is this, because Faith only connects the necessity of Obedience and a Holy Life with the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ; and thereby both secures and enforces our Duty, and attributes the glory of all to Free Grace, which is the great design of our Church. For Justifying Faith, according to the sense of our Church, (as abundantly appears from what I have discoursed above) includes in its own nature Repentance and the Love of God, and the sincere purposes of a new Life, which as opportunity serves, must actually produce all the Fruits of Righteousness; for without this we cannot embrace the Promise of Pardon and Forgiveness, which is made upon the condition of Repentance

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and a new Life: But then it is the proper office of Faith, when we have done our best, to depend upon the Mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, to pardon our many sins and defects, and to accept and reward our imperfect services; which attributes the glory of all not to our Merits and Deserts, but to the Grace and Mercy of God. Thus our Church tells us, that the reason why Faith only is said to justify, is because *Faith doth directly send us to Christ for Remission of our Sins, and that by Faith given us of God, we embrace the Promise of Gods Mercy, and of the Remission of our Sins, which thing none other of our Virtues or Works properly doth*: That is, Justice or Charity, or any other Virtue doth not in its own nature include a dependence on the Grace and Mercy of God for its Acceptance and Reward; and therefore should we be justified by these Virtues, considered as distinct from Faith, which alone embraces the Promise of Mercy, we must be justified by their proper Merit and Desert, not by the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ. But now Faith is not only an active and vigorous Principle of a new Life, but in its own nature includes a necessary dependence on the Promise of Pardon: it sends to Christ for the
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Remission of our sins, not immediately, for this is not the first act of Faith; but when we have done our best, it teaches us to renounce the Merit of our own Works, and to trust in the Mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ for our Pardon and Reward, which ascribes the Praise of all to the Mercy of God.

Upon the same account our Church tells us, that *Faith doth not shut out Repentance, Love, Dread, and the Fear of God to be joyned with Faith in every man that is justified; but yet it shutteth them out from the office of Justifying; so that though they be all present in him that is justified, yet they justify not all together.* Where by these good Works being joyned with Faith, and being present in him that is justified, is meant, that they are essential to a Justifying Faith, and must be *present*, as antecedent qualifications or conditions, without which God will not justify us; as appears from what I have discoursed above concerning the nature of Justifying Faith, which includes Repentance and the Love of God, &c. as antecedently necessary to our embracing the Promise of Pardon and Forgiveness, which is not the first, but the last and completing act of Faith: For if these good Works be not one way or
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other necessary to our Justification, no reason can be assigned why they should be present in him that is justified; for Faith might then justify alone without the Presence, as well as without the Merit and Efficacy of our good Works.

And therefore when Faith is said to shut out these good Works from the office of Justifying, that though they be all present, yet they do not justify all together; the design is not to deny the Necessity, but the Merit of good Works. This is plain from the Reason, which is immediately assigned, why these good Works cannot justify, because all the good Works we can do be imperfect, and therefore not able to deserve our Justification; which is the constant Doctrin of the Homilies: For our Church by Justification perpetually understands a meritorious, and not a conditional Justification, and therefore whatever justifies in this sense must by its own Virtue or Merit expiate our sins, which is the reason alledged, *why no man can make himself righteous* (that is, justify himself) *by his own works, neither in part nor in the whole, for that were the greatest Presumption in Man, that Antichrist could set up against God, to affirm that a man might by his own works take away and purge his own sins, and so justify himself.* SO, that is, by the Merit and Virtue of his own Works. And

And Faith it self considered as our own Act, hath no greater privilege upon this account, than any other Grace or Virtue; for in respect of Merit and Deserving we forsake altogether again Faith, Works and all other Virtues. Faith does not justify as our own Act, that is, it does not merit our Justification, as it must do, if it justify as our own Act; which in the sense of our Church signifies, that we do something so meritorious, as to deserve Justification at Gods hands: *But now Justification is the office of God only, and is not a thing which we render to him,* (that is, we can offer him nothing of our own to merit our Justification) *but which we receive from him, not which we give to him, but which we take of him, by his free Mercy, and by the only Merits of his dearly beloved Son our only Redeemer, Justifier and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

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part 2.

But for this reason Faith only is said to justify, and to shut out our own Works, and itself also considered as our own Act, from the office of justifying; because though it strongly enforce the Necessity of good Works, yet in its own nature it excludes all opinion of Merit and Desert. For Faith has a necessary respect to the Promise of Mercy and Forgiveness, and whoever acknowledges that

he owes his Justification to the Mercy of God, who for the sake of Christ pardons his Sins, and rewards his Imperfect Services (as all those must do, who hope to be saved by Faith in the notion of our Church) does plainly confess, that his Works are imperfect, and cannot deserve his Justification, which takes away all opinion of Merit from our selves, and attributes the glory of all to the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ.

I shall only observe three things from this Discourse, which are very material to our present purpose.

First, that our Church was not acquainted with that Distinction in the modern sense of it, that we are justified *fide solâ*, but not *solitariâ*; by Faith alone, but not by that Faith which is alone: the meaning of which according to some Modern Divines is this, *That we are justified only by that particular Act of Faith, which apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, and relies and rolls itself on Christ for Salvation, and applies his Merits and Righteousness to the Soul*; without any regard to Repentance and the Love of God, or any other Grace or Virtue: That though at the same time God infuse the habits of all Graces and Virtues into a justified person, yet in the

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Act of justifying, he hath no regard at all to Repentance or any other Grace; but we are justified in order of nature before these are infused into us, and without any respect to them: And some men would willingly affix this Notion, as absurd as it is, to our Church, because she only requires the presence of these Graces and Virtues in the justified person, but shuts them out from the office of Justifying. But I have made it appear, that these words admit a better sense, and that Justification *by Faith only* in the modern Notion of it, so as to exclude the antecedent Necessity of Repentance, or any other internal Grace or Virtue, is contrary to the constant doctrine of our Church which requires the presence of these Graces, as antecedent conditions or qualifications, though it shut them out from being the meritorious Causes of Justification.

And to confirm this, I observe secondly, that our Church doth not attribute our Justification to any particular Act of Faith: She frequently indeed inculcates the embracing of the Promise of Pardon and Forgiveness, as essential to a justifying Faith; but the reason of that is not because that particular Act justifies us, but to attribute our Justification not to

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the Merit of our own works, but to the Mercy of God: But she expressly affirms, that Faith doth not justify as our own Act; that Justification is not the office of Man, but of God; and if we be not justified by Faith, as our own Act, much less can any particular Act of Faith (which if it be considered as an Act, must be considered as our own Act) justify; which overthrows that Instrumentality of Faith in Justification, which these men talk of: but the plain meaning of our being justified by Faith only is this, that God will pardon our sins, and reward us with eternal life, if we repent of our sins, and believe and obey the Gospel of his Son, trusting wholly in the Mercies of God, and in the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is expressed at large in the Homily: *That the true understanding and meaning of our being justified by Faith without works, or by Faith in Christ only, is this, that although we hear Gods Word, and believe it, although we have Faith, Hope, Charity, and do never so many good Works thereunto; yet we must renounce the Merit of all the said Virtues, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and all other Virtues and good deeds, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as things that be far too weak and insufficient and imperfect to deserve*

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Part 2.

serve Remission of our Sins, and our Justification; and therefore we must trust only in Gods Mercy, and that Sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Jesus Christ the Son of God once offered for us upon the Cross, to obtain thereby Gods Grace and Remission, as well of our Original Sin in Baptism, as of all actual Sins committed by us after Baptism, if we truly repent and unfeignedly turn to him. All this is called being justified by Faith only, which includes a renouncing the Merits and Deserts of our own Works, but first requires that we should do good Works, before we renounce the Merit of them; and an affiance in the Mercy of God for Pardon and Forgiveness, upon the conditions of Repentance and a new Life. This is all I contend for, which is the Antient Catholick Doctrine of our Church, against those modern notions of Reliance and Recumbency, or the virtue of any particular Act of Faith in the Justification of a Sinner.

Thirdly, I observe, that should any man affirm in express words, that we are justified by Works as well as by Faith, meaning no more by it, than that good Works are the necessary Conditions, not the meritorious Causes of our Justification, though he would differ in the manner

ner of expression, yet he would agree with our Church in the true notion of Justification; whereas those who use the same phrase of being justified by Faith only, and by Faith without Works, thereby excluding the antecedent necessity of Repentance and Holiness to our Justification, though they retain the same form of words, yet renounce the constant Doctrine of our Church, and are the only Apostates and Innovators. Which may satisfy any man, how unjustly I am charged with corrupting the Doctrine of our Church, when I have only expressed the true sense and meaning of it in such words, as are less liable to be mistaken; and how vainly my Adversaries pretend to be such *Obedient Sons* of the Church of *England*, when under an Orthodox Form of Words, they have introduced such Doctrines as are diametrically opposite to the declared sense of this Church.

After this large and particular Account of the Doctrine of the Church of *England* concerning the Justification of a Sinner, it is time in the second place to consider, how the state of the Controversie is altered at this day; and how those men, whom I oppose, have corrupted the Doctrine, as well as rejected the Authority
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of our Church: And though I have already given sufficient Intimations of this, yet it may be of great use more particularly to shew how directly opposite these new and fantastick Notions are to the establish'd Doctrine contained in our Articles and Homilies, which though it would admit of a very large Discourse, I shall comprize in as few words as may be.

And first whereas our Church expressly asserts, that in the Justification of a Sinner, on Gods part is required Mercy and Grace; Justification consisting in the free Pardon of all our sins: *Mr. Ferguson* (very agreeably indeed to his own Principles) expressly asserts, that Justification does not consist in the Pardon of sin, nor is it the result of Mercy, but the off-spring of Justice. *Remission* (as he acknowledges) *is the result of Mercy, and the act of one exercising Favour; but Justification is the off-spring of Justice, and imports one transacting with us in a juridical way without the infringement of Law or Equity.* *Vide supra p. 152. &c.* This Notion I have examined already, and shall add nothing further for the Confutation of it: It is directly contrary to the Doctrine of our Homilies, and I hope that is Argument enough with these men, who pretend such a mighty veneration for the *Antient and Catho-*

Catholick Doctrin of our Church. But then if any man should wonder (as well he may) how a Sinner should be justified in this Law-notion according to the strict Rules of Justice, that is, that a Sinner is justified, not by being pardoned, but by being acquitted and absolved, as an innocent man, who has never offended; the account of this will farther discover what Friends they are to the Doctrin of our Church.

For secondly, whereas the Church of *England* requires no more on Christs part, but *Justice, or the Satisfaction of Gods Justice, or the Price of our Redemption*, which makes him *the meritorious Cause of our Justification*, that God for Christs sake forgives the sins of true Penitents; these men place our Justification *in the Imputation of Christs personal Righteousness to us*. They tell us, that Christ as our Surety and Mediator hath fulfilled all Righteousness *for us*, and *in our stead*; and that by being clothed with his perfect Righteousness, we are accounted perfectly righteous; and so are justified, not as Malefactors, when they are pardoned, but as righteous and innocent men, who are acquitted and absolved.

And I have already informed Mr. *Ferguson*, how effectually this Notion undermines

mines the necessity of an inherent Righteousness.

To be justified by the Merits of Christ, signifies no more than to be justified by the gracious Terms and Conditions of the Gospel, which is founded on the Merits of Christ, which was purchased and sealed with his meritorious Blood: For the Merits of Christ do not immediately justify any man, but whereas strict Justice will not admit of Repentance, nor accept of an imperfect, though sincere Obedience, God has for the sake of Christ who hath expiated our sins by his Death, entered into a Covenant of Grace and Mercy, wherein he promises Pardon to true Penitents; and this necessarily requires an inherent Holiness not to merit, but to qualify us for the Grace of God: But if we be made righteous by a perfect Righteousness imputed to us, if this will answer all the demands of Law and Justice, what need is there of an imperfect Righteousness of our own?

The Righteousness of Christ imputed to us makes us righteous as Christ is, and what need is there then of any Righteousness of our own? which would be according to the Proverb *to burn day*, and to *light up Candles in the Sun*.

Dr. Owen

Dr. Owen takes notice of this Objection, and pretends to give an Answer to it, which must be a little considered, for a little will serve the turn. And first he observes, that *here is a great difference, if it were no more than that this Righteousness was inherent in Christ and properly his own, it is only reckoned and imputed to us, or freely bestowed on us.* But does not this Imputation make it ours? How then can we answer the demands of the Law with it? Is any thing the less ours, because it is not originally ours, but so by Gift? And the Doctor was sensible that this Answer would not do, and therefore secondly he tells us, *the Truth is, that Christ was not righteous with that Righteousness for himself, but for us.* How plain are things when men will speak out! So that now it seems this Righteousness is not so properly Christs Righteousness as ours: he had no need to fulfil all Righteousness for himself, but for us, as our Mediator and Surety: *So that here can be no comparison between the Righteousness of Christ inherent in him, and imputed to us; because it is not so much his Righteousness, as ours.* But was not Christ personally righteous with this Righteousness? Did he so fulfil Righteousness for us, that he him-

himself had no interest in it? Can it be inherent in him, and he not righteous by it? And if Christ in his private capacity, as a man subject to the Law, were righteous with that very Righteousness, which makes us righteous, then we are righteous as Christ is, and not *only righteous with his Righteousness, which he wrought for us, and that completely, but righteous with the very same Righteousness, that makes him righteous; which excludes indeed all comparison, as the Doctor well observes, because we cannot so properly compare a thing with it self, but it demonstrates the Identity or Sameness of this Righteousness.*

And here unless I will prove my self an arrant Coward, I must accept that Challenge the Doctor has sent me to stand to that Resolution I gave in my former Discourse to that Question, *what Influence the* Vindicat. P. 232. *Sacrifice of Christs Death, and the Righteousness of his Life have upon our Acceptance with God?* Which signifies no more than what is meant by our being saved by the Merits and Righteousness of Christ; and the Answer I gave to it is this, *That all I can find in Scripture about it is, that to this we owe the Covenant of Grace: that God being well pleased with the Obedience of Christs Life, and*
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with the sacrifice of his Death, for his sake entered into a new Covenant with Mankind, wherein he promises Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life to those who believe and obey the Gospel. Now I would desire the Doctor to take notice, that I stand to this, and accept his Challenge, let him chuse what seconds or thirds or fourths he pleases. *This Assertion* (the Doctor says) *cannot be reconciled to common Sense, or the fundamental Principles of Christian Religion.* And indeed he has discovered a great many Absurdities in it, which are enough to put any man out of conceit with such a Doctrin; for hence it follows (if we will believe him, for we have only his bare word for it) *That God entered into a new Covenant originally only for the sake of those things, whereby that Covenant was ratified and confirmed.* But how does this follow? Did I ever affirm, that the Death of Christ did only *ratify* and *confirm* the Covenant? Do I not every where assert that Christs Death did procure and purchase, as well as seal the Covenant of Grace? And I hope God may be said to enter into Covenant for the sake of a meritorious Cause. What he means by Gods *originally* entering into Covenant, I cannot tell, unless it be, that this was the first moving cause of
Gods

understand how we can be justified by applying his Righteousness to our selves by Faith, which, if it have any sense, must signify our imputing the Righteousness of Christ to our selves (for the Righteousness of Christ can be applied to us only by Imputation) which makes our Justification our own Act, and not Gods: For it is as absurd to the full to say, that Faith is an Instrument in doing that which is intirely Gods act, or that our Imputation of Christs Righteousness to our selves is an Instrument of Gods imputing his Righteousness to us. And then it is worth considering which of these two Imputations must go first; if we apply, that is impute, the Righteousness of Christ to our selves before God has imputed it, this is a false Confidence and Presumption; if God imputes it first, then we are actually justified, and there needs no Imputation or Application of Faith to make this Righteousness ours: all that can be said in this case, is what the *Antinomians* affirm, that we are first justified before we believe, and that Faith is only a Sign or Evidence, not an Instrument of our Justification.

But to let pass the Absurdities of this Doctrin, every one may perceive how dif-

ferent this notion is from the sense of the Church of *England*, which does not attribute our Justification to Faith as our own Act, much less to any particular Act of Faith; but by Justification by *Faith only* intends no more than that God will pardon our sins, if we repent of them, and reform our Lives, and trust in the Mercies of God through the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ: according to the sense of our Church, the sole object of our trust is the Mercy of God through the Merits of Christ, and therefore the proper Act of Faith is to embrace the Promise of Pardon upon the conditions of Repentance and a new Life; we must first repent of our sins, and reform our Lives, and then rely on the Mercy of God for our Pardon and Reward. But according to this new Divinity, the sole object of our trust and reliance is the perfect and personal Righteousness of Christ, which shuts out the Mercy of God, and the meritorious Death and Sacrifice of Christ, and the Promises of Pardon, and the necessity of an inherent and personal Righteousness, as abundantly appears from what I have discoursed above.

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But fourthly, whereas our Church makes Christ only the meritorious cause of our Justification, but still requires on our part Faith and Repentance and the Love of God, as antecedent conditions of our Justification, these men found all our hopes of Justification *immediately* on the Person of Christ. Every good Christian hopes to be justified and saved by Christ, but not to be immediately saved by Christ, *i. e.* by a bare Union to his Person, but by believing his Gospel and obeying his Laws, which are necessarily required on our part to give us an Interest in his Merits and Righteousness: but to assert that nothing is necessary to our Justification, but to apply Christ and his Righteousness to our selves by a fiducial Reliance and Recumbency, is to place our hopes immediately in the Person of Christ, which is the foundation of *Antinomianism*.

For this reason among others, I charged them in my former Discourse with setting up the Person of Christ in opposition to his Gospel, and making a new Religion of the Person of Christ distinct from and contrary to the Religion of his Gospel. For the Gospel requires a great many previous conditions to entitle us to

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the Merits and Righteousness of Christ, as that we must repent of our sins and reform our Lives, and become new Creatures, and then God will pardon and reward us for the sake of Christ; but if an immediate Application of the Righteousness of Christ to our selves by a fanciful and Enthusiastick Faith will make all Christ ours, this makes all the conditions of the Gospel void and useles, and sets up the *Person of Christ* and his *Personal Righteousness* instead of his Laws and Religion. The Gospel attributes the Pardon of our sins, and the Acceptance of our imperfect Services to the virtue and efficacy of Christs Sacrifice and Righteousness, and thus we are made righteous by Christ, as by a meritorious Cause: But in this way the Righteousness of Christ must serve instead of a personal and inherent Righteousness, which makes us so innocent, that we need no Pardon, and so perfectly righteous, that we merit a Reward.

This I take to be the grand Miscarriage in these mens Divinity, which indeed is the foundation of *Antinomianism* (though the mistake be very taking and popular, which makes an opposition to it very odious) that whereas Christ is our Life and our Righteousness, our Wisdom and Power,

Power, and the Author of all spiritual Blessings, but does not dispense these Blessings immediately to us, but in such ways and methods, and upon such terms and conditions, as are prescribed and declared in the Gospel; these men send us immediately to the Person of Christ for Life and Righteousness, for Beauty and Comliness, for Grace and Wisdom, and for the supply of all our spiritual wants, which shuts out his Gospel and Religion, or makes it wholly useles; and let but Dr. Owen stand to what he asserts in his Vindication: *we do not imagin, but believe* P. 151. *from the Scripture, and with the whole Church of God, that we receive Grace and Salvation from the Person of Christ, in those distinct ways, wherein they are capable of being received; if by that he means, such ways as are prescribed in the Gospel, and I declare, I have no controversie with him about this matter.*

Thus for instance Christ is *our Righteousness*, as he is the meritorious cause of the Pardon of our sins, and the Acceptance of our sincere but imperfect services; but the way to be made righteous by Christ, is not *immediately* to go to Christ for Righteousness, with all our sins and impurities about us, to be cloathed with his perfect and

and personal Righteousness, but to repent of our sins and to believe and obey the Gospel, and then we shall be pardoned and rewarded for Christs sake.

Thus Christ is our Wisdom, as he has reveled those hidden Treasures of the Divine Wisdom, which were concealed from former ages, but we must not go *immediately* to the Person of Christ for this Wisdom, but we must search for it in the Gospel, where it is revealed; and beg those divine Assistances, which are necessary to enlighten our minds, and to bless our Studies and Enquiries.

Thus we must receive all supernatural Aids and Assistances from Christ to renew and sanctifie our Natures, and to make us holy as God is, Christ hath by his Death purchast the Gift of the Holy Spirit for those who believe: but we must not expect to receive these vital Influences from Christ by such a natural conveyance as water flows out of a fountain, or as the animal Spirits are communicated to the Members of the natural Body; but we must consider and meditate, and affect our minds with all the Motives and Arguments of our Religion, and derive strength and power from the consideration of Christs Death and Sufferings

ferings, and Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven, and Intercession for us at Gods right hand, &c. to mortifie our Lusts, and to transform us into a Divine Nature: We must read and pray, and watch and fast, and communicate at the Lords Table, and by these means put our selves under the guidance and conduct of the Divine Spirit, who will never fail to do his part, when we are so diligent in doing ours: But a bare trust and reliance on the Person of Christ will not entitle us to his Divine Aids, no more than a presumptuous Dependence on the Providence of God will secure a slothful man from want and beggery. Christ is the fountain of all spiritual life, but we must not look on this as a personal Grace in Christ, which must be immediately derived from his Person; but as an act of Goodness and Power in the Administration of his spiritual Kingdom, which is therefore dispensed in such regular ways, that every one that pleases may certainly know how to obtain it, and that no man must expect it any other way.

But now those Persons whom I oppose, if we may judge of their meaning by their words, send sinners immediately to Christ for Life and Righteousness, for
Wisdom

Wisdom and Power, &c. and make all these personal Graces, which must be derived immediately from the Person of Christ, when indeed they are no other than the effects of his Prophetical, Priestly or Regal Offices, in publishing the Will of God to us, or in expiating our Sins, or in governing his Church, and dispensing his Grace in such ways and methods, as he has prescribed in the Gospel.

And therefore as I observed in my former Discourse, they have either found out a new *Person for Christ distinct from his Godhead and Manhood*; or which comes to the same thing, have *dress'd up* the Person of Christ with such personal Graces as do not belong to his Person as God-Man, but are the effects of his Mediation. And here the Doctor and Mr. *Ferguson*, and the rest of my Opponents raise a great cry, and tell the world, that *what I charge them with as a Fault, that they have found out a Person for Christ distinct from his Godhead and Manhood, they think not to have done it, would have been as far from wit, as Truth*; because the Person of Christ is of a distinct consideration from his Godhead and Manhood: And here they Philosophize at large concerning the Notion of *Suppositum* and *Personæ* and *Hypostasis*, and are glad with all their

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Knowledge
of Christ,
p. 201.
Edit. 2.
p. 140.

Interest
of Reason
&c p. 475.

hearts to find an occasion to avoid the true Question. Now I readily grant, that this was not warily express'd, to prevent the cavilling humor of those men, who have no other way to escape, but by taking Sanctuary in such Retreats: though what I immediately add was sufficient to inform them what I meant by it, had they any mind to understand it, that *they distinguish the Person of Christ as Mediator, from his Person as God-Man*; and cloath this Person with such personal Graces, as belong neither to his Divine nor Human Nature, nor to the Union of both. Thus they talk of the Fulness and Riches, and Beauty and Loveliness, and Righteousness, and Wisdom and Power, and Grace and Mercy of Christ, as personal Graces, inherent in him, and derived immediately from his Person to us, whereas I made it appear by a particular examination of those Scripture-phrases, that all this is attributed to Christ, either with respect to his Doctrine, or Sacrifice, or Mediation and Intercession for us; that they are the effects of his several Offices, not properly the Graces of his Person, unless they will make his Mediatory Office a distinct Person: And therefore we must expect to receive the

Communi-

Communications of his Fulness or Riches, or Righteousness, or Grace or Wisdom, not from a bare Union to his Person, but by believing and obeying his Gospel, and in the conscientious use of such means as God hath appointed for the conveyance of Grace, and the Communication of all Spiritual Blessings to us.

Knowledge of Christ, P. 274. Edit. 2. P. 143. Vindicat. P. 153.

This I called *dress[ing] up the Person of the Mediator with all those Personal Graces and Excellencies, which may make him a fit Saviour, that those who are thus united to his Person, need not fear missing of Salvation*: This the Doctor thinks prophane, because *the Preparation of the Person of Christ to be a fit and meet Saviour for Sinners, which I prophanely compare to the dress[ing] up of—* (of what, good Sir? Speak out, and let us know the worst) *is the greatest, most glorious and admirable effect that ever infinite Wisdom, Goodness, Power and Love wrought and produced, or will do so to eternity*. Very right! God's fitting Christ to be a meet Saviour for Sinners, was an admirable effect of Wisdom and Power; but this new Dress, they have put our Saviour into, contains the greatest Mystery of Iniquity and Antinomianism, that ever was invented; and I hope it is no Prophaneness

phaneness to reprove such an uncouth Metamorphosis of our Saviours Person. And here once for all, I shall desire my Readers to take notice of their great Artifice in perverting my Words either into Prophaneness or Non-sense; that whatever I speak against that odd and Phantastical Representation which they make of the Person of Christ, they interpret as spoken against Christ himself *God-Man*; which is just as if a man, who argues against a false and absurd Notion of a Deity, should be charged with Atheism, or with Blasphemy against God.

And that no man may any longer think that this *Religion of Christs Person*, as it is distinguisht from *the Religion of his Gospel*, is a peculiar Conceit and Invention of my own (as the Doctor would fain persuade his Readers it is) I shall now make it appear, that this Distinction between the *Person* and *Gospel* of our Saviour is so far from being imaginary, that it is the very foundation of *Antinomianism*.

Thus the *Antinomians* lay the foundation of their Religion *in winning and wooing People unto Christ*, and therefore tell us, that *St. Paul, who had an excellent faculty this way, observes what doth most effectually take*

D. Crisp's
Christs
Preemin.
P. 32

take with people to beguile their Spirits, and with a kind of Craft to catch their Affections, and that accordingly he meets with every thing, that is most enamouring and taking with people. Thus far Dr. Crispe and Dr. Owen very well agree in placing the great Mystery of Religion in winning and wooing People unto Christ: though St. Paul tells us, that the Ministers of the Gospel are Embassadors of Christ, beseeching the People in Christs stead to be reconciled unto God: So that Christ and his Embassadors woo for God, but Antinomians woo altogether for Christ, to win people to the Person of Christ.

Let us then consider what course they take thus to woo and win people unto Christ: Now if by this wooing people to Christ, they understood no more than to persuade men to embrace the Faith and Religion of Christ, the proper way to effect it were to prove the Truth and Certainty of the Revelation made by Christ, to represent the Excellency of his Religion, how easie and advantageous his Commands are, how perfective of our Nature, and how necessary to dispose and qualifie us for future Happiness; to set before them those Rewards, which Christ hath promised to those who obey him,

him, and those severe threatnings, which he hath denounced against the Workers of Iniquity; and to confirm them in the belief and expectation of all this, by the consideration of the Incarnation, Death, and Sufferings of the Son of God, who died to expiate our Sins, and to purchase Pardon and Eternal life for all true Penitents, and rose again from the dead and ascended into Heaven to intercede for us, to dispence the influences of his Grace, to raise us to a new and spiritual life here, and at the last Day to raise our dead bodies out of the dust, and to reward us with Immortality and Glory: And then we may argue from the love of our Crucified Saviour to perswade men to live to him, who died for them. These and such like Arguments are very powerful to perswade men to be Christians, but this is not the way of wooing for Christ: You must with a holy guile catch peoples affections, and make them fall in love with the Person of Christ, and therefore you must describe his Personal Graces and Excellencies, and consider what is most enamouring and taking with the People: Thus for instance, *The World is* ^{ibid.} mightily taken with Beauty, with compleatness of Person; Oh, saith one, let me have a
X beautiful

beautiful person, it is no matter how poor: Well then, Christ is a rare piece, for such is the beauty of Christ, that there is no beauty like his: He is the Image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person: And Mr. Watson could have furnished him with a great many other irrefragable proofs of Christ's beauty and loveliness, though, I think, the Doctor had too much wit to have made use of them.

But besides Beauty, some persons look for Linage, what a Stock a person is of: Well if this will take, then there is no Stock like this of Christ: he is of the greatest House in the world, The First-begotten of all Creatures; He comes of that great House of God himself. He is not a Younger Brother in this House neither, for he is the First-begotten of the House, that is a great matter among persons to marry the Heir of the Family; nay, he is the Only-begotten of the House, there is never another in all the Family, and that is a great encouragement; so that if men go all the world over, to find a Match in the Noblest House, they will never meet with such a one as this of the Son of God: which exactly agrees with Mr. Vincent's reasoning to persuade young Women to chuse Christ for their Husband.

Well,

Well, but if he be poor after all, I shall live but poorly with him: But Christ is rich in Treasure too, it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell: He hath the whole world to dispose of, and therefore Gold and Silver are not to be compared to him; which Notion Mr. Brooks hath excellently improved in his Riches of Christ.

Thus to conclude, You have a Proverb, That Batchelours Wives, and Maids Children must be rare Creatures; that is, their fancy will devise what kind of one they will have, and what kinds of perfections they desire: Let the fancy devise what kind of perfections it can to please sense, Christ shall really out-strip in perfection all these fancies, more than a Substance doth out-strip a shadow.

This is the great Mystery of Antinomianism (which some of our Modern Divines call the Mystery of the Gospel, and the only spiritual Preaching of Christ) to attribute every thing immediately to the Person of Christ, which is spoke of him, either with respect to his Gospel, and Revelations, or his Propitiation and Sacrifice, or his Mediation and Intercession for us, as to give some few instances of it.

Thus it is a great Gospel truth, That Christ is the way to the Father, that he is the

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way,

way, the truth, and the life, both as he instructs us in the way to life and happiness, how we may please God and save our Souls; and as he is our Mediator and High Priest, by whom we have access to God: But then this requires, that we study his will, and live in obedience to his Laws, that we may have an interest in his Mediation, and may with a humble confidence put up our Prayers to God in his name: Whereas the *Antinomians*, agreeably enough with the Divinity of this last Age, make Christ such a way as excludes every thing else, even his Laws, and Religion, Evangelical Righteousness and Holiness from being the way; Christ himself, and nothing but Christ, though in a subservency and subordination to him, can be the way.

Christ alone exalted. Serm. 1.

Thus Dr. *Crisp* tells us, That Christ is the only way to free sinners from the guilt of sin; which is true in a sober sense, that Christ only makes atonement for our sins, but in the Doctors Divinity Christ is so the only way, that nothing else but Christ is required to this, neither Repentance nor Evangelical Righteousness. The Gospel holds forth the Lord Christ, as freely tending himself to people, considering people only as ungodly persons receiving him (that is, taking him

him for their own, to be justified and saved by him) you have no sooner received him, *Ibid.* p. 7. but you are instantly justified by him, and in this Justification you are discharged from all the faults that can be laid to your charge. And his Argument to prove this, is the same with Mr. *Ferguson's*, He was made sin for us; here you see plainly our sins are so translated to Christ, that God doth reckon Christ the very Sinner; nay, God doth reckon all our sins to be his sins, and makes him to be sin for us; And what is the fruit of this? We are thereby made the righteousness of God in him; if we be righteousness, where is our sinfulness to be charged upon us? And he adds, Many think there is such a kind of sinfulness, that is a bar to them, that though they would have Christ, yet there is not a way open for them to take him. Beloved, there is no way of sinfulness to debar thee from coming to Christ, if thou hast a heart to come to him, and to venture thy self with joy against all objections into the bosome of Christ to discharge thee of all thy sinfulness. And the Mystery of this he immediately explains, The truth is, men doat upon the establishing of their own righteousness to bring them to Christ, and it is but presumptuous or licentious Doctrine, That Christ may be their trust, and they receive him, and they considered simply ungodly as enemies. Now one Egg is not more like
X 3 another,

Knowledge
of Christ,
p. 64, 65,
66, &c.
p. 24, 129.
Edit. 2.

another, than this Doctrine is like what we find in M. Shephard, Watson, and D. Owen, as evidently appears from those many passages cited from them in my former discourse.

p. 45, 51,
90.
Ibid p. 49

Thus to proceed, Dr. Crisp observes, *That Christ is a free way to all sorts of persons, none excepted, none prohibited; for a Drunkard, for a whore-master, for a Harlot, an enemy to Christ. Or in Dr. Owens Phrase, For the greatest, the oldest, the stubbornest transgressor: And what Dr. Owen pleads for himself, that he only represented such grace in Christ as should encourage all sorts of persons to come to him, will serve Dr. Crisp as well as himself: For he expressly adds, Do not mistake me, I do not say, Christ is a free way to walk in him, and yet to continue in such a condition; but for entrance into him Christ is as free a way for the vilest sort of sinners as for any persons under heaven: That is, the worst man in the world may have as good an interest in Christ for Justification and Eternal life as the best; but when Christ has got him, he will make him good. Of which more anon.*

Ibid. p. 60

Thus Christ is a near way to the Father: he brings the Father unto men, and becomes such a way, as that there is but one step from the lowest

lowest condition of sinfulness to the highest of being the Son of God; That is, he who receives Christ, though, at that instant of receiving him, he be the greatest sinner in the world, yet in the next moment is the Son of God, and perfectly innocent and righteous with the righteousness of Christ, and heir of eternal life.

And to take notice but of one passage more; *Christ is a spacious, large, elbow-room way: when a man enters into Christ, he enters into liberty and freedom.* But how is it said then, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life?* Answer; *By the straitness of the way is not here meant strictness of conversation: But it is strait and narrow in this regard, that all a mans own righteousness must be cut out of the way; it must be so narrow that there must be nothing in the way but Christ; which is exactly parallel with Dr. Owen's chastity of our affections to Christ, in not taking any thing (as our own righteousness) into our affections and esteem for those ends and purposes, for which we have received Christ; that is, not to contribute any thing to our Justification or Salvation. This is the effect of making the Person of Christ in contradistinction from his Laws and Religion, the immediate way unto the Father.*

Know-
ledge of
Christ,
p. 422.
Edit. 2.
p. 295.

It were easie to give numerous instances of this nature, but these may suffice to satisfy any intelligent man, that all those precious and charming discourses of the Beauty, and Loveliness, and Fulness and Riches, and Righteousness of Christ, and of wooing and winning Souls to Christ, as they are managed by these men, are as formal hypocrisies, as *Judas* his Salutation of his Master when he betrayed him; for the plain design is to advance his Person to the prejudice of his Laws and Religion; whoever sends sinners immediately and directly to the Person of Christ for Righteousness, and Justification, and Eternal life, without first requiring Repentance, and the Love of God, and at least the sincere purposes of a new life to entitle them to Grace and Mercy, are down-right *Antinomians*; whoever place the Essence of a justifying Faith in a meer fiducial reliance on Christ, and a fancifull application of Christs Righteousness to themselves, place all their hopes immediately on the Person of Christ, which is to make a new Religion of Christ's Person in opposition to his Gospel.

But fifthly, I observe farther, That the Church of *England* makes Repentance, and the Love of God, and the sincere purposes

purposes of a New life antecedently necessary to our Justification, as appears from what I have discoursed above; but these men absolutely deny, that Repentance, or the Love of God, or any other internal Grace or Vertue, are necessary to our Justification by the Righteousness of Christ; but that we are justified before and without them, at least in order of nature. There are none of them indeed deny, that those who are justified ought to live holily; but yet they assert, that God hath no regard to Repentance and Holiness in the Justification of a sinner, but that all these follow our Justification, as the effects and fruits of it. God justifies the ungodly in a proper sense, while they are ungodly, but whom he justifies he sanctifies too, and makes them holy.

Now if any man should enquire, what great difference there is between these two, since the necessity of Holiness is universally acknowledged; I answer, the difference is just as much as between the necessity of an Event, and the necessity of Duty, which, I think, is a very material difference in matters of Religion; to place Holiness after Justification as a necessary effect and consequent of it, acknow-

acknowledges the necessity of Holiness, as to the Event, that those who are justified shall be sanctified; but it destroys the necessity of Duty, and undermines all the Arguments to a Holy life: God may sanctifie us if he pleases, by an irresistible and uncontrollable Power, but there is no necessary Argument left to induce us as free Agents to purifie our selves, and to co-operate with the Divine Grace; which makes the whole Gospel, and all the External Ministeries of Religion useles, the great design of which is to furnish us with such cogent and persuasive Arguments, as by the concurring assistance of the Divine Grace may effectually bow our Wills, and govern our Affections, and transform us into a Divine Nature: If we are justified without Repentance and a New life, if God accepts our Persons as Just and Righteous only for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and this gives us an actual Title to Life and Immortality; what reason can there be assigned so cogent, as to conquer our love to Sin, when there is no Argument to work either upon our Hopes or Fears? The Hope of Heaven, and the Fear of Hell, are the great Motives of the Gospel, but are of no use in
this

this new Religion, since a justified Person (who yet may be very wicked) is in no danger of Hell, and is secure of his Inheritance in Heaven: For if a justified person may miss of Heaven, and fall into Hell, his Justification is worth nothing, a man had as good be Unjustified, as to perish with his Justification: And therefore though God, if he pleases, may sanctifie whom he first justifies, yet there is no Argument left to persuade a justified person to be holy, if he may be justified without it.

This I particularly shewed in my former Discourse, where I examined Dr. *Owens* Reasons for the necessity of Holiness, which either prove nothing, or prove only the necessity of Event, that God will necessarily make men holy; not such a necessity of Duty, as will make every considering man, who hath any value for his Soul, freely chuse Holiness. But instead of answering what I there urged, the Doctor in his **Vindication* transcribes a long Paragraph concerning the necessity of Holiness, and leaves it to the judgment of his Readers, which I must needs say was very boldly done, if he thought his Readers had any judgment; though it argued more craft to give me a
fresh

Know-
ledge of
Christ,
p. 126. & c.
Edit. 2.
p. 83.

* p. 100.

fresh challenge, as if I had yet said nothing to him.

The Doctor only takes notice of two or three things which I answered to his Reasons for the necessity of Holiness, and passes over all the rest *as unanswerable scoffing*, which is his way to call that scoffing, which he cannot answer.

Knowledg
of Christ,
p. 127.
Edit. 2.
p. 88.

As first he proved the necessity of Holiness from the command of God, which had been a good Argument had it been used by another man; but the Doctors Notion of Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Christ only, evacuates this command, and therefore I enquired, *where is the sanction of this Law? will he damn those, who do not obey, for their disobedience? And will he save and reward those who do obey for their obedience? Not a word of this, for this destroys our Justification by the Righteousness of Christ only. And if, after all these Commands, God hath left it indifferent whether we obey or not, I hope such Commands cannot make Obedience necessary.*

Vindicat.
p. 120.

This last Clause the Doctor recites, and cries out, *wonderful Divinity! A man must needs be well acquainted with God and himself, who can suppose that any of his Commands shall leave it indifferent whether we will obey them or no.* This I confess is wonderful Divinity,

nity; but I know no reason the Doctor should wonder at it, because it is his own: For such indifferent things he makes all the Divine Commands, while he makes them unnecessary to our Justification, which quite destroys their Authority, and Sanction: For a Law (if it may be so called) without Rewards and Punishments is left at the liberty of the Subject to obey it or not; and such a Command cannot make Obedience necessary. But the Doctor proceeds, *But may we not, notwithstanding this Command, be justified and saved without this Holiness?* Wherein he designs to represent my Sense, though he have changed the words, and answers, *false and impertinent, we are neither justified nor saved without them, though we are not justified by them, nor saved for them:* This is warily expressed, but will not serve his purpose, for by our not being justified without Holiness, he means no more, than that God at the same time, when he justifies, infuses the Habits of Grace and Holiness, renews and sanctifies us too, and therefore we cannot be said to be justified without Holiness, because we are justified and sanctified at the same instant, though in order of nature we are Justified before we are Sanctified, and therefore

therefore in our Justification God had no respect to any sly Antecedent Holiness, which, as to the present Dispute, is the same thing as to be Justified without Holiness. The Doctor professes it as his avowed Doctrine, *That Holiness and Obedience is neither the Cause, Matter, nor Condition of our Justification, and therefore not Antecedently necessary: And expressly tells us, That the Passive Righteousness of Christ only is imputed to us in the non-imputation of Sin, and that on the condition of our Faith and new Obedience, so exalting them into the room of the Righteousness of Christ, is a thing which in Communion with the Lord Jesus, I have as yet no acquaintance withal.* And a little before: *Are we then freed from this Obedience? Yes; But how far? From doing it in our own strength, from doing it for this end, That we may obtain Life Everlasting. It is vain, that some say confidently, that we must yet work for Life; it is all one as to say, That we are yet under the Old Covenant, Hoc fac, & vives, we are not freed from Obedience, as a way of walking with God, but we are as a way of working to come to him: So that Holiness contributes nothing to our Justification, and Eternal life, and therefore we may as well be justified and saved without them, which destroys the Necessity*
and

Communion.
P. 187.

Ibid.
P. 185.

and Sanction of the Divine Laws, and leaves it at every mans liberty to Obey, or not to Obey, were they not over-ruled, like spiritual Machines and Engines, by an irresistible Power.

In the next place the Doctor proves the necessity of Holiness from the Ends of God in Election and Redemption; God Elected us, and Christ Redeemed us, that we might be holy. This is a very good Argument too, if it be rightly managed, but that it can never be upon the Doctors Principles; that is, if we deny the Antecedent necessity of Holiness to our Justification: For if God have absolutely Elected us to Eternal Life without any condition required on our part, only purposing to make those holy by an irresistible Power, whom he hath Elected; this only proves the necessity of the Event, that those who are Elected shall be holy, but can be no Argument to engage any man to press after Holiness: For this Election to Holiness doth not make Holiness necessary on our part with the necessity of Duty, or of a Condition, without which we shall not be saved, but only makes it necessary on Gods part as to the regular execution of his Decree of Salvation.

Vindicat.
P. 120.

And

And the same may be said of Redemption; if we are so absolutely Redeemed by the Death of Christ, as to have a right to all the benefits of it as Justification and Eternal Life, without any condition required on our part. *If we are justified freely by the Grace of God, through the Redemption which is in Christ Jesus, without any regard to Repentance or New Obedience to qualifie us for this Grace, then our Redemption by Christ cannot make it a necessary Duty in us to be holy, though Holiness may follow as a necessary Effect.*

This I expressed in fewer words, but to the same sense in my former Discourse. *Will the Father Elect, and the Son Redeem none but those who are holy, and reject and reprobate all others? Doth this Election and Redemption suppose holiness in us? Or is it without any regard to it? For if we be Elected and Redeemed without any regard to our being holy, our Election and Redemption is secure whether we be holy or not. And so this cannot make Holiness necessary on our parts, though it may be necessary on Gods part to make us holy, but that is not our care.*

This last Clause, wherein the strength of the Argument lay, the Doctor omits, as not knowing what to answer, but as
for

for the rest, cries out, *wonderful Divinity again.* Methinks he should consider, whose property it is so much to wonder: But what is the reason of this wonder? Why, *We are Elected and Redeemed with regard unto our own Holiness, that is, Antecedently to our Election and Redemption, for Holiness, being the Effect and Fruit of them, is that which he opposes:* But, pray Sir, where do I oppose this? Or what occasion had I to oppose it in this place? My enquiry is only whether Election and Redemption include any necessary condition on our part, without the performance of which we cannot lay claim to the benefits of them, and whether Holiness be that Condition; if they do not, then our Election and Redemption can be no Argument on our part to live holily, though it may be a sufficient reason for God to make us holy: If they do, then indeed Election and Redemption are a very necessary reason, why we should live holily, but such a reason as the Doctor dares not own.

Another reason, which he assigned for the necessity of Holiness, is, *That it is for our peace, by it we have Communion with God, wherein peace alone is to be enjoyed:* This is a very good Argument also in itself considered; for if Holiness be the only
Y way

way to enjoy peace and Communion with God, there is an absolute necessity for every man, who consults the peace of his Mind, and the safety of his Soul, to be holy, as God is : But this is not reconcilable with his darling Notion of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ only, without any regard to our Holiness and Obedience ; for if we may be Justified without any respect to Holiness, our Personal Righteousness cannot be necessary to our peace with God, any more than it is to our Justification ; for all justified persons are in a state of peace and reconciliation with God.

And besides this I made it appear by two large quotations out of his Book of *Communion*, that at other times he rejected our own Righteousness and Obedience, and founded our Peace with God and Communion with him wholly and entirely on Christ, and Justification by his Righteousness. Here he expresses some indignation, that I would offer to frame the appearance of a contradiction between what he saies on the one hand, that there is no Peace with God to be obtained by and for sinners, but by the Atonement, that is made for them in the Blood of Jesus Christ, with the Remission of Sin and Justification by Faith, which ensue thereon ; and the necessity

Know-
ledge of
Christ,
p. 129.
Edit. 2.
p. 90.

Vindiciæ
p. 117

necessity of Holiness and Fruitfulness in Obedience to maintain in our own Souls a sense of that peace with God, which we have being justified by Faith.

Now though we should (to bring him into a good humour again) put the Controversie upon this Issue, that our Peace with God is only to be obtained by the Atonement made by Christ, and Justification by the imputation of his Righteousness, but that the sense of this Peace with God is owing to Holiness and fruitfulness in Obedience, yet I cannot see how to reconcile them : For if nothing more be necessary to put us into a state of Peace and Friendship with God, but the Atonement and Righteousness of Christ, and we know, that this alone, and nothing else can do it ; How can our own Obedience and Righteousness, which we know can contribute nothing to our Peace with God, be necessary to give us a sense, that is, the knowledge of our Peace with God ? And therefore the *Antinomians* very agreeably to their own Principles, which are the very same with the Doctor's, do reject our own Righteousness as well from being the Signs and Evidences, as the Cause and Matter of our Peace with God : And the Doctor

Y. 2

and

and his Friends make Sanctification such a lame and imperfect Sign, that we had as good have none, as I have largely shewed in my former Discourse.

And though we should suppose Holiness to be a very good Sign and Evidence of our Peace with God, yet this only makes Holiness necessary as a Sign, not as our Duty: It may be necessary on our part to our present Comfort, not to our future Happiness.

And yet after all the Doctors swaggering, I cannot understand that his words will bear this sense: For in the first place he brings in a man enquiring after such a Righteousness, as may be a sure foundation of hope and comfort, and may settle and compose his mind with respect to a future judgment, and shews the various ways men take in order to this: *That some labour to correct their Lives, amend their ways, perform the Duties required, and so follow after Righteousness according to the Prescript of the Law: And in this Course do many men continue long with much perplexity, sometimes hoping, oftner fearing, sometimes ready to give quite over, sometimes vowing to continue, (their Consciences being no ways satisfied, nor Righteousness in any measure attained) all their days.* So that here he rejects Holiness and

Obedience,

Knowledge
of Christ,
p. 363, &c
Edit. 2.
P. 224.

Communion.
p. 113.

Obedience, correcting our Lives, amending our Ways, performing Duties, from being able to give us a comfortable sense of our Peace with God, this can by no means allay our Fears, and satisfy our Consciences; and I think no man, who is a Christian, who ever heard of Christs dying for our sins, can understand this in any other sense, than that our Holiness and Obedience is wholly useless, not only to expiate our sins (which every Christian knows to be the work of Christ, and the Effect of his Death and Sufferings) but to maintain any comfortable sense of the Pardon of our sins, and the Love of God in our Souls. I am sure he says the very same thing, and assigns the very same reason for it which Dr. *Crispe* does, and therefore there is some cause to think that they were of the same mind.

The Reasons Dr. *Owen* assigns, why there is no hope, no satisfaction of Conscience in correcting our Lives, and performing Duties, are first, That men have *ibid.* already sinned, and therefore there is a score and a reckoning upon them already, which they know not how to answer for by their after Obedience: That is, their Righteousness, though never so perfect, cannot expiate past Offences.

Y 3 Thus

Thus Dr. Crispe to the same purpose tells us, *That Christ is he that saves the Soul, Christ is our Peace-maker; that is, by his Expiation and Atonement. And as Christ is this Peace-maker, so all this Peace depends upon Christ alone: Beloved, if you will fetch your Peace from any thing in the world but Christ, you will fetch it from where it is not.*

Dr. Owen's second Reason is, *That if all former Debts should be blotted out, yet they are no way able for the future to fulfil the Law, they can as well move the earth with a finger as answer the perfection thereof. Thus Dr. Crispe in the very same manner; Men forsake that peace, which is to be had in Christ, when they would have Peace out of Righteousness of their own. These are broken Cisterns, and what Peace is there in them? who can say I have washed my hands? If there be sinfulness in them, where then is their Peace? &c. Fetch Peace where it is to be had, let subduing of Sin alone for Peace; let Christ have that, which is his due; it is he alone that speaks Peace.*

To the same purpose I produced another passage out of the Doctor's Book of Communion, where he asserts, *That all our wisdom of walking with God consists in our acquaintance with Christ; which is not very reconcilable with what he says in this place, that Holiness is necessary to our Peace,*

Christ
alone ex-
alted.
P. 18.

Ibid

Peace, and Communion, and walking with God: upon which account I had before charged him, with making Christ a medium of Communion and Agreement between God and bad men, while they continue so; to which he only answers according to his huffing way, that it is *flagitiously false*: Let the indifferent Reader then be judge between us: He describes the distance between God and Men in a state of nature, and how impossible it is they should walk together: *For God is light, and in him is no darkness at all; we are darkness, and in us there is no light at all. He is Life, a living God, we are dead, dead sinners, dead in trespasses and sins; He is Holiness, and glorious in it, we wholly defiled, an abominable thing; He is Love, we full of hatred, hating, and being hated; surely this is no foundation of agreement, or upon that of walking together: What course then must we take to come to an agreement with God, that we may walk with him? Must we reform our Lives, and lay aside our Opposition to God, and return to our Duty and Allegiance? Not a word of this; The Doctor only directs us to Dr. Crispe's near way, wherein there is but one step from the lowest degree of sinfulness to the highest of being the*

Know-
ledge of
Christ.
P. 55.
Edit. 2.
P. 38.

Vindicat.
P. 70.

Commu-
nion.
P. 119.

Sons of God. For he immediately adds, *The foundation then of this agreement is laid in Christ, bid in Christ; He, saith the Apostle, is our peace, he hath made peace for us, he slew the enmity in his own body on the Cross:* So that there is nothing but Christ comes between men in a sinful natural state, and a holy God to make up the difference; and therefore they are in Communion with God, and in a state of agreement with him by the interposition and mediation of Christ while they are wicked: And if the Doctor reply, That Christ, who takes away the distance between God and Sinners, and makes peace between them, does at the same time make those, who were wicked, holy. Dr. Crispe himself asserts as much, and yet this does not alter the case, for (according to this way) in order of nature they are in a state of agreement with God before they are holy, and Holiness in its own nature contributes nothing to this Agreement, but is only the Effect of it: And by the same reason, that God can be reconciled to wicked men continuing so for one moment, he may be so for ever.

But to proceed, The Doctor proves the necessity of Holiness with respect to Sanctification, we have in us a New Creature,

2 Cor. 5. 17

2 Cor. 5. 17. *This New Creature is fed, cherished, nourished, and kept alive by the fruits of Holiness. To what end hath God given us new hearts, and new natures? Is it that we should kill them, stifle the Creature, that is formed in us in the womb? That we should give him to the old man to be devoured? To this I answered, The Phrase of this is admirable, and the reasoning unanswerable; for if men be new Creatures, they will certainly live new Lives, and this makes Holiness absolutely necessary by the same reason, that every thing necessarily is, what is, when it is; but still we enquire after a necessary Obligation to the practice of Holiness, and that we cannot yet discover.*

To this the Doctor replies, *That the new Creature, whatever I may fancy, is not a new conversation, nor a living holily, but it is the Principle and spiritual ability produced in Believers by the power and grace of the Holy Ghost, enabling them to walk in newness of Life, and holiness of Conversation. And this Principle being bestowed on us, wrought in us, for that very end, it is necessary for us, unless we will neglect and despise the Grace, which we have received, that we walk in Holiness, and abound in the fruits of righteousness, whereunto it leads and tends. Let him answer this if he can, and when he hath done so, answer the Apostle in like manner, or scoff not only at me, but at*

him

Vindicat.
P. 125.

him also. What Apostle the Doctor means I cannot tell, unless it be some Gnostick Apostle and Teacher of Holiness; and I can as little guess, what he would have mean answer in all this: I agree with him about the nature of the New Creature, if he only mean, that a New Creature is not made up only of External Acts of Holiness, but is a new Principle of spiritual life, the Internal Habits of Grace and Vertue wrought in us by the concurring assistances of the Grace of God: but how does this make Holiness necessary? Yes, says the Doctor, it is necessary we should live holily, unless we will neglect or despise the grace of God, which was bestowed on us for this very end; that is, unless we will live wickedly, which, I confess, is a demonstration, we must live holily unless we live wickedly, which is the whole force of this answer, if it have any: For suppose we should *neglect and despise the grace of God*; What then? Why, truly nothing: the necessity of Holiness ceaseth, unless you can shew some very great danger in doing so, that we shall lose our Justification and Salvation by it; and then the necessity of Holiness does not result from the nature of the new Creature, but
from

from the great danger of living wickedly, because Holiness is Antecedently necessary to obtain the Pardon of our Sins, and Eternal Life, which the Doctor dares not own.

But I would fain know what he means by neglecting or despising the Grace of God, is it to resist the grace of God, and to make it ineffectual? And can the grace of God be resisted? Can it fail of its Effect? This is to assert a moral, a *Pelagian* grace, as the Doctor often tells me: If this new Creature, this new Principle of grace in us, produce the fruits of Holiness by a free and voluntary choice, from Principles of reason and moral persuasion, together with the supernatural assistances of grace, then it cannot it self be an argument of the necessity of Holiness, but does it self stand in need of such Arguments from the necessity and advantages of Holiness, as shall effectually incline and determine it to a constant and vigorous practice of Holiness: And if this new Creature produce the fruits of Holiness by a necessity of nature, meerly by the natural, or rather supernatural force and energy of Grace, then indeed it makes Holiness necessary, as a necessary cause makes a necessary Effect, and the
Doctor

Doct̄or need not fear, that this new Creature should be starved for want of *being fed and cherished with the fruits of Holiness*. And indeed this is a kind of *Pelagian* fear too, that the new Creature should perish for want of being kept alive by the fruits of Righteousness; for all Orthodox Divines use to assure us, that the new Creature can never die; that the least spark of grace will live in the midst of a whole Sea and Ocean of corruption. However upon the consideration of the whole it appears to be an excellent Argument to prove the necessity of Holiness, that we must abound in the fruits of Holiness to keep the new Creature alive in us, whereas the life of the new Creature is necessary to produce these fruits of Holiness: A Tree must be alive to bring forth fruit, and its bringing forth fruit is a sign that it is alive, but the fruit it self contributes nothing to the life of the Tree: Acquired Habits are owing to exercise, but an infused Principle of life in the Doct̄ors way can neither owe its being, continuance, nor increase to External Acts: I am sure in other cases the Doct̄or is very much against *working for life*. And I can imagine no reason why he should be for it now, but that it is
absurd

absurd and senseless. And to make the most of this Argument that may be, the whole result of it is this, that we must live holily, that we may be holy; we must abound in the External fruits of Holiness, that we may preserve an inward Principle of Holiness, for a new Creature in the Doct̄ors account is no more: But if the question be proposed, what need there is of this new Creature, as well as of the fruits of it (which ought to be taken into consideration when we enquire after the necessity of Holiness, unless he thinks Holiness a meer External thing) I doubt in his way he can find no good reason for it; unless he will say, that a new Creature is necessary to produce the fruits of Holiness, and the fruits of Holiness are necessary to feed and cherish the new Creature, and so they may be necessary for each other, but for ought yet appears might both be spared. I know not whether the Doct̄or will think all this an answer, but I am pretty confident (as young men are apt to be) that other men will. This is all our Author returns to those Objections I made against his reasons for the necessity of Holiness, the rest he passes over as *unanswerable scuffling*; that they are unanswerable I am verily
perswaded

perswaded, whether they be scoffing, let others judge; however whether they be scoffing or not, any one will perceive, that in this Argument I may securely scoff at the Doctor, without any danger of scoffing at any true Apostle.

But though the Doctor have done with me, I have not thus done with him; since at all turns he can talk of nothing less than *Apostles*, I shall acquaint the World to what *Apostles* he is nearest related, such as *Dr. Crispe*, *Saltmarsh*, and other *Antinomian Apostles*, who are to the full as *Orthodox* in this Point as our Author, and assign the same reasons for the necessity of Holiness, and take the same method to secure the Prerogative of Christ, and of Free Grace: which I shall make appear by particular instances.

Dr. Owen pretends to be a great Friend to Holiness, and so does *Dr. Crispe*. He tells us, *That he does not speak against Holiness and Righteousness, that becomes a people to whom Christ is a way, for holy and righteous they shall be; Christ will make them holy, and put his Spirit into them, to change their hearts, and work upon their Spirits.* And therefore as *Dr. Owen* takes care to assign the Righteousness of Christ its proper place, and Gospel Obedience its place, so does *Dr. Crispe*.

Thus

Thus *Dr. Owen* tells us, *we do by no means assign the same place, condition, state, and use, to the obedience of Christ imputed to us, and our Obedience performed to God, if we did they were really inconsistent.* And thus *Dr. Crispe* assures us, that the consequence of his Doctrine is not to take men off from Obedience, but to take them off from those ends which they aim at in Obedience, namely the end for which Christ's Obedience serves. It doth take men off from performing duties to corrupt ends, and from the bad use they are apt to make of idolizing their own Righteousness. Our own Righteousness is good in its kind, and for its own proper uses, but then it proves a fruit of sin, ignorance, and a dangerous stumbling block, when we go about to establish this Righteousness of ours, so as to bring it into the room, and stead, and place of Gods Righteousness. So far all is well on both sides; let us consider then, what those ends are, for which the Righteousness of Christ must serve, and which must not be attributed to our Righteousness.

Dr. Owen in the same place informs us, *That those who affirm, that our Obedience is the condition or cause of our Justification, do all of them deny the imputation of the Obedience of Christ unto us* (in his Notion, he should have

Vindicat.
P. 101.

Ibid.
P. 193.

P. 207.

have said, for otherwise it is not true.) *The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, as that on the account whereof we are accepted, and esteemed righteous before God, and are really so, though not inherently. Our own Obedience is not the Righteousness whereupon we are accepted and justified before God, although it be acceptable to God, that we abound therein. There is a necessity of good Works notwithstanding we are not saved by them, and that is, that God has ordained, that we shall walk in them.*

Ibid.
 p. 208. &c. And Dr. Crispe speaks the very same thing: *It will be worth the while to consider, when our Righteousness is said truly to be established in the room and stead of the Righteousness of God: viz. when men make their own Righteousness the Sanctuary and Refuge that Gods righteousness only should be. As when men have such imaginations as these, as long as men do not mend, there is no hope that God will mend. They that put deliverance from sin and wrath upon the spiritual performance of that Righteousness, which the Law doth command of them, they do put that Righteousness in the room and place of the Righteousness of God. It is most true, that all the Righteousness of man cannot prevail with God to do us good, there is but one mover of God, the man Christ Jesus, who is the only and sole Mediator. If you will have your own Righteousness to be your Mediator*
 with

with God, to speak to God for you, to prevail with God for you, what is this, but to put your Righteousness in the room and place of Christ? Which is the very same with what Dr. Owen affirms, That our Righteousness can contribute nothing to our acceptance with God. And if you will have Dr. Crispes sense in fewer words: It is as much as to say, Our standing righteous by what Christ hath done for us, concerns us in point of Justification, in point of Consolation, and in the business of salvation, we have our Justification, we have our Peace, we have our Salvation only by the Righteousness Christ hath done for us. They are both, you see agreed in attributing our Justification and Salvation entirely to the Righteousness of Christ; and as for Peace and Consolation the only difference is, that Dr. Owen sometimes attributes it to Christ, and sometimes to Holiness, but Dr. Crispe is always consistent with himself and his own Principles; and yet this difference is so very small, that Mr. Saltmarsh undertakes to compound it, and to allow Christians of a lower form to fetch their comforts from Holiness, as a mark and evidence, though a very uncertain one.

And now they are agreed about the place of Christs Righteousness, they
 Z cannot

cannot differ about the place and use of Obedience; for whatever does not belong to the Righteousness of Christ may be very safely attributed to the Righteousness of man

Thus for instance, the Reasons assigned by Dr. Owen for the necessity of Obedience are, First, *The Sovereign Appointment and Will of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* Thus Dr. Crispe tells us, *That one end of our good works is a manifestation of our Obedience and Subjection to God, that is our Obedience to the Sovereign will and appointment of God; and therefore he professes, I speak not, Beloved, against the doing of any Righteousness according to the will of God revealed, let that mouth be forever stopped that shall be opened to blame the Law, that is holy, just, and good, or shall be a means to discourage people from walking in the Commandments of God blameless.*

Dr. Owen's second Reason is, *That Holiness is one eminent and special end of the peculiar dispensation of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the business of exalting the glory of God in our Salvation. It is a peculiar end of God's Electing love, the Son's Redeeming love, and it is the very work of the love of the Holy Ghost.* To the same purpose Dr. Crispe (though not so particularly) tells us, that the end
of

Vindicat.
P. 104.

Christ
alone ex-
alted.
Vol. 1.
P. 70.

Ibid.
P. 210.

of good Works is, *The setting forth of the praise of the glory of the Grace of God:* That is, of the Grace of God in Electing, of the Grace of Christ in Redeeming, and of the Grace of the Holy Ghost in Sanctifying. Ibid.
P. 70.

But thirdly Dr. Owen tells us *That Obedience is necessary with respect to the end of it, and that whether we consider God, our Selves, or the World.* First, *The end of Obedience with respect to God is his glory and honour;* So says Dr. Crispe too, *That the end of good works is the actual glorifying of God in the World, that our services may glorify God, that is, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* Ibid.
P. 293.

Secondly, The ends assigned by Dr. Owen with respect to our selves, are Honour, Peace, and Usefulness. The first of these I do not find Dr. Crispe mention; because I suppose he might think it a greater honour to be clothed with the perfect Robes of Christ's Righteousness, than with the rags and patches of our own. The second he rejects, as Dr. Owen sometimes does, and ought always to do, if he would be true to his own Principles. The third he owns, but refers it to its proper head, where it ought to be placed, the end of holiness with respect to others, *in doing good in the world, and being profitable to men.* P. 70.

That we may serve our Generation, according to the Apostle's charge, that men study to maintain Good Works, because saith he, these things are profitable unto men. There is this usefulness of our Righteousness, that others may receive benefit by it, Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in heaven, which compriseth Dr. Owen's ends of Conviction and Conversion, and the benefit of all, for it must be confessed, that Dr. Crispe hath not so good a faculty, as Dr. Owen, in making distinctions without a difference. Dr. Crispe indeed will by no means allow, that our own Righteousness can keep off Judgments either from our selves, or from other men, as Dr. Owen would have it, but thinks, that God can be moved only by the Righteousness of Christ, and that if we must trust wholly in the Righteousness of Christ for our deliverance from future punishments, we may as reasonably trust him for present deliverances.

But to proceed with Dr. Owen, Fourthly, *Holiness is necessary with respect to the state and condition of justified persons, for they have a new Creature in them, which must be nourished and kept alive by the fruits of Holiness. Now though Dr. Crispe was never guilty*
of

of talking at this absurd rate, yet he says that which is more intelligible, and wherein the true force of this reason, if it have any, must consist, viz. that Holiness is necessary as it hath a necessary cause, a renewed and sanctified nature infused into Believers by Christ. Thus he affirms, *That there is no Person is a Believer, and hath received Christ, but after he hath received Christ, he is created in this Christ to good works, that he should walk in them. He that sprinkleth them with clean water, that they become clean from all their filthiness, puts also a new Spirit into them, and doth cause them to walk in his Statutes, and Testimonies.* Ibid. p. 69.

And the Doctor honestly confesses, that the only security against the evil consequences of his Doctrine is the power and efficacy of the Grace of God in bridling mens corrupt Passions. *That the same Christ, who hath born the wrath of the Father, and the effects thereof, the same Christ doth take as strict an order to restrain and keep in the Spirit of a man, as to save that man.* P. 30 This is the true and clear way of arguing (according to these Principles) from the state of a Justified person, because such a man is Sanctified too, and must live holily.

And fifthly, Dr. Owen assigns another reason of the necessity of Holiness. *That*

it is necessary with respect to the proper place of Holiness in the New Covenant, as God hath appointed, that Holiness shall be the means, the way, to Eternal life; though it be neither the cause, matter, nor condition of our Justification, yet it is the way appointed by God for us to walk in for the obtaining of Salvation. The meaning of which is, not that Holiness contributes any thing either to our Justification, or Salvation, but that God has ordained, that he will first sanctifie men, before he will save them: This is the method God hath designed in the execution of his Decrees, that he will first justifie, and then sanctifie, and then save and glorifie.

Now all this Dr. Crispe will readily own: For he asserts, that Christ will take care to sanctifie those whom he justifies. And that our Righteousness is useful, as it is the Ordinance of God, wherein the Lord hath appointed to meet with us, and wherein he will make good those things, which before he hath promised; which is all that can be meant by Dr. Owen's way, which is neither the cause, nor matter, nor condition of our Justification, nor of our Salvation neither, as he elsewhere tells us, that we must not work for Everlasting life. And therefore when Dr. Crispe elsewhere tells

Ibid.
p. 28.

tells us, That Sanctification of life is not a part of the way of the justified person to Heaven, it is the business of a person that he hath to do in his way to Christ, but it is not the way it self to Heaven. He only means, that Holiness is not such a way as Christ is, but would never scruple to own it such a way as Dr. Owen makes it.

What Dr. Owen adds, that this Holiness is the whole expression of our thankfulness to God, is so often repeated by Dr. Crispe, that I need not direct to any particular places.

From all this it evidently appears, that as great a Friend as Dr. Owen would seem to be to Holiness, Dr. Crispe is as great to the full, and that any Antinomian may own the necessity of Holiness upon the same accounts that Dr. Owen does. Indeed the parting Line is the Antecedent necessity of Holiness to our Justification and Salvation, and whoever will not own this, I will be bound to make it good against him, that he is an Antinomian, though he may not have courage enough openly to defend all the fulsom consequences of that Doctrine.

And for a conclusion of this Argument I shall only observe these two things: First, What great reason these men

have to assert a natural and irresistible efficacy of Grace in the Conversion of a Sinner. For they having taken away all those Arguments which should work upon our Hopes and Fears, which are the natural springs of action, there is nothing left, but an Omnipotent and irresistible Power, to make men good: And therefore, as I observed before, Dr. Crispe honestly acknowledges, *That this were the way to take the bridle from men, and make them kick up their heels, as the wild Asses upon the Mountains, were a man to be guided by himself, and to order his own way according to the pleasure of his own will, and therefore resolves the bridling of mens Passions solely into the over-ruling power of Christ, which restrains and keeps in their Spirits.* Which he explains by this similitude, *Although a wild Ass upon the Mountains, being loose, runs at random, yet this Ass may be taken, and so tamed, that he may be set as loose, as he was before, yet he will not run unrulily, as he did before, by virtue of that taming that is upon him. It is true, our natures themselves are mad, and if they had the reins, would run wild; but you must know, that Christ breaks this wildness, and then he dare let a Believer loose to that, in respect of which an Unbeliever, a wicked man, would*

take

take advantage to sin. This is a plain confession, that the only security against the evil consequences of this Doctrine consists in the restraints of Omnipotent Grace. The Doctrine is apt in it self to give the reins to mens ungoverned Lusts, and Passions, but Christ so tames the Spirit of a man, that he shall not run away, though there be no bridle to keep him in: which, though it be much for the necessity and commendation of irresistible Grace, is not much for the credit of the Christian Religion.

Secondly, I observe also, what great reason these men have to cry out against Selfishness, or Self-love, or against serving God in hope of a Reward, or for fear of Punishment; because they have taken away all the Objects of our Hopes and Fears; for if as Dr. Crispe well says, *Christ have done all, that may be done for us, then there needs no doing at all for our selves.* If our Justification and Eternal Life be wholly owing to what Christ hath done for us, then we must not work either for Justification, or Eternal Life, as Dr. Crispe and Dr. Owen both assert. For what reason then shall we serve God? *If we get nothing by all the righteousness we perform, then we had as good sit still, and do nothing.*

This

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This, says Dr. *Crispe*, is a carnal reasoning, and there is *Selfishness* at the botom of it; and such a man had as good do nothing, for if he design his own good and happiness, *he serves himself, not God, and though he doth perform Righteousness never so exactly, if he serves himself, God will never reckon that he serves him.* At this rate Mr. *Shephard*, and others talk, as I shewed in my former Discourse, and here we see the plain reason of it. For it is not imaginable, what should force men into such wild conceits, as to banish all the natural principles of Action out of Religion, but that they had first formed such uncouth Notions of Religion, as were inconsistent with all the Principles of Human Nature: They first ascribe our Justification and Salvation entirely to what *Christ* hath done and suffered without requiring any condition on our part, and then they were forced either to assert, that there was no need of serving God at all, which they durst not own; or that we must serve God without designing any benefit and advantage to our selves in doing so, because in their way there is nothing to be gained by it; and therefore unless we will serve God for nothing, we must not serve him at all: And I cannot

Know-
ledge of
Christ,
p. 413, &c
Edit. 2.
p. 295.

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cannot but acknowledge, that it was very craftily done of them, to cry up that as the very hight and perfection of Christianity, which (how absurd and contradictory soever to the Principles of Humane Nature, yet) they were forced to own, unless they would renounce their darling and beloved Notions.

Thus I have given a plain and full account of the Doctrine of the Church of *England* concerning the Justification of a sinner, and shewed what little reason these men have to talk of Articles and Homilies: All which I willingly submit to the judgment of my Superiours, but neither expect nor fear an Answer from my Adversaries.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning an acquaintance with Christ's Person.

THe Sum of what I charge Dr. Owen with in this matter is this, that, as far as I can discover his meaning, by an *Acquaintance with the Person of Christ*, "He understands such a knowledge of what Christ is, hath done, and suffered for us, from whence we may learn those greater, deeper, and more saving Mysteries of the Gospel, which Christ hath not expressly revealed to us: Let us hear now how the Doctor avoids this Charge, and I should be very glad, if he could come off well, for I had much rather do publick Penance in recanting an involuntary mistake, than to find such pestilent Doctrines maintained and propagated by men of note and fame: First then he tells his Readers, *That I quarrel with him about asserting the necessity of Acquaintance with the Person of Christ*. This is a very ill beginning, and I have nothing to answer to it, but that it is a mistake; for

p. 6.

for I acknowledge the necessity of acquaintance with the Person of Christ, as much as the Doctor does, and no where intimate the least dislike of it; but I frequently make use of this expression afterwards by way of reproach: That is, I often call those Persons, who derive their Schemes of Orthodoxy from a pretended acquaintance with Christ's Person by the name of *Acquaintance of Christ*, and this I must confess is a fault, that I have given so good a name to them, and I wonder why they should take it as a reproach: I was sensible that an *Acquaintance with Christ* was too good a name, and therefore frequently mollified it with the addition of a *pretended* acquaintance, which I should never have done, had I designed it as a note of infamy; yet I thought it the most proper name to characterize those men, who pretend to learn all saving knowledge from such an acquaintance with the Person of Christ. But the Doctor adds, "That the use of the word Acquaintance in this matter is warranted by our Translation of the Scripture, and that properly, where it is required of us to acquaint our selves with God: Here I perfectly agree with him, for I have no quarrel with the word *Acquaintance*, but believe it

Ibid.

believe it to be a very good English word, and our Translators did well to use it; nay I agree with the Doctor too, that an acquaintance with the Person of Christ signifies the knowledge of *Jesus Christ, of his Person the Word made flesh. or the Son of God incarnate*; but yet I must beg the Readers favour to believe, that this is *not the Crime I charge the Doctor with, that he asserts it necessary that Christians should know Jesus Christ: Nor do I charge him with asserting any acquaintance with the Person of Christ, which is not learned from the Gospel.* Nay, I do not so much as affirm, That the Doctor in express words owns *that there are any Mysteries of Religion, that are not to be found in the Gospel, unless we are first acquainted with the Person of Christ.* I always had a better opinion of his prudence and skill in Humane Affairs than to imagine, that he would thus publicly disown the Gospel-Revelation, or set up an arbitrary Rule of Faith above it: What then is the Dispute between us? That is easily discerned by any man, who has a mind to see it, and I cannot better express it than by repeating my own words, *That by an acquaintance with the Person of Christ, he understands such a knowledge of what Christ is, hath done, and suffered for us, from whence*
we

we may learn those greater, deeper, and more saving mysteries of the Gospel, which Christ hath not expressly revealed to us. This sense I put upon his words, and whether I have mistook him, the Reader has liberty to judge, when he has perused my Defence.

The words, on which I found this charge, and which the Doctor does very wisely suppress, are these: *Christ is not only the wisdom of God, but made wisdom to us, not only by teaching us wisdom, as he is the great Prophet of the Church, but also because by the knowing of him, we become acquainted with the wisdom of God, which is our wisdom.* In which words the Doctor tells us, *That Christ is made wisdom to us*; that is, that by him we learn all spiritual wisdom and knowledge, all the Mysteries of Religion, these two ways: First, As he instructs us in the will and wisdom of God, as he is the great Prophet of the Church: This includes all the Revelations of the Gospel, which the Church of Christ hath hitherto thought sufficient to make a man wise unto Salvation; but the Doctor has discovered another way, whereby Christ is made wisdom to us, and that is, as by *knowing of him we become acquainted with the wisdom of God, which is our wisdom*: So that
this

this knowing of Christ, or being acquainted with Christ is a way to be acquainted with the wisdom of God distinct from all the Revelations of the Gospel: Let us then consider, since we have two ways of learning wisdom, which of these is the best, and the Doctor clearly prefers an acquaintance with the Person of Christ before the Revelations of the Gospel in those words which follow, *That these properties of God (his pardoning mercy, &c) Christ hath revealed in his Doctrine in that Revelation he hath made of God and his will, but the life of this Knowledge lies in an acquaintance with his Person, wherein the express beams and glory of his Father doth shine forth; that is, that these things are clearly, eminently, and savingly to be discovered only in Jesus Christ,* as he explains himself. Here he distinguishes again between the Revelations which Christ hath made, and an acquaintance with his Person, and prefers an acquaintance with his Person as the way to attain to the most saving knowledge: *The life of this knowledge lies in an acquaintance with his Person, these things are clearly, eminently, and savingly to be discovered only in Jesus Christ; that is, in the knowledge of his Person, as distinguished from the Revelations of the Gospel: the Gospel*
of

of Christ instructs us in the wisdom of God, but these things are discovered savingly *only* in the Person of Christ, which, if I can understand plain English, excludes the Revelations of the Gospel from making any saving discoveries of the wisdom of God: And does not all this amount to what I charge him with, that he sets up a new Rule of Faith above the Gospel, that he teaches such a *knowledge of Christ's Person, from whence we may learn those greater, deeper, and more saving Mysteries of the Gospel, which Christ hath not expressly revealed to us; for if Christ hath expressly revealed these things to us, I can by no means understand, why they may not be as clearly, eminently, savingly discovered in the Revelations of the Gospel, as in the Person of Christ.*

Now though no man in his wits will openly profess to learn any other new Mysteries from the Person of Christ, than what are revealed in the Gospel, yet when men have set up a new Rule of Faith or Knowledge, they may learn new discoveries too, if they please; especially if it be such a rule, as will bend and comply with every mans fancy; and thus it hath fared with the Doctor and his Friends, as I have made appear by a whole Scheme of

new Divinity, which is wholly owing to this acquaintance with the Person of Christ, but hath no solid foundation in the Gospel.

But though the Doctors words be too plain and express to be evaded, yet I had a surer foundation for this Charge than some loose or unwary expressions; for the design of that whole digression of the excellency of Christ Jesus will satisfy any impartial Reader, that I did not either mistake or pervert his sense; for there he gives us many examples of this way of reasoning from the knowledge of Christs Person to discover those other great Mysteries of Religion, which however they may be revealed in the Gospel of Christ, yet are clearly, eminently, savingly discovered only in Jesus Christ. He reduces the sum of all true wisdom to three heads, the knowledge of God, and of our selves, and skill to walk in Communion with God; and adds, *That not any of them is to any purpose to be obtained, or is manifested, but only in and by the Lord Christ.* “Upon this I observed in my former Discourse, that “by is fallaciously added to include the “Revelations Christ hath made, where- “as his first undertaking was to shew, “how impossible it is to understand these “things

“things savingly and clearly, notwithstanding all those Revelations God hath made of himself and his will by Moses and the Prophets, and by Christ himself, without an acquaintance with his Person.

To this the Doctor answers, *The fallacy pretended is meerly of his own coyning. The knowledge I mean is to be learned in Christ, neither is any thing to be learned in him, but what is learned by him. I do say indeed now, whatever I have said before, that it is impossible to understand any sacred truth savingly and clearly without the knowledge of the Person of Christ; but that in my so saying I exclude the consideration of the Revelations, which Christ hath made, or that God hath made of himself by Moses and the Prophets and Christ himself, the principal whereof concerns his Person, and whence alone we come to know him, is an assertion becoming the modesty and ingenuity of this Author.* As for modesty and ingenuity, the Doctor may take them to himself, since no man deserves them better, but I would willingly put in for a share of truth and honesty, if he can spare any: The Doctor says the fallacy is of my own coyning, pray why so? Because he does not exclude the Revelations which Christ hath made; nor do I say he does

in these words, but the fallacy consists in not doing it, which he ought to have done, if he would have been true to his proposed design: He who undertakes to prove, that there are any sacred truths, which cannot be *clearly and savingly* known by the Revelations of the Gospel without an acquaintance with the Person of Christ, (which was the Doctors task, as appears from what I have already said) though he need not wholly renounce Revelation, yet he ought to consider the Revelations of Christ, and the knowledge of his Person distinctly, and shew that these truths are not clearly manifested by Revelation, but are clearly and savingly discovered in the Person of Christ: The first of these (especially with reference to some new discoveries) the Doctor has done pretty honestly, for he has either alleaged no Scriptures for the proof of these grand Doctrines, or such, as every one may easily see, do not clearly prove them; I shall now consider how he acquits himself in the second, whereby it will evidently appear, that he sets up the knowledge of Christs Person as a way of learning Divine Truths distinct from the Revelations of the Gospel: A few instances will be sufficient to clear this matter;

ter; and that is all I at present design.

I shall begin with that terrible discovery of the naturalness of Gods righteousness (*vindictive justice*) unto him, in that it was impossible, that it should be diverted from sinners without the interposing of a Propitiation; this the Doctor tells us is discovered in Christ, that is, in his Death and Sufferings for Sin; what he means by a natural vindictive justice I shall consider in its proper place, my present business is to examine, how he proves a natural vindictive justice in God from the knowledge of Christ, and the only Argument in that place is this: *Those who lay the necessity of satisfaction meerly upon the account of a free act and determination of the will of God, leave to my apprehension no just and indispensable foundation for the Death of Christ, but lay it upon a supposition of that which might have been otherwise; but plainly God in that he spared not his only Son, but made his soul an Offering for Sin, and would admit of no Atonement but in his blood, hath abundantly manifested, that it is of necessity to him (his Holiness and Righteousness requiring it) to render indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish unto Sin. To look upon it (Vindictive Justice) as that which God may exercise or forbear,*

Of the excellency of Christ. p. 93.

makes his Justice not a property of his Nature, but a free act of his Will: And a will to punish, where one may do otherwise without injustice, is rather ill will, than justice. If you resolve this Argument into its several Propositions, it must proceed thus: It is very plain in Scripture, that Christ died for our sins; so far Revelation goes. Hence the Doctor infers, That it was absolutely necessary, that Christ should die for our sins; from hence he infers, That it was absolutely necessary, that Sin should be punished; and thence he infers, That Punitive and Vindictive Justice is so absolutely necessary to God, that it is not at the free choice of his Will, whether he will punish sin, or not, but he must do it: Now whether this Argument be good or bad, I am not at present concerned to enquire, but shall only ask, whence the Doctor learns all this train of Consequences, from which he at last concludes, the naturalness and necessity of God's Vindictive Justice? Are we any where told in Scripture, that because Christ died for sin, therefore it was absolutely necessary he should die for Sin; and that it was absolutely necessary he should die for Sin, because it is absolutely necessary that Sin should be punished, and that it is absolute-

absolutely necessary that Sin should be punished, because God is so naturally just and righteous, that he cannot do otherwise: If we are no where taught in Scripture to argue at this rate, then here is a plain example how we may learn something from the knowledge of Christ's Person, which the Gospel has not expressly taught us; how we may reason from what Christ hath done and suffered to draw such Conclusions, as are either no where to be found in express terms in Scripture, or at least which we are no where taught to draw from such Premises; which makes an Acquaintance with the Person of Christ a new way of discovering Divine Truths distinct from the Revelations of the Gospel; and if this be once acknowledged to be a good way of reasoning, men may as well draw such Conclusions, as are no where to be found in Scripture, as those which are.

By the same Argument the Doctor proves what the desert of Sin is: *the demerit of Sin is such, that it is altogether impossible that God should pass by any, the least, unpunished:* How does this appear? Why from the Person, who suffered for it, who was the only Son of God, and if God would have done it for any (passed by sin unpunished) he

would have done it in reference to his only Son, but he spared him not. The sum of which Argument is this, that because God would not spare his only Son, after he had determined, that he should die as a Sacrifice for sin, therefore he could not spare him, and therefore the demerit of Sin is such, that it is impossible God should suffer it to go unpunished, which is indeed a pretty Argument, but whether it be true or false, it is no Scripture Argument, and therefore may serve for another instance of this new way of reasoning from the knowledge of Christ.

This may suffice at present to make good my Charge, that the Doctor sets up an acquaintance with the Person of Christ as a new medium of saving knowledge, distinct from the Revelations of the Gospel; from whence we may clearly and savingly learn those Divine Truths, which though they are pretended to be contained in the Gospel, yet are not clearly and savingly to be learnt thence without this knowledge of the Person of Christ; the plain meaning of which is, that men must first reason from what Christ hath done and suffered, and thence form their Notions and Theories of Religion, and then it is very hard, if they cannot find some obscure, ambiguous, or metapho-
rical

rical expressions in Scripture to countenance such conceits.

But this Book of *Communion*, out of which I have transcribed these passages, was writ near twenty years since, and therefore to do the Doctor all the right we can, let us consider whether in his later Writings he hath expressed himself more cautiously in this matter.

In his second Volume on the *Hebrews*, a Book of a very late date, p. 20. I find this observation: *A diligent attentive consideration of the Person, Offices, and Work of Jesus Christ is the most effectual means to free the Souls of men from all entanglements of errors, and darkness, and to keep them constant in the profession of the truth*: This is the very same Doctrine we had before, that we must learn Divine Truths (which is much the same with being delivered from errors and darkness) by a knowledge of the Person and Offices of Christ: For the explaining of this he tells us there must be *a diligent searching into the word, wherein Christ is revealed to us: The Scriptures reveal him, declare him, testify of him, to this end are they to be searched, that we may learn and know what they so declare and testify*. Thus far it is very well, and would men confine their knowledge of Christ and Divine Truths

Truths to the Revelation of the Gospel, it would be an infallible preservative against all Error: But I do not so well understand what he adds towards the conclusion of that Discourse: *Unto him (Christ) and the knowledge of him is all our study of the Scripture to be referred, and the reason why some in the perusal of it, have no more light, profit, or advantage, is, because they have no more respect unto Christ in their enquiry. If he be once out of our eye in searching the Scripture, we know not what we do, nor whither we go, no more than doth the Mariner at Sea without regard to the Pole-star. Truths to be believed are like Believers themselves, all their life, power, and order, consist in their relation to Christ, separated from him they are dead and useless.* This is very profound and Mysterious; we must search the Scriptures to know Christ, and the knowledge of Christ must direct us in expounding the Scripture, as the Pole-star does the Mariner to steer a safe and direct Course: We must consider all Truths in their relation to Christ, which gives life, and power, and order to them. I wish the Doctor had given us some examples of this, for I confess, I cannot understand it. In p. 23. he tells us, *But here lies the root of mens failings in this matter: They seek for*

for truth of themselves, and of other men, but not of Christ, what they can find out by their own endeavours, what other men instruct them in, or impose upon them, that they receive; few have that faith, love, and humility, are given up to that diligent contemplation of the Lord Christ, and his Excellencies, which are required in those, who diligently wait for his Law, so as to learn the truth of him: So that it seems by eying Jesus Christ in searching the Scriptures, he means a diligent contemplation of the Lord Christ and his Excellencies, which will be a safer guide to all true saving knowledge than all other enquiries whatsoever; so that still we must learn all Sacred Truths from the knowledge of Christ's Person and Excellencies. And indeed this he expressly tells us in the same Page, "All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ, and therefore from him alone to be received, and in him alone to be learned: In the due consideration of the Lord Christ are these Treasures opened unto us. There is not the least line of truth, how far soever it may be extended, and how small soever it may at length appear, but the springs of it lie in the Person of Christ; and then we learn it aright, when we learn it in the spring, or as it

" is

“*is in him*, Eph.4.21. which when we
 “have done, we may safely trace it
 “down, and follow it to its utmost ex-
 “tent. If there be any sense to be made
 of this Discourse, it must be this, that
 we must learn all Divine Truths from a
 consideration of the Lord Christ, his
 Person and Excellencies, &c. because the
 Springs of all truth lie in the Person of
 Christ, and without such a serious confi-
 deration of the Person of Christ to direct
 and steer our Course, the study of the
 Gospel will avail us nothing: That it is
 to no great purpose to understand Gospel
 Truths, unless we can find out the springs,
 and the Center of them in the Person of
 Christ: *He that looks upon Gospel-truths as*
Sporades, as scattered up and down independ-
ently one of another, who sees not the Root,
Center, and Knot of them in Jesus Christ, it
is most probable, that when he goes about to ga-
ther them for his use, he will also take up things
quite of another nature.

But it may be we may understand the
 Doctor better, if we consider the object
 of this consideration, which is to free
 men from all errors and darkness, and
 that is, *the Person of Christ, his Offices, and*
his Work; this is the very thing I charged
 him with, that he affirmed, we must
 attain

attain to a saving knowledge of Divine
 Truths from a consideration of the Person
 of Christ, and what he had done and
 suffered for us, so that I hope every one
 will now believe, that this was no Ca-
 lumny.

From Christs Authority as King he
 observes, p. 22. *Men not considering the*
Authority of Christ, either as instituting the
Ordinances of the Gospel, or as judging upon
their neglect or abuse, are careless about them,
or do not acquiesce in his pleasure in them: This
hath proved the ruine of many Churches, who
neglecting the Authority of Christ, have sub-
stituted their own in the room thereof: The
consideration therefore of this Kingly Legisla-
tive Authority of the Lord Christ by men, as to
their present duty and future account, must
needs be an effectual means to preserve them in
the truth, and from backslidings. From the
 faithfulness of Christ as Prophet, he ob-
 serves the same thing: *He being then ulti-*
mately to reveal the will of God, and being ab-
solutely faithful in his so doing, is to be attended
unto: Men may thence learn, what they have
to do in the Church and worship of God, even
to observe and to do whatever he hath com-
manded, and nothing else. This is the very
 first Principle of Phanaticism, which un-
 dermines the most prudent Orders and
 wholsom

wholsom Constitutions of any Church, and is another instance of this way of Reasoning from the knowledge of Christ to discover those important Truths, which the Gospel no where expressly teaches: Neither Christ nor his Apostles have any where told us, that we must do nothing in the Worship of God, but what Christ hath expressly commanded, but this we must learn from an acquaintance with the Person and Offices of Christ, from his Authority as King, and Faithfulness as Prophet, which (if we will believe the Doctor) have left no room for the exercise of Humane Authority, nor for the use of humane Prudence in Church-Affairs.

But all this the Doctor spake without an Adversary, let us now consider, how he explains his own meaning in his Answer to my Discourse, which you may find in pag. 33, 34. where he first denies, *That he ever taught any other knowledge of Christ, or acquaintance with his Person, but what is revealed and declared in the Gospel.* This (as I observed above) I never charged him with, and he himself seems to be sensible of it, and therefore adds; *Yet I will mind this Author of that, whereof if he be ignorant, he is unfit to be a Teacher of others;*
and

Vindicat.
P. 33, 34.

*and which if he deny, he is unworthy the name of a Christian, (this is a dangerous Dilemma; for I confess, I am not at present disposed either to part with my Rectorship, or my Christianity, and therefore let us hear what it is) namely, that by the knowledge of the Person of Christ, the great Mystery of God manifest in the flesh, as revealed and declared in the Gospel, we are led into a clear and full understanding of many other Mysteries of Grace and Truth, which are all Centred in his Person, and without which we can have no true nor sound understanding of them: I shall speak it yet again, that this Author if it be possible may understand it, (this is kindly done, since so much lies at stake on it) or however that he and his Co-partners in design may know, that I neither am, nor ever will be ashamed of it: That without the knowledge of the Person of Christ, which is our acquaintance with him, as we are commanded to acquaint our selves with God, as he is the Eternal Son of God Incarnate, the Mediator between God and Man, with the Mystery of the Love, Grace, and Truth of God therein, as revealed and declared in the Scripture, there is no true useful saving knowledge of any other Mysteries or Truths of the Gospel to be attained. I wish I get well off, but I will do my best endeavour to understand it. By the know-
ledge*

ledge of the Person of Christ, the great Mystery of God manifested in the flesh, as revealed and declared in the Gospel, we are led into a clear and full understanding of many other Mysteries of Grace and Truth, which are Centred in his Person, and without which we can have no true nor sound understanding of them. If by this he means, that we cannot understand those mysteries of Grace and Truth, which concern the Person of Christ without knowing the Person of Christ, this is a great Truth, but contains no great Mystery: As for instance, Unless we have some knowledge of the Person of Christ, God manifested in the flesh, we cannot understand the love of God in sending Christ into the World, nor the great Mystery of Pardon and Forgiveness through the blood of Christ, we can know nothing of his Death, and Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven, and Intercession for us at the right hand of God, and all those benefits we receive from it; we cannot understand our Adoption in Christ to be the Children of God, nor our Union and Relation to him as our Head and Husband, as our Lord and Saviour, nor the communications of his Grace and Virtue to us, nor his Power and Authority to raise us from the Dead,

to judge the World, and to bestow Life and Immortality upon his obedient Disciples: Not that the *Springs of these Truths lie in the Person of Christ*, or must be learnt from a contemplation of his Person, but from the Revelations of the Gospel. But the knowledge of Christ's Person is necessary in order to understand those other Gospel Mysteries, for the same reason, that it is necessary to understand, that there was such a man as *Alexander*, before you can know what he did, where he was King, what Battels he fought, what Victories he won; or by the same reason, that you must first know the subject, before you can know the properties, and qualifications of it. If this be all the Doctor intends, I must confess it is very sound and Orthodox, but yet I must say, that time was, when he meant otherwise, and his obscure way of expressing so plain a thing would make any one suspect, that he meant something more still; and if he does, then after all his soft and palliating expressions, it must come to this, That the Person of Christ is the Spring and Fountain of all saving Knowledge, from whence we must learn all those Mysteries, which are but obscurely and imperfectly revealed in the

Gospel, unless we make use of this knowledge of Christ and acquaintance with his Person to expound and unriddle them: And indeed his second Explication of his sense in this matter plainly looks this way: For under an *acquaintance with Christ* he includes the knowledge of him, *as the Eternal Son of God incarnate, the Mediator between God and Man, with the Mystery of the Love, Grace, and Truth of God therein, as revealed and declared in the Scripture.* This comprehends all those Revelations, which immediately concern the Person of Christ, as his Nature, Offices, Mediation, and all the benefits which flow from them; *the Mystery of the Love, Grace, and Truth of God therein;* And then he adds, That without such a knowledge of the Person of Christ as this (which contains all we can know, and all that is revealed in the Gospel concerning Christ) *There is no true useful saving knowledge of any other Mysteries of the Gospel to be attained.* This indeed is very warily said, and like a right Sophister; set aside all the saving Mysteries of the Gospel, which concern the Person, and Offices, and Mediation of Christ, and then there are no other saving Mysteries to be discovered, or at least no saving knowledge of any other Mysteries, because

because he knew very well, that no Christian could own any saving knowledge, when he had laid aside the knowledge of Christ: And yet in this saying he craftily insinuates too, that there are some other saving Mysteries, which are to be discovered, when we are first acquainted with Christ; and he should have done well to have told me what they are, and how they may be discovered, since my Living or my Christianity lay at stake, and I am not very good at guessing; but since he has here concealed this secret, we must learn what it is from his former Writings, and then whatever danger there be in it, I must needs say, that this acquaintance with the Person of Christ is a very ill way of expounding Scripture, or of learning Gospel-Mysteries, as being that, which different men may use to different purposes (as I shewed in my former Discourse) and from whence some men draw such Conclusions, as do quite evacuate the ends and design of the Gospel.

This is sufficient to vindicate my self from those imputations of Falshood and Calumny, which occur almost in every Page of the Doctors Answer, but I shall not dismiss this subject thus, but shall

first shew you, that there is such a way of reasoning from the knowledge of Christs Person now in great vogue among some late Writers, and what Arguments I reject upon that score, as weak or fallacious: And secondly, discourse something more particularly concerning this way of reasoning.

As for the first, I have given instances enough of this nature in my former Discourse, which were so plain and evident, that I thought the bare mentioning of them was sufficient to convince any man from what Principles such Arguments and Conclusions were deduced. But because I find, that my Adversaries are willing to take no notice of the chief design for which those passages were alleadged, but to fall into some collateral Disputes, I must be forced more expressly to state the matter in debate, and reduce it to another form and method.

The Question then between us is plainly this, Whether any Persons pretend to learn or prove the great Principles of their Religion from an Acquaintance with the Nature, Person, Offices of Christ, distinct from the Revelations of the Gospel. In my former Discourse I asserted, that they deduced such Doctrines from the knowledge

knowledge of Christ, as are no where expressly contained in Scripture, and I doubt not, but that will appear true, upon a particular examination of such Doctrines as they have or shall fall in my way: but let the Doctrines be true or false, the present dispute is, whether they make the knowledge of Christs Person a new medium of saving knowledge, from whence we may learn the greater, deeper, and more saving Mysteries of Religion, distinct from the Revelations of the Gospel: And that they do so is plain from this, that most of the Arguments, from whence they deduce, and by which they prove their most darling and mysterious Notions, are wholly owing to an acquaintance with Christs Person, and are no where express in Scripture. I have already given two instances of this in his way of proving *the naturalness of vindictive justice to God, and the desert and demerit of sin,* and shall now add some more.

The Doct^r proves from the Deity of Christ (as I observed in my former Discourse) *the endless, bottomless, boundless grace and compassion that is in him, mercy enough for the greatest, the eldest, the stubbornest transgressor, the infiniteness of Grace with respect to the Spring or Fountain* (the

Deity of Christ) *will answer all our Objections. What is our finite guilt before it? (How comes this guilt to be finite now? When we are so often told, that the demerit of every sin is infinite, as being committed against an infinite God, and requiring an infinite satisfaction for its Atonement) Shew me the Sinner, that can spread his iniquity to the dimensions (if I may so say) of this Grace. I am glad to hear the Doctor put so fair a sense on these words, and to declare to the World, that he designed no more in it, than to invite all sorts of sinners, though under the most discouraging qualifications, to come unto Christ for Grace and Mercy by Faith and Repentance: Though any man, who reads that long Discourse about an endless, bottomless, boundless Grace and Compassion in Christ, such an infinite Grace as makes nothing of our finite guilt, as all the sins in the world cannot equal its dimensions, without one word of Faith or Repentance, or a new life to qualify us for this mercy, especially if withal he understood what a great Patron the Doctor is of the necessity of holiness and obedience to qualify us for Gods mercy (as appears from what I have already discoursed above) would not easily have guessed this to have been his meaning:*

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meaning: And whoever writes a Book which cannot be understood without a Commentary, ought not to complain that he is mistaken, nor charge his Readers upon that account with ignorance, falshood, or calumny: Though for my part I shall be very well contented he should write another Book consisting of little else than those mild and gentle imputations of falshood and calumny, so he will but recant, or at least handsomly palliate those doctrines, which otherwise may encourage bad men continuing so, to lay claim to such a boundless and bottomless mercy.

But my present business is to observe, how the Doctor proves, that there is such a boundless, bottomless Grace in Christ, and his Argument is taken from his Divine Nature, which is infinite: For *when the Conduit of his humanity is inseparably united to the infinite inexhausted fountain of the Deity, who can look into the depths thereof; if now there be Grace enough for sinners in an all-sufficient God, it is in Christ.* This is a plain instance of this way of reasoning from an acquaintance with Christ, (with his Divine nature) which the Scripture nowhere teaches, and which is weak and fallacious: For though the Divine Nature

ture be infinite, yet the exercise of mercy and compassion is regulated by wisdom, and the free choice of the Divine Will, and therefore though we may conclude from the Divine Nature, that God will be gracious and compassionate to sinners, yet we cannot certainly know in what measures and proportions God will exercise this Grace and Mercy without an exprefs declaration of his Will; and when God has declared his Will, as he has now done in the Gospel, it is then at best to no purpose to argue from his Nature, unless we have a mind to encourage Sinners to expect more Grace from the Divine Nature than God hath promised in the Revelation of the Gospel.

p. 272. So that though we should suppose, *that he did not consider this boundless Grace in Christ as Mediator, but considered it as in him who is Mediator* (which by the way spoils all the comfort sinners might take from the boundless mercy of the Divine Nature in Christ, if this be not in him as our Mediator, unless we may expect more Grace from Christ upon his Personal account, than from his Mediation, that is, more from the Person than from the Gospel of Christ, which contains the terms of his Mediation, which he so vehemently

vehemently disowns) yet I say this Argument were weak and fallacious, because we cannot reason thus from the Divine Nature it self, for though the Divine Nature be the Fountain of Grace and Mercy, yet the Divine Will regulates the exercise of it, and assigns its measures; much less can we reason thus from the Divine Nature considered in Christ as our Mediator; for a Mediator as Mediator, though he be *God-man*, is not the Fountain, but Minister of Grace, as Christ witnesses, *That he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him.* And thus he is considered in Scripture, even where he is said to be *the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and truth*, which seems not primarily to refer to the inherent glory and perfection of his Nature (though that may be proved from it) but to the glory of his Ministry, which was the only glory the Apostles could then discover, when his Essential Majesty was hid under a vail of flesh: and therefore I think still, the Doctor would do well to make *God the Father the Fountain of Grace*, for though when we consider the three Persons in the Sacred Trinity in the Unity of the Divine Essence, what is attributed to one is supposed to be attributed to the other; yet when

when we consider them under different capacities and relations, it is not so: Christ as God essentially one with the Father and Holy Spirit is the Fountain of Grace, as Mediator he is the Minister of it; the Father sends, and Christ is sent; the Father prescribes his work, and he finishes it: And therefore to make Christ as Mediator, the Fountain of Grace is a derogation from God the Father, whom the Scripture makes the first mover and supreme Agent in the work of our Redemption.

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I observed in the same place another instance of this way of reasoning from the Divine Nature in Christ, to prove that Eternity, Unchangeableness, and Fruitfulness of his Love. Now this, I say, is a way of proving the Eternity, Unchangeableness, and Fruitfulness of Christ's love, which the Scripture nowhere teaches, but is wholly owing to an acquaintance with Christ: And I wonder that the Doctor should be at a loss to know what it is I except against, whether it be, *that the love of Christ, as he is God is Eternal? Or that it is Unchangeable? Or that it is Fruitful, or Effective of good things unto the Persons Beloved?* It is neither of these in themselves considered, for I own all,

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as he very well knows, but I except partly against his way of stating these things, and partly against his way of proving them: or rather against both together. What he means by this Eternal, Unchangeable and Fruitful Love, he tells us himself: *The love which I intend, and whereunto I ascribe those properties is the especial love of God in Christ unto the Elect.* This is such a love, as is Eternal without beginning, and without end, as does not change with the changes of the object, as the love of men does, and is so fruitful and effectual, as to love Life, Grace, holiness into us, to love us into Covenant, to love us into heaven. Now my business is not to dispute the case, whether God have elected some particular Persons, whom he will infallibly bring to glory, which I never denied yet, and I think never shall: But the question is, Whether the Eternity, and Unchangeableness, and fruitfulness, of this Electing Love, can be proved from the Eternity, and Immutability, &c. of the Divine Nature: The inconvenience I then urged it with was this, *If this love be so Eternal and Unchangeable, &c. because the Divine Nature is so, then it was always so, for God always was what he is, and that which is Eternal could never be other than it is now;*
and

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and why could not this Eternal, and Unchangeable, and Fruitful love as well preserve us from falling into Sin, and Misery, and Death, as love Life and Holiness into us all. To this the Doctor answers, "That Gods love is in Scripture represented Unchangeable, because he himself is so, but it doth not hence follow, that God loveth any one naturally or necessarily. His love is a free act of his Will, and therefore though it be like himself, such as becomes his nature, yet it is not necessarily determined on any object, nor limited as to the Nature, Degrees, Effects of it, which he proves from the different dispensations of the Grace and Mercy of God under the Law and Gospel; and adds, "God is always the same that he was, love in God is always the same that it was; but the Objects, Acts, and Effects of this Love, with the measures and degrees of them, are the issues of the counsel or free purpose of his Will. Now this Answer is what I would have, and plainly discovers the Sophistry of this way of reasoning: For if this electing Love be not the immediate and necessary effect of the Divine Nature, but the free choice and purpose of his Will, then we cannot learn either that it is, or what it is
from

from the bare contemplation of the Divine Nature, but from the declarations of the Divine Will; for we can prove nothing from the Divine Nature, but what has a necessary and inseparable connexion with some attribute and perfection in God; but where a free choice and counsel intervenes, we must be contented to be ignorant, or to learn from Revelation.

We may certainly conclude from the holiness and goodness of God, that God will love good men, and hate the wicked, because holiness includes in the very notion of it a necessary love to goodness, and hatred of evil; and from the immutability of God, we may conclude his unchangeable love to goodness, and hatred of evil, as the Psalmist expresseth it, *Psal. 103. 17, 18. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto Childrens Children, to such as keep his Covenant, and to those who remember his Commandments to do them.* And this is all that can be proved from the natural notion of an immutable love. But we cannot hence conclude, that God hath elected any particular persons as the objects of this unchangeable love; whether this be so or
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no, must be determined by Revelation, which contains the declaration of the free purposes and counsels of the Divine Will.

It is impossible from the nature of God to determine, whether God has from all Eternity decreed whatever shall come to pass in time; because the Decrees of God are the free choice of his will, and therefore he might either decree, or not decree, as he pleased: Nor does the immutability of his Decrees depend immediately upon the immutability of his Nature, but upon the immutability of his Counsel, for God may if he please make temporary and conditional Decrees, which shall last but for a certain time; and be performed only upon certain conditions as well as those which are absolute and peremptory: And therefore when the Apostle to the *Hebrews* would prove the immutability of the Gospel-Covenant, he does not argue from the immutable Nature of God, who cannot alter what he once decrees, but from his immutable Counsel, which he confirmed to *Abraham* by an Oath, *Heb. 6. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.* For when God made promise to *Abraham*, because he could swear by no greater, he swear by himself, saying, surely blessing I will
bless

bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee; for men verily swear by the greater, and an Oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife, wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise, the immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us. So that the foundation of our hope rests upon the unchangeable counsel and purpose of God, confirmed by an Oath, which at most resolves it self not into an unchangeable love, but into unchangeable truth and faithfulness, that God will never alter that, which he hath promised never to alter. This is plainly expressed too in that Promise made to *David* concerning the perpetuity of his Kingdom, wherein he was a Type of Christ, and of the Eternal duration of his Kingdom, *Psalms 89. 33, 34, &c.* Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips; once have I sworn in my holiness, that I will not lie unto *David*, his seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me. Thus to give but one instance more of
this

this nature, when God by the Prophet *Isaiah* makes such a gracious Promise of the restoration of the Gentiles, and their incorporation into his Church, he confirms it in the very same manner, *Isa. 54.8,9,10.* *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redecmer; for this is as the waters of Noah to me; for as I have sworn, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee, for the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.*

And it is very observable, that throughout the Scripture, where it is said, that God will not repent, it refers not to the immutability of his Nature, but of his Counsels; Thus in *1 Sam. 15. 28, 29.* *Samuel* acquaints *Saul* with his immutable Decree to remove the Kingdom from him: *And Samuel said unto him, the Lord hath rent the Kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou;* and to assure him of the Immutability of this Decree, he adds,

adds, *And also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent, for he is not a man, that he should repent.* The like we may see in *Jer. 4.28.* where God denounces his severe Judgments against *Jerusalem*: *For this shall the Earth mourn, and the heavens above be black because I have spoken it; I have purposed, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it:* Whereas in other cases, notwithstanding the Immutability of the Divine Nature, the Scripture frequently mentions Gods repenting both of the good and of the evil, which he had thought to do, when the change of the Object required such a change in his affections, and in the administrations of his providence: Nay, in that very place where God assigns his own immutable Counsels, as the reason why he had not destroyed the Posterity of *Jacob*, when they had so grievously provoked him, yet he thought it no blemish to his Immutability to assure them, that he would alter the administrations of his Providence according to those changes and alterations which were in them; for his immutable Promise to *Abraham* required, that he should not utterly destroy them, and his immutable love to holiness and goodness required the latter, *Mal. 3.6,7.* For I

and the Lord, I change not, therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed. Return unto me, and I will return unto you saith the Lord of Hosts. And this is what I asserted, that the only natural Notion of an immutable love, which we can learn from the Contemplation of the Divine Nature, is that God always loves for the same reason; that he always loves those who are good, and hates those who are wicked, not that he always loves the same Person, let him be good or wicked: And as for what the Doctor objects against this, that then either God indeed never loveth any man, be he who he will; or that he is changeable in his love upon outward external reasons, as we are; I think by his good leave I need chuse neither of them; the first I by no means like, that because God loves none but good men, therefore he loves no man, for though there are but a few good men in the world, yet I hope there are some, and I do as little like the other; for though God alter his love to any person, when he ceases to be good, yet this is not to change upon outward External reasons, but upon such reasons as are essential to his Nature; for it is contrary to the holiness of the Divine Nature to love wickedness, or a wicked man: God's
love

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love to holiness and hatred of evil is immutable as his nature is, and therefore when any Person ceases to be good, God must cease to love, which does not argue any change in God, but in the Object, and when the Object is changed, the immutability of his love is the reason why he loves no longer.

As for what the Doctor adds, *In the mean time, such a love of God towards Believers, as shall always effectually preserve them meet Objects of his love and approbation, is not to be baffled by such trifling impertinencies:* Whether what I have discountenanced be a trifling impertinency let others judge; but when he makes it a necessary effect of an immutable love effectually to preserve such Persons meet Objects of love and approbation, he grants all that I have contended for, that the immutability of Gods love in it self considered is no argument, that he will always love the same Persons, unless they continue meet objects of his love; for if the love of God be so immutable, as always to love the same Person, be he what he will, then such a man is a meet Object of love, while he continues the same Person, whatever his qualities are, and there is no more required to this, than that God should uphold him in
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being: But if besides his being such a particular Person, on whom God hath fixt his love, there be any other qualifications required to make him, and preserve him a meet Object of love, then the Doctor must acknowledge, that Gods immutable love requires an Object which does not change, one who persists and perseveres in the practice of an Universal Righteousness, which is all I contend for, the immutable love of God to good men, under that notion as good: For supposing any change in the Object, God must either continue to love an unmeet Object, or else cease to love: And let him chuse which side he pleases; if the first, he attributes such an immutability to God, as is inconsistent with wisdom and holiness, and favours more of the stubbornness and impotency of humane Passions, than of a Divine Love: If the latter, then he makes the Love of God as mutable and Subject to changes as I do.

And as for that love of God to Believers, which always preserves them meet objects of his love. the Doctor mightily mistakes me, if he thinks I designed to oppose it; I acknowledge the perseverance of Believers to be the effect of the Divine Grace, as well as their believing at first; but if he designs

designs this for a description of Gods electing love, which is the immutable cause both of faith and perseverance, as it is plain he does, I wonder, why he calls it *Gods love to believers*; for Election in the Doctors judgment considers no qualifications in Persons; and what he calls *Gods love*, is more properly Gods Decree to Love, when the Person is a fit object for it: And it is necessary to distinguish between an immutable Decree to make and preserve a fit object of love, and the immutability of the Divine Love; The first depends upon an immutable Counsel; The second upon the persevering meetness and fitness of the object to be Beloved.

I have already given several other instances of this way of reasoning from an acquaintance with Christs Person, from his being our Surety and Mediator, our Head and Husband, and the like, and intended to have added many more, but this is sufficient to satisfy any impartial Reader, what I mean by an acquaintance with Christ's Person, and how far the Doctor and his Friends may be charged with it, and therefore at present I shall only briefly consider this way of reasoning, and put a conclusion to this Argument.

Now I readily agree with Mr. *Ferguson*, that in many cases it is not only justifiable, but necessary to Reason from Revelation; and I must needs say, that the instances he gives of it are unanswerable, but whether they may be called deductions and consequences from Revelation let others judge: As the application of *general Precepts, Promises, and Commixations to single Individuals, and universal directions to particular cases.* The application of ancient Prophecies to their Events, whereby the Apostles proved Christ to be that Messias who was to come. And the testimony of Miracles for the proof of a Revelation, which are the principal instances Mr. *Ferguson* gives, as will appear to any one who consults those Texts of Scripture, which he alleadges in this behalf. But this is nothing to our present Dispute; the question is, whether we may deduce any new Doctrinal Conclusions, which are neither expressly taught in Scripture, nor can be found out by meer Principles of Reason, from their supposed connexion with some thing which is revealed.

And I think thus much we may safely say, that we can know no more of matters of pure Revelation than what is revealed;

revealed; whatever wholly depends upon the free and Sovereign Will of God can be known no other way but by Revelation, as no man can know the secret thoughts and counsels of a man, but those who learn them from himself; and by the same reason that we can know nothing of these matters without a Revelation, we can know no more neither than what is revealed; which consideration alone is sufficient to overthrow this way of reasoning from an *Acquaintance with the Person of Christ.* This Argument I have managed at large in my former Discourse, and know not what I should add to it here, unless it be a more particular application of it to our present case.

As for instance, we learn from Revelation that Christ died for our sins to make Atonement and Expiation for them, and to procure pardon and forgiveness for all true Penitents; but because Christ died for our sins, it does not hence follow that there is *such a natural vindictive Justice in God*, as would not suffer him to pardon sin without a full satisfaction: for Christ's Death being the effect of Gods free Counsel, we can know no more of the cause, and reason, and motive of it

than he has revealed; there may be several other reasons assigned on Gods part, why he should send Christ into the world to save sinners, besides a natural Vindictive Justice, and the Scripture has assigned several other reasons of Christ's Death, but has never assigned this: And indeed unless we will assert that the Death of Christ did necessarily result from the nature of God, and was not the effect of his free choise and counsel, this reasoning must be false: For I hope they will acknowledge God to be as necessarily good, as he is just (for there is no reason, why goodness should be thought the free act of Gods Will and Counsel, and Justice the necessity of his Nature,) and if so, then supposing the fall of man, which brought sin and misery into the world, the Death of Christ was as absolutely necessary, as that God should be good and just: The goodness of God (according to this way of reasoning) made it necessary to redeem Mankind from that state of misery, and the Justice of God made it necessary for him to punish sin. This punishment must fall either upon the Sinner himself, or some other in his stead; the Sinner cannot suffer the just desert of sin without being Eternally miserable,
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and none else could expiate our sins but only the Son of God incarnate; who by being Man was capable of suffering, and by being God, gave an infinite value to his sufferings, answerable to the infinite demerit of sin: So that if God be as necessarily Good as he is Just, his Goodness did as necessarily determine him to provide a ransom for sinners, as his Justice did to punish sin, and there being no other possible way of doing this, but by the Incarnation and Sufferings of his own Son, the Death of Christ is as necessary an effect of the Justice and Goodness of the Divine Nature, as Light is of the Sun.

Thus though Christ died for our sins, yet we cannot meerly from the Death of Christ certainly conclude, that he died for all, or only for some, that he died for us absolutely or conditionally; for the extent and efficacy of Christ's Death, as well as his Death it self, depends upon the Will and Counsel of God, and therefore cannot be known without a Revelation.

Christ fulfilled all Righteousness, but we cannot hence conclude, that he fulfilled all Righteousness for us, and that we are accounted righteous for the sake of
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his perfect Righteousness imputed to us; for he might fulfil Righteousness for a great many other reasons, and this is the most unlikely reason of all: The same may be said of those choice Conclusions from Christ's being our Head and Husband, our Surety and Mediator, our Physician, and Shepherd, and Rock, and Life, &c. Whatever Conclusions we draw from these which are not revealed in the Scripture are at best very uncertain and lubricous, because all these Revelations and Offices of our Saviour, with their extent and virtue, and manner of their execution depend upon the free Counsel of God, and therefore can be known only by Revelation.

Indeed, those who argue and reason from an Acquaintance with the Person of Christ seem to be aware of this, and therefore they endeavour to reduce the whole Mystery of our Redemption by Christ to necessary causes, that God could not do otherwise, and that Mankind could not be saved in any other way, which is enough to prejudice all wise men against the whole Systeme of their Divinity, and yet they can take no other course to uphold their cause, for if it be once supposed, that this may be otherwise,
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all their Arguments will be found weak and unconcluding.

Thus for instance; if we suppose, that God may forgive true Penitents, without exacting satisfaction, this destroys their Notion of a natural Vindictive Justice, and their wild conceit about the nature of Christ's satisfaction, which is built on it, as if it were only to gratifie an inexorable revenge. If it be supposed, that God may forgive our sins, and accept and reward our sincere though imperfect services for the sake of Christ's Death, and Sufferings, and Righteousness, without accounting us perfectly innocent and perfectly righteous with the Righteousness of Christ; if God may for Christ's sake dispense with the rigour and severity of the Law, and accept of sincerity instead of perfection, than all their Arguments for the necessity of imputation (in their notion of it) fall to the ground.

If Christ may be our Surety and Mediator, and yet not be obliged to fulfil all Righteousness in our stead, if Christ may fulfil all Righteousness, and yet this Righteousness not be imputed to us; if the antecedent necessity of Repentance and a new Life may be reconciled with the Grace of God, and the Merits of Christ,
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than to be sure it is not necessary it should be otherwise, and then all their Arguments are weak and fallacious, for if they do not conclude necessarily, then the contrary may be true.

And is it not strange presumption for any men to say, that there is no other possible way for God to save Sinners than what they have described in their ill-digested Systemes, and yet all their Arguments from an acquaintance with Christ's Person proceed upon this, and can never be made good without it. For if they be not necessarily true, they may be false: And if they may be false, they are no good foundation for our Faith. We have an excellent instance of this in Mr. Ferguson's way of proving the Mystery of the Trinity from its necessary connexion with the Doctrine of Original Sin: *For the Mystery of the Trinity hath a necessary Connexion with the Work of our Redemption by the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the work of our Redemption by the Incarnation of an infinite Person hath the like Connexion with the necessity of satisfying Divine Justice, in order to dispensing of Pardon to repenting Offenders, and the necessity of satisfying Justice for the end aforesaid, hath a necessary Connexion with the Doctrine of the corruption of Mankind;*
and

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son, p. 35.

and the corruption of Humane Nature is both fully confessed, and may be demonstrated by reason. And thus the Mystery of the Trinity is at last demonstrated by reason, that is, from the wickedness and degeneracy of Mankind.

And thus they reason in other cases; they prove the necessity of a Vindictive Justice, and the necessity of Satisfaction, and the necessity of the Incarnation and Sufferings of the Son of God, and the necessity of his fulfilling Righteousness, and the necessity of Imputation, nay, a necessity of the Divine Decrees themselves; For the Arguments, which they commonly alleadge in these cases, if they have any force in them, must prove all this to be necessary, and without this can prove nothing else.

When we discourse of the free Counsels and Purposes of the Divine Will, we must learn from Revelation what God has done, and what he will do, not argue what he must do: Or we may confirm our Faith by considering how fit and becoming it is, and how agreeable to the Divine Nature and Perfections, or at most may argue probably from some collateral Circumstances, to prove the thing likely and probable, an instance of which I
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gave at large in my former discourse ; but we must pretend to know no more of matters of pure Revelation, than what is revealed, unless we can either comprehend the infinite Methods of the Divine Wisdom, or discover a necessity of Nature in God, that he could do no other than what we fancy ; or can pretend to a Spirit of Propheſie and Revelation, to discover thoſe hidden Myſteries to us, which are either concealed or obſcurely hinted in the External Revelation of the Letter. And indeed, ſometimes they talk at this rate, as if every particular man muſt have an immediate Revelation from Chriſt to enable him to expound the External Revelation, which is but a dead Letter without it ; and I know no other ſecure refuge they have, but to take Sanctuary in Enthuſiaſms and pretended Inſpirations.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the Union of Believers to Chriſt, and the imputation of Pelagianism.

IT is time now to proceed to the conſideration of our Union to Chriſt, in which Argument Mr. *Ferguson* has put out his whole ſtrength, ſuch as it is, which conſiſts only in ſome Childiſh Cavils, falſe Representations, and insolent and fooliſh Triumphs. Though I wonder he has no more craft, than to tell ſuch improbable Stories, as confute themſelves. As for inſtance, he charges my Notion of Union to Chriſt *with diſſerving holineſs* ; Why, what is my Notion of Union ? That I expreſſed in few words, That *Chriſt is a ſpiritual King, and all Chriſtians are his Subjects, and our Union to Chriſt conſiſts in our belief of his Revelations, obedience to his Laws, and ſubjection to his Authority* : How can this diſſerve Holineſs, which makes Holineſs and Obedience Eſſential to our Union ? This is a very improbable Story, and I doubt he will find few Vouchers for it :

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of Rea-
ſon in
Religion,
p. 443, &c

ti: And yet to see the power of wit; he has two or three as plain proofs of it as heart can wish.

For first he observes, that I acknowledge, *that in one sense we must be united to Christ before we can be holy*: But then he ought to have been so honest, as to have told what *sense* that is. I shall transcribe that passage, and leave men to judge what they please of our Author. "Our Union to Christ is more or less perfect, according to our attainments in true Piety and Vertue. The first and lowest degree of our Union to Christ is a belief of his Gospel, which in order of nature must go before Obedience to it; but yet it includes a purpose and resolution of obeying it; and in this sense we must be united to Christ before we can be holy, because this belief of the Gospel is the great Principle of Obedience: But then our Union is not perfected without actual Obedience, this makes us the true Disciples of Christ, when we are fruitful in good Works. So that all I affirm is, that we must first believe the Gospel before we can obey it, and that a sincere belief of the Gospel, and a hearty resolution of obeying it, does begin our union to Christ before we may have

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ledge of
Christ,
p.349.

have the opportunities of External Obedience: The Internal acts of the mind, as Faith and Repentance, and the love of God, and the sincere purposes of a new Life, are antecedently necessary to our Union to Christ; but External Holiness and Obedience, which requires time and opportunities of action, which are not always in our power, may not always go before, but must always follow to complete and perfect our Union. Which I thus explained in the same place: "Christ receives bad men as soon as they believe his Gospel, and resolve to be good, but their Reward is suspended upon the performance of these Vows, and this is no reproach to his Holiness.

But still Mr. *Ferguson* can prove, that I make our Union to Christ to be perfected without actual obedience, though I expressly affirm the contrary, because I say, *That to be in Christ signifies no more than being members of his visible Church, which is made up of Hypocrites, as well as sincere Christians*: And so I say still, *That where Christ speaks of such branches in him as bear no fruit, Joh. 15.2. By being in him he can intend no more than being Members of his visible Church by a publick profession of*

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Faith

Faith in him, for otherwise this Phrase of *being in him* cannot be applied to hypocrites, who bear no fruit; But how does it hence follow, that our Union to Christ is compleated without Obedience? For did I ever assert, that an External Union to the visible Church did complete and perfect our Union to Christ? And if it does not, then I hope we may safely assert, that to be in Christ is sometimes taken in that Latitude of sense, as to include Hypocrites as well as sincere Christians, and yet not assert a complete and perfect Union to Christ without Obedience.

But it is very pretty to observe our Authors Criticism upon our Saviours words, *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, which he says may as well be read, Every branch that beareth not fruit in me, he taketh away*: Now suppose we should be so civil, as to grant him this, What will he gain by it? Why, *then the true import of it is this, That unless we be in Christ we can bring forth no fruit to God, and that what shew of being branches we make by an External Membership in the Church, yet that shall be no obex to Christs disclaiming and renouncing our works.* His design is to prove, that *every branch in me* does not signifie those branches which are

Ibid.
P 445.

are in Christ; and therefore he will not joyn *in me* with *branch*, but with *beareth fruit*, which being a very dull observation may pass for his own: For I would fain learn of Mr. *Ferguson* in what this branch is: It is certain *de fide*, that it is a branch, unless he can find some new reading to avoid that too; Of what then is it a branch? There is nothing in the Context to which this branch can refer; but only the Vine, which is Christ; and therefore if it be a branch, do what he can, it must be a branch in the Vine, a branch in Christ. And then I have a farther scruple still (supposing we did allow his reading) how a branch, which is not in Christ the Vine can bear fruit in Christ the Vine: And therefore if it be acknowledged, that God expects from such branches, that they should bear fruit in Christ, it must be confessed, that in one sense or other they are in him; for they can in no sense be said to bear fruit in him, till in some sense they may be said to be in him. And there is still one little difficulty behind, what is meant by God's *taking away* those branches which bear not fruit in Christ: This is a plain Allusion to the Husbandman's cutting dead and fruitless branches off from the Vine, and

so signifies the Excision of such fruitless branches from the body of Christ; and how can they be cut off, and taken away from Christ, if they were never in him.

And yet after all our Author is forced to return to what he designed to confute, and by a *Branch* to understand one who lives in *External Membership with the Church*, and by so doing makes a shew of being a *branch in Christ*, that is, (as he must mean, if he means any thing) of being vitally united to him, when he is not; which is as much as ever I asserted in this matter; only he will by no means allow, that these branches may be said to be in Christ, though he owns them to be members of the visible Church of Christ; and yet he has no way to prove, that a *branch* in this place signifies a *Church member*, but only because it is called a branch in Christ.

A second and third Argument, where-
by Mr. *Ferguson* proves my Notion of Uni-
on to Christ to be destructive to Holiness,
are both resolved into this, That I deny
the supernatural assistances of Grace from
Christ to make men holy; and therefore
that Holiness and Obedience, which
alone I make necessary to our Union to
Christ

Ibid.
p. 447, &c

Christ is not true Gospel-holiness, as not being owing to an infused Principle derived from Jesus by the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost. And that it is impossible for any Persons, though compleatly and perfectly united to Christ; to attain true Holiness for the future, because Christ is not considered as a quickning Head, and a vital root of influences to us. Now though I suppose Mr. *Ferguson* and I shall hardly agree about the manner of the Holy Spirits working in us, which he affirms to be by a real and Physical operation, yet I never denied, but have expressly owned the Divine Influences of Grace from Christ, as will appear plainly before I conclude this Chapter. But suppose for once that I had denied this, and had affirmed, that men might be holy without it, would it hence follow, that I rejected the necessity of holiness, or made it impossible to Mankind, because (though falsely) I should assert, that men are and may be holy without such supernatural strength and power. Yes, for this is not a *Gospel-Holiness*, which is wholly owing to the Divine Grace: But does the efficient cause then constitute the nature of things? Suppose two men, one immediately created by God, another begotten in the ordinary course of nature, but both perfectly

fectly alike, as to all the Essentials of Humane Nature, does this make such a difference between them, that one must not be called a man, as well as the other, because one was created, and the other begotten. Thus in the same manner, suppose one man immediately created by God perfectly righteous and holy, as *Adam* was; Another, who is renewed and sanctified by infused Principles of Grace, and by the Physical operation of the Spirit; And a third, who by diligence and industry, by reason and discourse, and the wise improvement of his natural faculties, hath arrived to the same temper of mind, to the same Principles and Habits of Action, which were immediately created in the first, and Physically infused into the second. If there were such a man, as this, I would willingly understand, why he should not be accounted as truly and properly holy as either of the former; by the same reason, that he is as true a man, who is begotten by the strength of nature, as *Adam* was, who was immediately created, or as *Christ* was, who was formed in the Virgins Womb by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost.

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The original Holiness of God is the Pattern of all Holiness, and the holiness of Creatures consists in a conformity to the Divine Image, not in being produced by a Divine Power: The sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary to the Being, not to the Nature of Holiness: Could that which we call Holiness be produced by the strength of natural Reason, and our natural Faculties, it would be nevertheless Holiness for that: And therefore unless *Mr. Ferguson* can prove, that that Holiness, which I make essential to our Union to *Christ*, is defective in something which constitutes the nature of Holiness, though he could prove that I attributed Holiness to the strength and power of Nature, he will only make himself ridiculous, by charging my Notion with destroying the necessity of Gospel-holiness.

But this whole charge was the effect only of a weak and contemptible revenge, because I had charged them (and made good my charge) *with placing our Union to Christ before holiness of life*: What defence can *Mr. Ferguson* make against this? Truly none at all, but according to his old way he denies it, without attempting to answer any thing which I

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Christ,
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of Rea-
son,
p. 440,
441.

alleadged in the proof of it: And yet (which argues him to be a man of much greater courage than wit) at the very same time he denies and owns it, or which comes much to one, professes that it is very indifferent to him, whether it be so or not. He tells us, *All that we plead for is this; That as previously to our Union with Christ, we are polluted and unholy, so by that very act, whereby he unites us to himself, he infuses those Principles into us, whereby our natures are cleansed, and we come to be denominated holy and pure.* Here he expressly acknowledges, that before our Union to Christ we are polluted, and unholy, and therefore we must be united to him while we are unholy, for every minute before, our Union is previous to it. Well, but then *by the same act that he assumes us into Union with himself, he transforms our natures.* Suppose that yet we are unholy till we are united, for we are made holy by vertue of our Union; and our Author tells us, *That it is a needless enquiry, whether our Renovation in order of nature precede our Union with Christ, or whether our Union go before our Renovation, seeing in order of time they are not only inseparable, but that which is the new Creature, the Seed of God, and Divine Nature in us is the very bond of our Cohesion.*

tion. Say you so Sir? *Is this a needless enquiry?* Then it seems it is indifferent, whether we be considered as united to Christ before or after we are holy; and why then should he pretend so much to abhor the thoughts of our being united to Christ while we are unholy? And yet how this agrees with making the New Creature *the bond of Cohesion,* I cannot understand, since in order of nature, we can have no notion of any Union before or without its bond.

But to consider this a little, whether it be so indifferent to place our Union to Christ in order of nature before or after our Renovation: (For I never charged them with saying that those, who are in Christ may continue unholy, because they, as well as the *Antinomians,* do affirm, That Holiness is a necessary and Physical effect of our Union to Christ, though their Principles overthrow the necessary Obligations to it) whoever is considered as united to Christ must be considered in a state of favour and acceptance with God, as cloathed with the perfect Righteousness of Christ, as pardoned through his Blood, and so an actual Heir to Eternal Life and Glory; now if a man may be considered as pardoned,
and

and justified, and an Heir of Glory in order of nature before he is holy, before he repents of his sins, or loves God, or so much as resolves and purposes to obey him, this I am sure overthrows the whole Christian Religion, which denounces the wrath of God against every man, who is wicked, to the very last minute, wherein he may be considered as wicked, and promises Pardon and Eternal Life only to those who actually repent and love God: If we may be considered in order of nature, as united to Christ before we are holy, then there is nothing in Sin contrary to the nature of our Union, and then we may as well be united to Christ in order of time, as in order of nature, before we are holy, and then we may (if Christ please) as well continue united, as at first be united to him without holiness: For if neither the nature of the Gospel-Covenant, nor the nature of God and Christ, hinder such a Union between Christ and bad men, while they may be considered as bad, then nothing can hinder their continuing bad after they are united to Christ, but an arbitrary Decree, or an irresistible Power. Christ may make them good if he pleases by an Almighty Power, but there is no reason can be assigned,

assigned, why he may not as well own them, while they continue wicked, as receive them into Union with himself, while they were considered as such. Christ may undertake the cure of bad men, as Physicians do the cure of the sick, this was the great end of his coming into the world, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to repentance; but to unite them to himself, to receive them into a state of favour and reconciliation, to interest them in his Righteousness, to make them Heirs of Glory, while they are considered as bad, in order of nature before they are renewed and sanctified, is contrary to the holiness of his Nature, to the express declarations of his Gospel, and perfectly alters the whole frame of the Christian Religion.

This gives us a little taste, what candour and honesty we may expect from our Author in his ensuing Discourse, in the examination of which I shall not confine myself to his method, but shall content myself to vindicate my own Discourse of *our Union to Christ* in that order and method wherein it lies, which will give me occasion to consider whatever I am concerned to answer in Mr. *Ferguson's* Chapter of Union, and then his scurrilous reflexions,

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ledge of
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flexions, and Childish impertinencies will need no answer.

The two first Propositions which I laid down in order to explain our Union to Christ are these: First, *That those Metaphors, which describe the Relation and Union between Christ and Christians, do primarily refer to the Christian Church, not to every individual Christian.* And secondly, *That the Union of particular Christians to Christ is by means of their Union to the Christian Church.* Which Mr. Ferguson tells us, *Are in his opinion things coincident:* If by *Coincident* he means, that one follows from the other, I readily grant it; but if he means, that the Propositions are the same, which have neither the same subject nor predicate, he might have spared his reflexions either upon my Logick, or accuracy of Writing, as being a very incompetent Judge of either: But the Propositions are distinct and proved by different Mediums; that which proves the first Proposition does not immediately prove the second; though Mr. Ferguson would persuade the world, that I had argued at that inconsequent rate, and charges my Logick with the miscarriages and failures of his own, which was the most effectual way he could take to make it ridiculous.

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And yet after he had charged them with being *coincident* Propositions, which signify the same thing, at the very next turn he is so far from owning them coincident, that he will not allow one to be so much as a just consequent from the other: For having recited that Paragraph, whereby I proved, *That the Metaphors, which describe the Relation and Union between Christ and Christians, do primarily refer to the Christian Church, not to every individual Christian:* He adds, *To this I answer.* 1. *That were this Discourse of our Author framed into a Syllogism, the incongruity between the Conclusion and Premises would easily appear. For example, Christ is the Head of the Church, ergo, no particular Believer is united to him, but by means of their Union with the Church.* Let us learn then how he disproves it; *I deny* (says he) *the Consequent,* (I suppose he would have said *Consequence,* had he understood the difference of those Logical terms) his Reason is this: *Surely, though the King be immediate Head to the whole Kingdom, yet he is immediate head to every Individual Person in it.* As for that word *Immediate,* I shall let it alone till anon, but our Author says very right; The King is the Head of every Subject, as well as of the whole Kingdom, and so is Christ the Head of every parti-

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of Rea-
son,
p. 597.

Ibid.
p. 611.

particular Christian, as well as of the whole Church; but this is not the thing in Controversie: The question is, Whether a King, who is Head only of his own Kingdom, can be said to be the Head of any single Person, who is not of his Kingdom, and therefore whether such a Person must not first be incorporated into his Kingdom, before he can be related to the King as his Head: Thus Christ is *primarily* stiled a Head with reference to his whole Church, which is his body, and therefore those who are not of this Church and body cannot be related to him, as to their Head; the only way to be related to Christ, as our Head, is to be incorporated into his Church, which is his body: For no head has relation to any members, which are not united to its own body.

But our Author proceeds: 2. *The Church and its Individual Members being of an Homogeneous nature, whatsoever is prædicated essentially of the whole, is equally prædicated of every part.* If by this he only means, that Christ may as well be called the Head of particular Christians, as of the whole Christian Church, I readily grant it, though it be nothing to the purpose; but the Proposition is the most absurd and sense-

less that ever was framed. A River is a Homogeneous body, and yet every drop of water cannot be called a River. The Union of several things of the same nature gives them a new denomination, which cannot belong to every particular: A Kingdom consists of a great many men, who are as much of the same Homogeneous nature as men, as Christians are, as they are Christians; and yet every particular man cannot be called a Kingdom. The body of Christ consists of a great many particular Christians, and yet every Christian is not the body of Christ: And besides this, it is fulsomly absurd to say, that *the Church and its Individual Members are of an Homogeneous nature*: For the Church is an organized body, which consists of several Christians, who considered as Members, are of as different a nature as the hand, and eye, and foot, which are of different use, necessity, and honour: So the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 12. 12, 13, 14, &c. *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ.* And he particularly mentions the Foot, and the Ear, and the Eye, which no man yet thought to be of an Homogeneous nature, till Mr. Ferguson blessed the

the world with this Discovery. His third and fourth Arguments proceed upon the same mistake, and indeed are the very same in *terminis*: That every member of the body, as well as the whole body is united to the Head, that the Church is Christ's Body, and we are all Members in particular, which is the very thing I contend for. But Mr. *Ferguson* ought to have proved, that every member is the body of Christ, or that any one can be a member of Christ, without being a member of his body; that any Christian can be said to be married to Christ, or to be his Spouse upon any other account, than with respect to his relation to the Church, which is his Spouse. That these expressions may be used of particular Christians upon account of their relation to the whole body, I deny not; but the primary use of these Metaphors is to describe the relation between Christ and his Church, and are secondarily applied to particular Christians, and particular Churches as they are members of the Universal Church.

But to come closer to the business, Mr. *Ferguson's* great spight is at the second Proposition, *That the Union of particular Christians with Christ is by means of their*
Union

Union to the Christian Church. Now methinks our Author in common prudence ought not to have expressed too great a zeal against this Notion, till he had found out some better way of stating it: And yet there are two or three plain questions, which I am sure he can never answer, without owning all I contend for in this matter.

As first, whether Christ have more than one body; I suppose he dares not say he has, because the Apostle has expressly told us, that there is but *one body*, as there is but *one Spirit*, *Eph. 4.4.* And therefore I would ask him secondly, whether every Christian, as a Christian, be not a member of Christ; this I presume he will not deny neither; and therefore thirdly I enquire farther, whether any Christian can be a member of Christ without being a member of his body: And unless our Author be very fond of non sense, and thinks every thing true which is unintelligible he dares not say it; and then the Consequence is very plain, that no man can be considered as a Christian, that is, *as united to Christ*, without being considered as incorporated into the Christian Church: For no man can be a member of Christ without being a member
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of his body, which is his Church. Mr. Hooker, in that very Paragraph which Dr. Owen alleadges, as he thought, against me, asserts this in as exprels words as ever I did: *In God we actually are no longer than from the time of our actual Adoption into the body of his true Church, into the fellowship of his Children. For his Church he knoweth and loveth, so that they, that are in the Church, are thereby known to be in him. Our being in Christ by Eternal Fore-knowledge saveth us not, without our actual and real Adoption into the Fellowship of his Saints in this world. For in him we actually are by actual incorporation into that Society, which hath him for their Head, and doth make together with him one body.* I am not ashamed to confess, that I cannot answer this, though the comfort is, that I have no need to do it. If Dr. Owen be of this mind, as methinks he should be by this quotation, I would desire him to answer Mr. Ferguson; if he be not, let him answer Mr. Hooker, or at least give an account to the world for what purpose he alleadged his authority, for grant but this; and I see nothing in that long Paragraph, which will do him any kindness, or me any injury. But to return to Mr. Ferguson, there needs no more to take off the force of his little
Cavils,

Cavils, than to state the true meaning of that Proposition, *That particular Christians are united to Christ by means of their Union to the Christian Church*; which I perceive he either does not, or will not understand. And I shall do that in these following Propositions.

First, this does not signifie, that it is one thing to be united to the Church, and another thing to be united to Christ, but our Union to Christ consists in our Union to the Christian Church, as at other times I express it: For there is no other way for a member to be united to the Head, but by being united to the body: And by its Union to the body it is united to the Head; and we cannot so much as consider any priority of nature, much less of time between these two: For though we may distinctly consider the relation, which is between the particular members of the body to each other, and that relation, which every particular member has to the head, and for a more distinct conception of them, may represent one as the means to the other; yet when we consider the relation which is between the head and particular members, we can form no other Notion of it, than their Union to that body which is
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ledge of
Christ.
p. 145, &c

united to the Head. Hence it is, that when I explain that Metaphor of Christ's being a Vine, sometimes by Vine I understand *the Christian Church*, which is founded on a belief of the Gospel of Christ, and is united to him as their Head: Sometimes I express it more distinctly, that *I am the Vine* signifies, *Christ together with his Church, which is his body*, in which Mr. Ferguson fancies great contradictions: That the Vine should sometimes signify the Church, sometimes Christ together with his Church; but *this savours only of his dulness and hebetude*, to use his own Phrase, or which is as likely, of a prevaricating conscience. For when I say the Church is the Vine, no man in his wits could imagine, that I excluded the consideration of Christ the Head, especially when I immediately explain it by Christ and his Church, that is the Head and the Body: For it is the very same thing, when we speak of our Union to Christ, to say, that we are united to Christ, or that we are united to his Church, that we are united to the Head, or to the Body, since our Union to both is the very same: And therefore it is indifferent whether we explain this Metaphor of the Vine by the Christian Church, which is the body of Christ, and inseparably

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of Rea-
son, &c.
p. 457.

rably united to the Head, or by Christ considered as Head, which implies a necessary relation to his body, to which particular Christians are united. We are in Christ as members are in the body, which unites them to the head, which is our being engrafted into this spiritual Vine: Christ is in us, as the Head is in the members, by his Influences and Government, by his Word dwelling and abiding in us, *Joh. 15.7.* And now I hope no man will believe me so senseless, as to deny the Union of Christians to the Person of Christ (as Mr. Ferguson would persuade the World I do) when I acknowledge our Union to him, as the Head of the Church, as the great Prophet, and Ruler, Prince and Saviour of his body, which he is, as he is a Person: And therefore when I affirm, *That when Christ speaks in the first Person I and in Me, he cannot mean this of his own Person, but of his Church, Doctrine, and Religion, according as the circumstances of the place require*; the plain meaning of it is this, that we must not consider the Person of Christ as abstracted from his being the Head of his Church, and the great Prophet and Teacher of it, as these men do, as will appear more in what follows.

Ibid.
p. 461.
499.

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Secondly, I observe, that we are united to Christ and to the Church by the very same act, as it must necessarily be, if the Union be the same. Faith in Christ, and such a publick profession of it, as he requires, unites us to Christ, and incorporates us into the Christian Church, that is, makes us members of Christ's body, which is our Union to him. We are not first united to Christ by Faith, and then united to the Church by our subsequent choice and consent, by explicate Contracts, as some imagine without any reason or president of the Apostolick Age; but that Faith, which unites us to Christ, incorporates us into his Church, makes us members of his body, wherein our Union consists, and that obliges us, as we will own our Christianity, to a visible Communion with the Church, where it may be had.

Thirdly, to make this yet more clear, we must consider what is meant by the Church in this question: Now the general Notion of a Church is, *a Religious Society founded on the belief of the Gospel, and an acknowledgment of the Authority of Christ, and united to him as their Head; who rules and governs them either immediately by him-*
self,

self, or by the mediation of Church-Officers, authorized by him for that purpose. That Christ designed not only to reform and save some particular men, but to erect a Church, and to unite all his Disciples to himself in one body, is so very evident, that were not men acted by Faction and Interest, it could admit no serious dispute: All the Metaphors, which describe our Union to Christ, do primarily refer to the Christian Church, as I observed before: Christ is the Head, and the Church his body, and the Apostle tells us, that there is but one body; and that he is the Saviour of the body, and that he has redeemed his Church with his own blood: The Jewish Church was Typical of the Christian, and they were all of one Family, the carnal Seed and Posterity of *Abraham*, and were all united by the same Laws, and Religious Ceremonies, and there was no way for an Alien to partake of the Priviledges of that holy people, but by being incorporated into the body of *Israel* (who were the Heirs of the Promises) by Baptism and Circumcision. Now as the Jews were the carnal Posterity of *Abraham*, so the Apostle tells us, that Christians are his spiritual Seed, the Sons of God, and the
E e 4 Children

Children of *Abraham* by Faith, *Gal. 3, 26, 29. (i. e.)* We are admitted into *Abraham's* Family, and made Heirs according to Promise: When God cast off the Jewish Church, he did not leave himself without a Church in the world, but *as some of those branches were broken off*, so the Christians, who before their Conversion were many of them Pagan Idolaters, *a wild Olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the Olive tree*, *Rom. 11. 27.* So that Christ did not come to dissolve, but to reform the Church: He owns no relation to particular men, as scattered Individuals, but as incorporated into his Church. Now the internal Union of the Church to Christ consists in a sincere and lively Faith, and a voluntary subjection to his Authority; the External Ligaments of it, are an External and visible profession of our Faith, and solemn Vows of Obedience (which is regularly according to our Saviours Institution performed in Baptism) and external and visible Communion, and the external Ministries of Grace, to which our Saviour has ordinarily annexed the internal operations of his Spirit, as will appear more hereafter.

Now

Now though Internal Union by a sincere and hearty Faith, and a subjection of ourselves to the Laws and Government of Christ will unite us to his invisible Church, where there is no visible Society of Christians professing the faith of Christ, and living in a regular Communion and Fellowship with each other; Yet where there is, we cannot be united to Christ's body without a visible incorporation into his Church: For the visible and invisible Church of Christ is but one body, and to renounce the Communion of the visible Church, where it may be had without any injury to our internal Union, that is, without being forced to renounce any Article of the Christian Faith, or to violate any of the Christian Laws, is in effect to renounce Christianity: For Christ hath appointed no other ordinary method of our Union to his body, but those ordinary and regular ways of incorporation into his Church, and though he will dispense with ordinary ways in extraordinary cases, yet we have no reason to think he will ordinarily do so, which would be to dissolve his visible Church, or to make External Communion the most arbitrary and precarious thing in the world.

A

A secret Faith in Christ, and acknowledgment of his Authority does not ordinarily unite us to his body, but is only a necessary qualification, and disposition to such a Union: But in order to an actual Union there is required such a publick profession of our Faith, and solemn Vows of Obedience, performed with such initial Rites, as our Saviour has appointed, as does actually incorporate us into the Christian Church, as makes us members of the Universal Church, visible or invisible, and more immediately unites us to the particular Church wherein we live; just as it is in our admission into any Relation or Society, there is required an antecedaneous consent to qualifie us for it, but this alone does not unite to such a Society, without such particular Ceremonies, or publick Oaths and Engagements as by the Laws of that Society are required to our actual admission: And therefore in the Ancient Church the *Clinici*, who delayed their Baptism till they were under the apprehensions of death, though all their lives they professed the Faith of Christ, yet refusing by this holy Rite to be actually incorporated into the Church, they were looked on at best as a very imperfect sort of Christians.

of

of whose state there was just reason for doubt and jealousy.

Fourthly, we may observe some difference in the manner of our admission into the Church according to the different states and dispensations of it: We may consider the Church in its *Idea* and *Embryo*, before there be any visible Society of Christians, and in this case, though the first Believer cannot be said to be admitted into any Society of Christians, yet he may be said to be admitted into the Church: For then the Church signifies Christ, who is the Head, and such a platform and Idea of a Society, which is to be set up in the world, formed according to such a model of Laws and Government, Priviledges, and Immunities as are described in the Gospel. This is no other than what is necessary in the first forming of any Societies upon a publick Charter or Commission: He who is first admitted into any Colledge or Corporation is made a member of that Society, though as yet there be none but himself, for there is the foundation of a Society laid, where there is a Head and Governour, and publick Laws, and Constitutions, and Priviledges for the Government of it.

Thus

Thus when our Saviour did converse upon earth, and was a visible Head, then the way to be united to him was immediately to put themselves under his Government, to go directly to him, and to profess their Faith and subjection to him: Upon which account Faith is called *coming to Christ*, which Phrase is never used to signify believing, but only in the Gospels, and with reference to that time, while he conversed on earth: But since Christ ascended into heaven, and left a visible Authority in the Church, there is no other way of admission into his Church but by the Ministry of men invested with his Authority, nor is there any other way of submitting our selves to the Authority of Christ, but by a regular subjection to the Discipline and Government of the Church: as you may see more at large in my former Discourse.

These things being premised, it will be a very easie task to answer all Mr. Ferguson's little Cavils. As 1. He argues, *If particular Christians be united to Christ only by virtue of a previous relation to the Church, I would then fain know of Mr. Sherlock, how the whole Church comes to be united to the Lord Jesus.* If this will do him any kindness, it is quickly answered: For the whole Church

Know-
ledge of
Christ,
p. 162.

Interest
of Rea-
son, &c.
p. 59.

Church is united to Christ, just as particular Christians are united, by Faith and Obedience: The only difference is, that the Church is united as a body, particular Christians as members of that body. The foundation of this Objection is, That our Author imagined, that our Union to the Church, and our Union to Christ, were two distinct things, and that we are united to Christ and to the Church by two different acts, and then indeed his Argument would have entangled me in a Circle, but I have already broke this Circle in my first and second Propositions. *For though the Church being an aggregate body of believers, can no other ways embrace the Revelations of the Gospel, or yield obedience to its commands but in the virtue of what her particular constituent members do; yet this may be done in such a manner, as to unite them all to Christ, not as single Individuals, but as formed and cemented into a regular and well-proportioned body.*

His second Argument in short is this, *That the Christian Church being nothing else but the collective body of Christians, it naturally follows, that they must in priority of nature be Christians before they can any way belong to the Church.* But I can imagine no reason for
this;

this; for it is sufficient, if they be made Christians by their Union to the Church, for then the Church will still be the collective body of Christians. And indeed if every Christian be a member of Christ, it is not imaginable how any should be a Christian, before he be united to the body of Christ.

His third Argument is, *That the Apostles were immediately united to Christ without any antecedent relation to the Church, and therefore every Individual Christian may be so too:* And this he proves, *because there was no Christian Church pre-existent to them, into whose Fellowship and Society they could be admitted:* But this I have already answered in my fourth Proposition, that we may be said to be admitted into the Church, where there is no visible Society of Christians to joyn with: If Christ might then be called the Head of the Church, I know no reason why the Apostles at that time might not be called the members of it. And though the Apostles were immediately under the Government and Instruction of Christ, while he was visibly present with them, yet I suppose there may be some reason assigned, why other Christians cannot be so immediately united to him, now he is not present as a visible Head on earth.

Thus

Thus far, Mr. Ferguson tells us, he has discoursed these things, taking the Church for the Universal Catholick visible Church, which is the most favourable acceptation to befriend my Notion; But I can tell him a more favourable acceptation than this, which he durst not touch on, The Universal Catholick Church, visible or invisible: For the visible and invisible is the same Church of Christ, and every Christian being a member of Christ's body, which is but one, every Christian is as truly united to the invisible, as to the visible part of it; and where there is no visible Church, our Union to Christ is secured by our Union to the invisible Church. Had Mr. Ferguson thought on this, he would not have urged that Argument from the Union of the Apostles and first Believers to Christ, without any pre-existent Church to be united to: Unless he thinks that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the good men, who lived before Christ's Incarnation, were not of his Church, and then I would desire him to tell me how they were saved. Whoever is admitted into the Christian Church must of necessity be admitted by the Ministers of some particular Church, but yet this makes him a member of the Universal Church, which

which is Christ's body. Our relation, as we are Christians, is to the whole body of Christ, and to a particular Church, as a branch and member of it; our Christianity is not confined to any particular Society of Christians, but our obligation to external fellowship with any sound part of the Church of Christ, where-ever the Providence of God casts us, is our antecedent relation, at least in priority of nature, to the whole Christian Church. Thus I am sure our Church of *England* in her Office of Baptism declares, that she receives the baptized Person *into the Fellowship of Christ's Church*, not of this, or that particular Church, but of the whole Church of Christ, and teaches her Children, that in their Baptism they are made *the members of Christ*, which word is of a larger import than the members of a particular Church: And *St. Paul* tells us, that as there is *but one body*, so there is *but one Baptism*, which makes us members of that one body. This was one Argument whereby the Fathers in the Council of *Carthage* proved the invalidity of that Baptism which was administered by Hereticks and Schismaticks, who separated from the Church; because they being out of the Church, could not admit any one

one into the Catholick Church. *Frastra ille putat se esse baptizatum, cum non sit baptismus nisi in Ecclesia, unum, & verum, quia Deus unus, & fides una, & Ecclesia una est, in qua stat unum baptismus, & sanctitas, & cetera; nam quae foris exercentur, nullum habent salutis effectum.* Now whether they were mistaken in their Conclusion or not, the Premises were the received Doctrine of the Catholick Church, owned by those very Fathers, who opposed the re-baptization of Schismaticks. Cyr. Conc. Carthag.

We are united to Christ by our Union with the Catholick visible or invisible Church, which necessarily includes our visible Fellowship and Society with that particular Church, wherein we live, when we may hold Communion with it without renouncing the Christian Faith, or violating any express Law, which our Saviour has given us; as I discoursed more fully in my other Book: And when we cannot joyn in Communion with any visible Society of Christians without renouncing our fidelity to Christ, our Union to Christ is then secured in our spiritual Union to his invisible Church and body. Know- ledge of Christ. P. 165, &c

Now this gives a plain solution to all *Mr. Ferguson's Arguments*, whereby he

F f proves

proves, *That Communion with a particular Church cannot be the medium of a Christians Union to Christ.* Though I never asserted this any other ways, than as communion with a particular Church, where it may be had, is essential to our Union with the Universal Church. But let us hear what he says: First, *there may be some Individual Christians, where there is no particular instituted Church of Christ into which they can be admitted.* Then if they be Christians, they are united to the Universal Church: *But there can be no particular Church without the pre-existence of Individual Believers.* Right, but every Individual Believer is not a Christian till he be incorporated into the Christian Church: Faith is necessary to qualifie a man for admission into the Church, but though God may dispense with extraordinary cases, yet ordinarily Faith alone does not make a Christian, as appears from the third Proposition: We must believe and be baptized if we will be saved: For Baptism ordinarily incorporates us into the Christian Church, to which alone the Promises of Salvation are made. And whereas a late Author thinks to evade the force of this Argument by observing that our Saviour adds, *But he that believeth not shall be damned,*

Separati-
on yet no
Schism.
p. 5.

damned, Mark 16.16, So that *men shall be damned meerly upon account of their unbelief, and not meerly for want of baptism, provided they have faith:* It is on the contrary very evident that no such thing can be concluded from our Saviours words: He first lays down the terms of Salvation, Faith, and Baptism, and methinks those men make very bold with our Saviour, who affirm, that we may be *ordinarily saved* (for our Saviour speaks here of ordinary cases) without Baptism; but then he adds, who shall be damned, and they are Unbelievers of two sorts: such Infidels as refuse Baptism, and such unbelievers as are baptized: So that *he that believeth not, shall be damned,* signifies, that though Faith and Baptism be necessary to Salvation, yet unbelief alone whether men be baptized or not shall damn them: For I would ask this Author, whether supposing that our Saviour had designed in those words, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved,* to signifie, that Faith and Baptism were both necessary to Salvation; it had been proper for him to have added, *but he that believeth not, and is not baptized, shall be damned:* which would have damned only unbaptized Infidels, and have given too great reason to

Ff 2

baptized

baptized hypocrites and unbelievers to hope for salvation.

But to return to Mr. *Ferguson*, his second Argument is this, *That Christians may be obliged upon their loyalty to Christ to renounce Communion, not only with the particular Church with which they have walked, but to suspend fellowship with any particular Church, that lies within the circle and compass of their knowledge.* If there be a just cause for this, it will be their vindication, and this will not prejudice their union to the invisible Catholick Church; But I hope all good Christians will be more wary of this than our Author and his Friends are, for humour, and frowardness, and interest will not justifie a separation.

His third Argument is of the same nature, and needs no other answer, *That Christians may be injuriously cast out of the Communion, not only of one, but of every particular Church, and yet remain united to Christ:* If they be injuriously cast out, it shall be no prejudice to them, for Christ will reverse all unjust Sentences; such men are still united to Christ, and therefore are united to his body, the Catholick invisible Church: But what he adds, *that a man may be justly secluded for a time from communion with any particular Church, and yet*
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his union to Christ not be dissolved: Though it make nothing against me, for if he be still united to Christ, he is united to the Catholick Church, though secluded from the Communion of the visible Church; yet it is directly contrary to the sense of all antiquity, and makes the censures of the Church vain and useles things: What is the meaning of that authority our Saviour hath granted to his Apostles and Ministers, *whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven;* if they may bind, and Christ loose, if they may justly separate men from the body of Christ, and yet Christ keep them united to himself? which I fear must be unjustly done, if the other be justly; unless he will say, that the Church may justly separate men from Christ, & Christ justly keep them united to himself. All Divines indeed grant, that whatever is done *errante clare* through ignorance and mistake, or for some worse reasons, is rectified by Christ; but to say that Christ makes void the just and regular Censures of his Church, is expressly contrary to his declared will, and is in effect to repeal and countermand that authority which he has left in his Church: and therefore so far as any man is justly
F f 3 separated

separated from the Church, he is separated from Christ too, and cannot regularly be restored again but by the same authority. But I suppose Mr. Ferguson (and he has some reason for it) is of Mr. Watson's mind, *That neither Sin nor Satan can dissolve our Union with Christ*, and then I know no reason, why it should dissolve our Union with the Church neither.

His fourth Argument is, *That none are to be received under the notion of members into a particular Church, but upon a presumption that Christ hath received them.* But it is sufficient, if they be such as Christ will receive and own, when they are incorporated into his Church; and indeed Mr. Ferguson's way is down-right nonsense. For Christ's *receiving* men is his admission of them into his Church, as members of his body, and if Christ must receive them, first he must own them for members of his Church, before they are members of his Church, and no man is fit to be admitted as a member of the Church, before he be a member of the Church: As for what he adds, that men must first be Believers before they be admitted members of the Church, is very true, but Faith only does not make them Christians, as I shewed above.

His

His fifth Argument is, *That it is a Persons submitting himself to the Laws and Authority of Christ, which swayeth and influenceth him to submit to Pastors and Teachers, and to joyn with others in the fellowship of the Gospel; and by consequence our union with a particular Church is so far from being the bond of our Union with the Lord Jesus, that on the contrary our Union with him is the motive and inducement of our joyning into fellowship with a particular Church.* This is so far from being true, that on the contrary we have no visible way of submitting to the Authority of Christ, but by submitting our selves to that Authority and Government, which he hath left in his Church: For Christ does not govern us now as a visible head, but by the Ministry of men, whom he hath invested with authority for that purpose. The belief of Christ's Power and Authority is the reason of our subjection to the Church, but we do not actually submit to the Authority of Christ on earth, but by our actual subjection to the Church, as I shewed above in the fourth Proposition. As for his proof from the example of the *Churches of the Macedonians, that they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then unto them (the Apostles) by the will of God, 2 Cor. 8. 5.* Which he thus expounds,

F f 4

That

That it was by taking upon them the observance of Christs commands, that they found themselves obliged to coalesce into Church Societies; it is a famous example of our Author's skill or honesty in expounding Scriptures; for the Apostle speaks nothing there of Church Societies, or the reason of their entering into them, which was no dispute in those days, when Independency was not yet hatched; but he commends the bounty and charity of the *Macedonians* in contributing to the necessities of the poor Saints, and their great forwardness to it, that they did not need to be stirred up by the Apostles to so good a work, but on the contrary earnestly intreated them to receive the gift, and take upon them the fellowship of the ministering to the Saints. And the account the Apostle gives of it is this, that they first gave up themselves and all they had to the service of Christ, and then committed their liberal contributions into their hands to be disposed of for the propagation of the Gospel, and the relief of the Saints. This was the commendation of their charity, that it was not the effect of importunate solicitations, but of hearts entirely devoted to Christ and the service of the Church: though

αὐτοὺς ἐδωκον προῶτον τὰ Κεφάλια ἑ ἡμῶν, doth
not

not signifie, that they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us, his Apostles, who are invested with his Authority, and then expressed their bounty and liberality to the poor Christians.

His last Argument is, *That an imagination of our being united to Christ by the mediation of an Union with the Church, seems to have been the foundation of the Papal Vicarious Political Head*: But pray how so? Because I assert, that Christ is the Head of the Church, which is his body, and that he is a head only to his body, and therefore, that none can be united to Christ as their head without being members of his body, therefore there must be a *Papal Vicarious Political Head*? I must now do as *M. Ferguson* does, deny the consequent, for I am sure there is no consequence in it. He imagines that our Union to Christ, and our Union to the Church, are two distinct Unions, and therefore if we are united to Christ by our Union to the Church, there ought to be a Universal Vicarious Head on earth, to whom we may be united: Whereas we are united to no head but Christ, and we are united to this Head, as all members are, by our Union to his body, which is his Church: To be united

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ted to a Vicarious Head in order to our Union to the Real Head, if it be not senseless and ridiculous, yet is founded neither on reason, nor Scripture, nor any analogy or resemblance in nature; but to be united to the body that we may be united to the head is necessary in order of nature; for no member is any other ways united to the head but by its Union to the body: The whole Church is the body of Christ, and Apostles, and Prophets, and Bishops, are but members of this body, though of greater use, dignity, and authority than meaner Christians; as in the natural body some members are more honourable and useful than the rest. But who told Mr. Ferguson that Christ is not the immediate Political Head of his Church, and that therefore there must be a Vicarious Head? He represents this as my opinion, though I never said so, nor thought so: I have said indeed, that particular Christians are not immediately united to the person of Christ, but are united to Christ by their Union to his Church: But it does not hence follow, that Christ is not the immediate Head of every Christian, much less that he is not the immediate head of his whole Church: except he will say, that the Head in the natural

natural body is not the immediate head of the body, and of every member in it, because the hand and the foot are not immediately joyned to it.

These are Mr. Ferguson's Arguments to prove, that we are not united to Christ by being united to the Christian Church, most of which he alleedges also upon another occasion to prove, *That one living in the Fellowship and Communion of no visible Church may be a Christian* (which was the avowed Doctrine of Socinus) by this we may guess, what weight he laid upon them, and I am not at leisure to repeat my answers, as often as he repeats his Arguments, but dare venture them at one proposal against his frequent repetitions.

And therefore to proceed, among other Arguments whereby I confirmed that Notion, that our Union to Christ consists in our Union to the Christian Church. I argued from the nature of the two Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lords Supper, which our Saviour has appointed, as Symbols of our Union with him. Our first undertaking of Christianity is represented in our Baptism, wherein we make a publick profession of our faith in Christ, and solemnly vow obedience to him, and it is sufficiently known, that Baptism is the Sacrament of our admission into the Christian Church. Now

Now in answer to this Mr. *Ferguson* tells us, 1. *That Baptism is neither the medium of our Union with the Catholick visible Church, nor that whereby we become members of a particular instituted Church.* I hope our Author will not here too challenge me with contradicting the Church of *England*, which so expressly teaches us, that in our Baptism, *we were made the members of Christ, the Children of God, &c.* I observed before, that Baptism admits us into the Catholick Church visible or invisible, and admits us into particular Churches as members of the Universal Church, which signifies no more, than that by virtue of our being members of the Universal Church, we have a right, and are under an Obligation to visible Communion with any particular Church, wherein we live, if there be no just and necessary cause to hinder it.

Let us hear now how Mr. *Ferguson* disproves this: he tells us, that Baptism is not the medium of our Union with the Catholick visible Church, he should say the Rite and Ceremony of our admission and incorporation into the Church, *forasmuch as a person may be of the Universal visible Church, and yet not be baptized.* How does he prove this? Because there have been many who
(partly

(partly through want of opportunity to enjoy the Ordinance of Baptism, partly through other motives, though they are not justifiable) have denied themselves the mercy of the Baptismal Laver, and yet to suppose that thereupon they are not Christians, is to renounce all exercise of charity, and to involve our selves under the guilt of condemning those whom the Lord hath received, in which Argument there are almost as many absurdities as words. He attempts to disprove the received Doctrine of the Church by a judgment of charity, so that if a man will not be very charitable his Argument is worth nothing; and indeed his Arguments do as often need the exercise of charity, as most I ever met with: And yet in the next breath he charges those with guilt, *who condemn them whom the Lord hath received:* But if Gods receiving them be only a judgment of charity, how comes he to be so sure of it as to pronounce, that the Lord hath received them, and to condemn all those who deny it, without offering the least word to prove it? But suppose that we are so charitable as to hope that God may receive them, yet how does this make them members of the Catholick visible Church? To be sure they are not visible members of any Church, for if they were they would
not

not need the judgment of charity to make them so, and if they be not visible members, they cannot be members of the visible Church: Those who want the opportunities of Baptism, cannot be members of the visible Church, for it is supposed they do not live where there is any visible Church, otherwise they might have the opportunity of Baptism; and those who refuse to be baptized upon unjustifiable reasons, certainly were never received into the Catholick visible Church, (which never owns any members but those who are baptized) though they may be entertained in private Clans and Conventicles.

But is not this a pretty Argument against Baptism being the regular way, which Christ hath appointed for our admission into his Church, because there are some few favourable cases, which require the exercise of our charity, to hope that God may be merciful to them who are not baptized, whereas this very supposition, that it requires the judgment of Charity is a plain acknowledgment, that Baptism is the regular way of making men Christians, and that there is some reason of doubt, whether Christ will own them members of his Church who are not baptized. All

All Divines of any note tell us, that where men want the opportunity of Baptism, Baptism *in voto*, in our wish, and desire, and purpose, will be accepted; as for those who deny themselves the mercy of Baptism upon unjustifiable grounds, we must leave them to the secret judgment of God; they have not the ordinary title to the Promises of the New Covenant, and what extraordinary mercy God will vouchsafe to them who reject the ordinary methods of grace no man can tell.

His Arguments whereby he proves, that Baptism does not admit us into a particular instituted Church, are first because *it is possible that a person may be baptized where there are not enough to form any particular instituted Church*: What of that? May it not confer a right, and lay an obligation to Communion with a particular Church, when we come where it is? Which is all that is meant by our admission into a particular Church by Baptism: Well, *but it may sometimes be found necessary to deny the Priviledges of Membership in an instituted Church, even to such as have been baptized*: That is, if they be found forging of bonds, or guilty of any other scandalous sin, they may be censured and excommunicated; and

and who ever denied this? Nay, is not this an Argument that Baptism admits them into the Church, because such persons only are subject to the Censures of it? And how they can be cast out of the Church, I know not, except they were in it: The sum of this Argument is this, That Baptism does not admit us into the Church, because baptized persons, living disorderly, may be cast out of it.

But there were baptized Christians before any particular Churches were erected. Be it so; then they were members of the Universal Church, and thereby qualified to be members of a particular Church, when there should be one.

Secondly he proves, that we are not admitted into the Church by Baptism, because *none ought to be admitted to Baptism, but those who are antecedently judged to be Christians*: For which he quotes *Acts 8. 37.* where *Philip* tells the Eunuch, that if he believed he might be baptized: it seems he knows no difference between a Believer and a Christian, but I have taken notice of this already. Faith is necessary to our Baptism, and to qualifie us to be admitted into the Church; but besides this, an actual incorporation into the Church by Baptism is necessary to make

us Christians, and to entitle us to the Priviledges of Christs body.

In his third and fourth Propositions he designs to say something against me, but I cannot imagine what it is. He tells us, *That our submitting to the Ordinance and Institution of Baptism, is a visible profession of our owning the Authority of Christ*: So say I too; it is such a profession of our subjection to Christ, as Christ hath made necessary to our incorporation into his Church: But we must own the Authority of Christ, before we can make this profession of owning it. Right, we must believe Christ to be Lord and Saviour, but this alone does not make us Christians, unless we make such a profession of it, and be admitted into the Church by such publick Rites and Ceremonies as Christ hath made necessary to that end. The consent of both Parties is necessary to a Marriage, but this alone will not make the Marriage without such a publick solemnization of it as is required by the Laws of Countries: For when there is a legal way appointed for declaring our consent, no Government takes notice of any consent, till it be declared in Form of Law.

Our Author tells us, *That Baptism is both a Badg and Symbol of our Profession, and a*

found or rotten, weak or strong, and upon that score may be a perfect, or imperfect member; but considering only the relation of membership, which is the present case, every member is as much a member as any other.

But Baptism makes us complete members of the Church only under the notion of *Catholick visible*; How comes this to pass now? When in his first Proposition, he would by no means allow, that Baptism united us to the *Universal visible Church*; and yet here it makes us complete members of the Church under the notion of visible: How will he answer his own Argument? That men were baptized before there was any particular visible Church formed, and if there were no particular visible Church, certainly there could be no *Catholick visible Church* neither: Unless we can imagine, that there may be a Kingdom, which consists of a great many subordinate Societies, and Corporations, and Families, before there is so much as any one Family.

Baptism admits us into the Church of Christ under the notion of Christ's body, not under the notion of visible or invisible, unless we think, that the Covenant of Grace, and all the Promises of it, which

which are sealed to us in Baptism, be made only to the Church under the notion of visible: and then I shall not blame the Church of *Rome* for making *Visibility* one mark of the true Church.

But to proceed, I argued also from the nature of the Lords Supper, which is a Sacrament, and Symbol of our Union to Christ and Fellowship with him after we are incorporated into his Church, and signifies and represents that near conjunction which is between Christ and the Christian Church, and the mutual Fellowship of one Christian with another, as members of the same body. Which is a plain Argument, that Christ owns us, not as single Individuals, but as members of his body, as incorporated into the Christian Church.

To this Mr. *Ferguson* answers: 1. *The* ^{p. 612.} *Supper of the Lord, though a Sacrament of Union, yet it cannot be the first medium of our Union to the Church, seeing none have a right to it, but such as are already Church members. Nor did I ever say it was the first medium, but that it represents that near conjunction which is between Christ and the Christian Church, and every particular Christian, as incorporated into the Church; For as the Apostle says, (to use our Authors*

own words in another place) seeing it's one loaf (εἰς ἄρτον) of which we partake, we are therefore one body (viz. in Christ) who participate of that one loaf, 1 Cor. 10. 17. Pichorellus well observes, that Paul doth not say, we are one loaf or bread, (though our Translation renders it so) but that he argues from the Coalition of the clusters of the small corpuscles of meal (surely our Author was taught this bombast by the School-master in Sir Philip Sidney) of which a Loaf is kneaded and contexted to the identity and oneness, that intervenes between Christ and Believers, (intervening identity and oneness is a great elegancy.) But our Author seems to have abused Pichorellus not only in a phantastical Translation of his words, but in perverting the sense of them, whose words, as he has set them in the margin, are these: *Non dicit Paulus fideles unum esse panem, sed ab uno pane ducit similitudinem: Paul does not say, that all Believers are one bread, but takes a similitude and resemblance from one bread; What to do? To prove the oneness and identity, which intervenes between Christ, and single Believers? as Mr. Ferguson would represent it; no, but to prove that near alliance and conjunction which is between the whole body of Believers, which are as closely compacted into one body,*
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as the several particles of flour are; when they are kneaded into one Loaf, and so as one body are united to Christ, and entertained at his Table. Agreeably to St. Chrysostoms account of the words, as they are translated also by our Author, what is that Loaf? It is the body of Christ. what are those who partake of it? They are the body of Christ, not many bodies, but one. For as the many grains of which a loaf is formed, are so conjoined into one mass (mighty elegant still) that the distinction and diversity one from another doth not appear. Ἔτι καὶ ἀλλήλοις, καὶ τῷ Χριστῷ κοινωνοῦμεθα, in the same manner are we conjoined to Christ, and one another; or according to the order of St. Chrysostoms words, to one another and to Christ: So that though this holy Supper be not the first medium of our Union to the Church, yet it represents the Union of the Christian Church, and of all particular Christians in it, in one body to Christ, which was all I designed to prove by it.

In the second place he tells us, *That by the Lords Supper we ratifie our perseverance, and renew our engagements of being the Lords.* And thirdly, *That it is a Symbol of our Union to Christ and to each other.* And so we are very well agreed, and it is time to give over this Dispute.

Thus I have brought off my two first Propositions safe and sound, but before I proceed to the rest, I must remove a rub or two which Mr. *Ferguson* has thrown in my way: For he charges me with denying our Union to the *Person of Christ*, and our *immediate* Union to his Person; and this indeed I do in some sense, and if he had been either an honest man, or a fair Disputant, he ought to have declared in what sense I disowned it; but instead of this he fills several Pages with long and senseless Harangues to prove, that we must be united to the Person of Christ, and that it would have been as consistent with my design to own, as to deny it, when indeed I never denied it, but expressly owned it, in that sense which he would now contend for: And to give a plain demonstration of the honesty and ingenuity of this Author, I shall transcribe one Page out of my former Discourse, which concerns this matter. "The design of all these distinctions is to prove the Union of Persons between Christ and Believers, and because I find this Author hath bewildred himself, I will endeavour to help him out; for it is a very plain case, if Christ and Believers are united, their Persons must be united
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" too: For the Person of Christ is Christ himself, and the Persons of Believers are Believers themselves; and I cannot understand how they can be united without their Persons, that is, without themselves: But then they are united by mutual relations as the Person of a Prince and of his Subjects, of a Husband and his Wife are united, or by mutual affections, or common interest, not by a natural adhesion of Persons: But because I find it does not satisfy these men, that Christ and Believers are united, unless their Persons be united too, it makes me suspect, that there is a greater Mystery in this Union of Persons than every one apprehends. Upon this I considered what they meant by the Person of Christ, and our Union to him: So that I do not *impeach them, for not being satisfied, that Christ and Believers are united unless their Persons be united too*, as Mr. *Ferguson* represents it, but from their making such a difference between our Union to Christ, and our Union to his Person, I reasonably concluded, that they meant something more by our Union to the Person of Christ than every one was aware of; and so indeed I found it, as appears from what I discoursed in that place.
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And to give as short and perspicuous an account of it as possibly I can here: I observe, that by the *Person of Christ* to which we are united, they mean *such a Person, as has done all for us, and hath undertaken to do all in us*: And by an immediate Union to this Person; they mean at most an immediate application of themselves to his Person by reliance and recumbency, which gives them an interest in all that Christ has done and suffered, by vertue of an Union to his Person.

First, By the Person of Christ to which we are united, they mean such a Person as has done all for us, and has undertaken to do all in us. As for the latter part of this, that Christ hath undertaken to do all in us: I shall reserve it to be considered under the head of *Political Union*, and shall at present confine my Discourse to his having done all for us. This is their notion of Christ's being our Surety and Mediator, that in our stead he hath satisfied the justice of God, and fulfilled all righteousness, and that we are made righteous by his Personal Righteousness, which he performed in his own Person, but in our stead, and as representing us: And I should wonder that Mr. *Ferguson* denies this, but that I now know him too well
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to wonder at any thing he says. For Doctor *Jacomb* has industriously endeavoured to prove this notion of Christ's being our Surety to do all in our stead; and Dr. *Owen* hath with as great endeavours, and with like success, attempted to prove this from Christ's being our Mediator: But how far either the notion of a Surety, or of a Mediator is from countenancing any such Doctrine, I have made abundantly evident in my former Discourse, to which Mr. *Ferguson* replies nothing, but entertains and amuses his Readers with some School-pedantry in the derivation of the words *εὑρισ* and *Μεσίτης*, which he learnedly observes comes ἀπὸ τῆς *μείρα*. But to leave these little Criticisms to School-boys; and to reduce the Controversie into a short compass, the fundamental mistake is this, that they represent Christ as a Surety and Mediator for some particular men, not as the Surety and Mediator of the Covenant. I made it appear, that though we should grant, that Christ is called a Surety and Mediator, with respect to his undertaking for some particular persons, yet they cannot reasonably argue from the notion of a Surety and Mediator to prove, that Christ fulfilled all righteousness for those, and in their
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their stead, whose Surety and Mediator he was; and, as I have observed above, my Adversaries have been forced to quit this way of arguing from the general notion of a Surety and Mediator among men: But indeed the foundation of this notion is false, that Christ did undertake for particular persons, to do all for them, which was required of them, by vertue of any Law, as Dr. *Owen* represents it.

Christ by his death made a general Atonement and Expiation for Sin, and with his Blood procured, purchased, and sealed the Covenant of Grace, wherein God promises pardon of Sin and Eternal Life to those who believe and obey the Gospel; and thus his blood is *the blood of the Covenant*, and he is the *Surety and Mediator of the Covenant*: But that what Christ did and suffered, he should do in the name and stead only of some particular Persons, as their Surety, Proxy, Surrogate, or Substitute, has not the least foundation in Scripture, and is the first cause, and the only support of the *Antinomian* Heresie.

Mr. *Ferguson* founds Christ's Suretiship on the *Covenant of Redemption*, that is, on that Covenant, which some modern Divines so much talk of, between God
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the Father, and Christ concerning the Salvation of the Elect: that God the Father gives so many persons by name to Christ, to be saved by him, and upon his voluntary undertaking that work, he stands in the room and stead of those men, and does and suffers what ever was required of them, acting for them as a common person: that God imputes all their Sins to Christ, and imputes his Righteousness to them, and reckons it as much theirs as if it had been personally performed by them: Gods appointing of Christ to this work, and his accepting of it, puts him into the room and stead of the Elect, and whatever is done by him as their Surety and Mediator, is reckoned as done by them. If this could be proved, it were somewhat to the purpose, but if no such thing appear, as Christ's acting in the name and stead of any particular men, this utterly subverts their notion of Suretiship: For a Surety, or Proxy, or Surrogate, or what ever you will call him, who acts in the name and stead of others, so that what he does, is reckoned as done by those for whom he acts, must do what he does in the name, and as representing the persons of some certain particular men. For to act in the name and
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stead of another in this sense, and yet not to represent any certain person, is a contradiction.

I do not deny, but that Christ may properly be said to die in our stead, *loco nostro & vice nostrâ*, in as much as his Death was a proper Expiatory Sacrifice for Sin, or as *Grotius* explains that Phrase, *Vice nostra Christum esse mortuum, hoc est, nisi Christus esset mortuus, nos fuisse morituros, & quia Christus mortuus est, nos non morituros morte aeterna*; That Christ is said to die in our stead, because unless Christ had died, we must have died, and since Christ hath died, we shall not die an Eternal death. *De satisf. Cap. 9.* But then Christ did not so die in our stead, much less fulfil Righteousness in our stead, as to personate us, as our Substitute, Attorney, or Proxy, and the difference between these two is vastly wide: for in the first Case, Christ only so dies in our stead, that in virtue of his Expiation and Sacrifice he procures, confirms, and ratifies, a Universal Covenant of Grace with mankind upon certain terms, and conditions to be performed by us; hence his blood is called the blood of the Covenant, and he the Surety of the Covenant: But for Christ to act in our stead, so as to represent and personate us, gives us

us an immediate actual right to the purchase of Christ's Death, and to the merit of his Righteousness; for what is thus done in our stead, is in Law and Justice reckoned as done by us, and therefore can admit of no intervening condition to intitle us to it. In the first sense Christ may die for all mankind, and be a propitiation for the sins of the whole World, and the Sacrifice and Expiation of his Death be very well reconciled with a conditional Covenant. But in the second sense he can be said to die for none, but those particular men, whose persons he represented as their Surety and Proxy; and who have an immediate right to what ever he has done and suffered for no other reason, but because he acted in their name and stead: Which resolves the whole Covenant of Grace between God and man into the Covenant of Redemption, as they call it, between God and Christ.

Mr. *Ferguson* has a great mind to say something against this notion of Christ's being the Surety and Mediator of the Covenant; and not such a Surety and Mediator for particular persons as acts in their name and stead. and does for them what ever was required of them by any Law.

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Law. He first excepts against my Notion of a Surety of a Covenant, that it signifies no more than to confirm and ratifie this Covenant, and to undertake for the performance of it, that all the Promises of the Covenant shall be made good upon such terms and conditions as are annexed to them. And first he would fain insinuate the charge of Socinianism against it, though he confesses, that both Grotius and Dr. Hammond go this way, but yet my Paraphrase hath more affinity to Schlichtingius's Gloss, than to either of theirs, which is said with the usual ingenuity of our Author, without any pretence or shew of reason: For there is nothing in my Paraphrase like Schlichtingius's, which I had never seen. As he has set it down in the Margin, Schlichtingius's Comment is this: *Sponsor fœderis appellatur Iesus, quod nomine Dei nobis sponsonderit i.e. fidem fecerit Deum fœderis promissiones servaturum esse, non vero quasi pro nobis sponsonderit Deo, nostrorumve delictorum solutionem in se receperit. That Jesus is therefore called the Surety of the Covenant, because he hath promised us in Gods name, that God shall keep and perform the Promises of the Covenant, not that he undertook for us to God, by taking upon himself the discharge of our debts, or sins; That is, by making*

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Which is so far from being my sense, that it is directly contrary to it.

For when I say, that Christ's being the Surety of the Covenant, signifies his confirming and ratifying the Covenant, and undertaking for the performance of it, under those Phrases of confirming and ratifying, I include whatever Christ did in order to the full and complete ratification of the Covenant, and had a principal regard to that Expiation and Atonement which he made for sin, which was the procuring cause of the Covenant of Grace, and the Seal and ratification of it: For thus Covenants were confirmed by Sacrifices in the Eastern Countries. Thus Moses confirmed the Covenant between God and the people of Israel, by sprinkling the book and all the people with the blood of the Sacrifice, saying, *this is the blood of the Testament, which God hath ordained to you, Heb 9.19,20,21.* Upon which account the blood of Christ is called the blood of sprinkling too, because by his blood God did seal and confirm the Covenant of Grace, as the sprinkling the blood of beasts did confirm the Mosaical Covenant, as I expressly observed in my former Discourse, from whence Mr. Ferguson might have learned what I meant by confirming and ratifying the Covenant.

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Now this alone answers all Mr. Ferguson's Objections against my Notion of a Surety of a Covenant. He tells us, that the Surety of a better Testament, and Mediator of a better Covenant are equipollent terms, (though he produces no other reason for it, but that Christ is called a Surety in one place, and Mediator in another, whereas the notions seem to be somewhat different) and that his being stiled a Surety hath respect not to his Prophetical, but Sacerdotal Office; and what follows from hence? Why therefore Christ's being our Surety does not signifie his confirming and ratifying the Covenant, which had been an unanswerable objection, had I attributed the confirmation of the Covenant to Christ only as Prophet, and not as Priest; but now proves nothing but our Authors great forwardness to answer Books before he understands them, or great skill in affixing perverse senses on them.

But Mr. Ferguson has one extraordinary Argument to prove, *That there is nothing of ratifying the Covenant, and undertaking for the performance of it intended in the term of Suretiship, because this shakes God's infinite veracity, which is the foundation of all Divine Faith. We may sometimes question, whether such a declaration come from God, but admitting*

ting once, that it is his, there is no room left to suspect its being true; and therefore Christ could not confirm the Covenant; For Christ needed a testimony from God to confirm his mission, but God needed none from him to establish his being true and unchangeable. But he quite mistakes the state of the question, for Christ's confirmation of the Covenant is not his giving testimony to the truth and faithfulness of God, but such a confirmation of the Covenant, as is made by a purchase, and by a Seal; which is an evidence to us that the Covenant is confirmed past all revocation, which no Covenant is, till the Seal is put to it; or to use the Apostles Argument from the nature of a Testament, which is not in force till the death of the Testator, which reason the Apostle assigns, why the first Testament was dedicated with blood, and why this New Testament should be dedicated, and confirmed, and ratified with the blood of Christ, Heb. 9. 15, 16, &c. which gives a plain Answer to his other Argument, That the Apostle reckoning up all the evidences of the Immutability of God's Counsel, hath omitted this, and thereby precluded it from the number of them. Whereas in this very place the Apostle tells us, that this New Testament receives its

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force and final confirmation from the death of Christ, who is the Testator. And whereas he adds, *Other security in order to our consolation we need not, nor hath God thought fit to give any but his Promise and Oath;* and for this alleadges Gods Oath to *Abraham*, Heb. 6. 16, 17. though we should acknowledge, that God confirmed his Covenant and Promise to *Abraham* only by an Oath, yet it is as plain, that he has confirmed his Covenant with us by the Death of his Son; and indeed God ratified his Covenant with *Abraham* too by Sacrifice, and that at *Abraham's* request, Gen. 15. 8, 9, 10, &c. And this Mr. Ferguson at last acknowledges, *that the enacting of the Covenant of Grace (which I suppose includes a final ratification of it) respects Christ's undertaking to be made sin, and to undergo the Curse, as the moral cause and condition without which there had been no overtures of mercy made to the Sons of men:* And that upon this account is Christ called the Surety of the Covenant. This is a very dilute account of the Death of Christ, to make it only the condition *sine qua non*, without which God would not have made overtures of mercy; but he mends this in what follows, that *It was in consequence of Christ's susception to be our Sponsor, and with respect to*
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the obedience of his life, and Sacrifice of his Death, as the procuring and deserving cause that God entered into a Covenant with mankind, &c. Which is no more than I always affirmed, excepting by *Sponsor* he means, that Christ did act in the name and stead of any particular men.

Having thus got rid of Mr. Ferguson's Objections against my Notion of Christ's being the *Surety of the Covenant* (for what he discourses of Christ's being a Mediator having nothing new in it, deserves no particular consideration) I come now to shew what necessity there is of rejecting that Notion of *Christ's being a Surety and Mediator for particular persons, to do for them in their name and stead, whatever was required of them by vertue of any Law;* and that in short is this, that it is one of the first and fundamental Principles of *Antinomianism*, from which are deduced all those pernicious Doctrines which alter the whole frame and design of Christianity, and do naturally tend to debauchery and licentiousness.

I shall give but some short hints of this, because the thing is sufficiently evident and notorious. Thus from hence they argue, that the very sins and iniquities of the Elect, and not only the guilt and

punishment of them, is laid on Christ, because he stands so in our stead, as to become just what we were: *Hast thou been an Idolater? Hast thou been a Blasphemer? Hast thou been a Murderer, an Adulterer, a Thief, a Liar, a Drunkard? &c.* If thou hast a part in the Lord Christ, all these transgressions of thine become actually the transgressions of Christ, and so cease to be thine, and thou ceasest to be the transgressor, from that time they were laid upon Christ, to the last hour of thy life. Christ himself is not so completely righteous, but we are righteous as he was; nor we so completely sinful, but he became, being made sin, as completely sinful as we. So that here is a direct change, Christ takes our persons, and condition, and stands in our stead, we take Christs person, and condition, and stand in his stead; what the Lord beheld Christ to be, that he beholds the Members of Christ to be; what the Lord beholds the Members of Christ to be in themselves, that he beholds Christ himself to be. This is very true arguing from this Principle, that Christ did to all intents and purposes stand in the stead, and represent the persons of particular men; and thus far Dr. Owen and Mr. Ferguson agree very well with Dr. Crisp.

But secondly, Dr. Crisp argues farther, That every Transgression, first and last, great and

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and small, one with another, are carried away at once, and laid upon Christ: Which is a necessary consequence of the other; for if all our sins were laid on Christ, and he took them away with one Sacrifice for sin, then they must be taken away all together. *Whatever sinfulness you have committed, do commit, or shall commit, there was one Sacrifice once offered by Christ, through which he hath perfected them that are sanctified.*

And thirdly, from hence it follows, that we are actually acquitted from the time of our sins being laid upon Christ: For sin cannot be laid upon Christ, and continue upon the sinner too; and therefore from the time of sins being laid upon Christ, the sinner is acquitted and justified. But for the fuller explication of this, Dr. Crisp distinguishes between God's laying Iniquity upon Christ by way of obligation, by way of execution, and by way of his own application of it to his people; by way of obligation God did lay iniquity on Christ, when he did tie, and bind, and oblige himself to it. And that is from all Eternity, then he did it in his own determinate Counsel, when in his own Counsel he did determine it should be done. But this was a secret tie and obligation upon God, but God did lay the Iniquity of his people upon Christ openly, when he did openly bind himself by Cove-

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Ibid.
P. 90, 91.

Ibid.
P. 244.

P. 248.

nant to do it: viz. in that first Promise which he made to Adam after his Fall.

But then God laid Iniquity on Christ by way of execution, as he in time served the execution upon Christ, which may be considered, as it was virtual, or as it was actual and real. The execution was served upon Christ in the virtue of it, from the first instant that ever there was a transgression committed, and not only at that time when sin was first committed, and from thence to the time of his suffering, but also afterwards from the time he had suffered to the end of the world. For you must know that Christ was to bear the sins of the Elect from the beginning to the end of the world, and he was to discharge this debt at once, and therefore he does not actually do this, either at the beginning or at the end of the world; but in the fulness of time Christ came and reckoned with the Father, and the Father hath so much of him for all that is past, and as much for all for after-times to the end of the world: Saith Christ to the Father, here is so much for every one of mine, that they have run out for the time that is past, and here is so much for every one of my Members that shall come after; they will commit so many sins in time to come, here is so much for all that sin they shall commit. And this is Gods serving execution actually upon Christ, when

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when he died upon the Cross in the fulness of time.

But thirdly, as for Gods laying Iniquity upon Christ by way of particular application of it to this and that man: You must observe, That concerning the Elect in general, as they were in the eye of the Lord, before they had a real Existence and Being, so all their Iniquities were laid upon Christ from Eternity: But the particular application of this grace to persons must be in time, and this done either secretly or manifestly. As for this secret application (which is so called, because it is a secret thing for a time to these for whom he does it) it is at the very instant that such a person hath a being in the world: the manifest application is, when the sinner actually believes, and thereby knows, that God hath laid his sins on Christ. In the secret application of this grace unto a person, this person hath a full discharge; and in the manifestation he hath the comfort of this discharge. So that every elect Sinner is justified from Eternity, as Christ died and bore his sins from Eternity, viz. in the Counsel and Decree of God: His sins are actually paid for, and removed from his Surety too, from the time of Christ's suffering upon the Cross. From that time there was not one sin to be reckoned, either to Believers who are Christ's

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Christ's Members, or to Christ himself, he having them made satisfaction, and upon it given out unto the world it is finished: And this discharge is actually, though secretly, applied to them, as soon as they have any being, and they know that they are discharged as soon as they believe: This is the Antinomian account of Justification; and supposing their first Principle, that Christ did represent the persons of the Elect, and do all in their name and stead, I cannot see how it is possible to confute it. I confess, I cannot answer Dr. Crisp's reasoning; That God hath not one sin to charge upon any Elect person from the first moment of conception, till the last minute of his life: because the Lord hath laid it on Christ already. He did lay sins on him; when did he lay them? when he did pay the full price for them. Now suppose this person uncalled commits Iniquity, and that this Iniquity is charged upon him; seeing that his iniquities are laid upon Christ already, how comes it to pass that they are charged upon this Elect Person again? How come they to be translated again from Christ, and laid upon this Person? Once they were laid upon Christ, it must be confessed, for the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Was there by one act of Christ, the expiation of sin, and all at once, that are committed from the beginning of the world

world to the end thereof; how comes it to pass that this and that sin should be charged upon the elect persons, when they were laid upon Christ long before? And, I profess, I cannot see one hairs breadth difference between Dr. Owen and Dr. Crisp in this matter, unless it be, that Dr. Crisp speaks his mind plainly and honestly, and Dr. Owen endeavours (if it be not a natural infirmity) to cloud his sense with a multitude of words, and to lose himself and his Readers in a labyrinth of distinctions, as to give some plain evidences of it.

*Dr. Owen, in his Book entituled, *Salus electorum sanguis Iesu*, or, *The death of death in the death of Christ*, p. 145. Printed 1648. lays down these Propositions. First, *That the full and due debt of all those for whom Christ was responsible, was fully paid in to God according to the utmost extent of the Obligation. Secondly, That the Lord, who is a just Creditor, ought in all equity to cancel the Bond, to surcease all Suits, Actions, and Molestations against the Debter, full payment being made to him for the Debt: And since he ought to do this, we need not doubt but he, being a just Creditor, does do it. Thirdly, That the Debt thus paid was not this, or that sin, but all the sins of all those for whom, and in whose name this payment was made. Fourthly, That**

That a second payment of a debt, once paid, or requiring it, is not answerable to the justice which God demonstrated in setting forth Christ to be a propitiation for our sins; and therefore it is not just with God to require the payment of that Debt again of us, which Christ hath already paid for us. And fifthly, That, whereas to receive a discharge from further trouble, is equitably due to the Creditor, who hath been in Obligation, his Debt being paid; the Lord having accepted of the payment from Christ, in the stead of all them for whom he died, ought in justice, according to that Obligation, which in free grace he hath put upon himself, give them a discharge. And Sixthly, considering that relaxation of the Law, which by the Supreme Power was effected, as to the persons suffering the punishment required, such actual satisfaction is made there-to, that it can lay no more to their charge for whom Christ died, than if they had really fulfilled in the way of obedience, whatever it did require. Now I can by no means understand what all these Propositions can signify else, but to prove, that those for whom Christ died, are discharged upon his payment of their Debt, and so are justified from Eternity, as Christ paid their Debt from Eternity, in the Decree of God, and are justified in time; as soon

as they are capable of it, that is, as soon they are in being.

In his Book of *Communion*, p. 204. he has ten Propositions, much to the same purpose; He there tells us, *That Christ in his undertaking of the work of our Redemption with God, was constituted and considered, as a common publick person in the stead of them, for whose reconciliation to God he suffered. And that being thus a common Person, upon his undertaking as to merit and efficacy, and upon his actual performance, as to solemn declaration, (this is what Dr. Crisp calls Gods laying iniquity upon Christ by way of Obligation, and by way of Execution) was as such (as a common person) acquitted, absolved, justified, and freed from all and every thing, that on the behalf of the Elect, as due to them, was charged upon him, or could so be: So that he was from all Eternity upon his undertaking, and in time upon his actual performance, as a common Person, that is, in the name, and as representing the persons of the Elect, acquitted, absolved, and justified; and therefore as it follows, Christ received the general acquittance for them all, and they are all acquitted in the Covenant of the Mediator, whence they are said to be crucified with him, to die with him, to rise with him, to sit with him in heavenly places, namely, in the Covenant*

of the Mediator. This is what Dr. Crisp calls a secret application of Gods laying iniquity upon Christ to particular persons, which is done before they know it; and the only difference between him and Dr. Owen is, that Dr. Owen will not allow this to be a discharge of the Elect in their own persons, but only in the Person of the Mediator; and Dr. Crisp thinks it more proper to say, that this is a personal discharge of them, since it is done in their names and persons; but it is no great matter who speaks most properly, when the thing is the same.

In another Discourse *of the Death of Christ*, in answer to Mr. Baxter's Objections against his Treatise of Redemption, p. 72. he asserts, that the Elect have an actual right to all that was purchased by Christ's Death *before believing*, and that is equivalent to their having a right from Eternity, or from the first moment of their being. And he offers it as his one opinion, *Whether absolution from the guilt of sin, and obligation unto death, though not as terminated in the conscience* (that is, though it be not known to the Person, which is Dr. Crisp's secret application) *for complete Justification, do not precede our actual believing,* and expounds the Justification of the ungodly.

ungodly, *Rom. 4.* to this sense, as Dr. Crisp expressly does. And though he dare not assert *complete Justification to be before believing*, yet he affirms, that *absolution is*, as it is considered, *as the act of the Will of God, that is secret, and known only to God; for a discharge from the effects of anger naturally precedes all collation of any fruits of love, such as faith is.* And the difference between this absolution and complete Justification is no more but this: That absolution *wants that act of pardoning mercy, which is to be terminated and completed in the conscience of a sinner.* That is, though such a man be pardoned before believing, yet he can have no sense of his Pardon before believing, which is exactly Dr. Crisp's notion: And absolution *wants the hearts persuasion of the truth and goodness of the Promise, and the mercy held out in the Promise. And it wants the Souls rolling it self on Christ, and receiving Christ, as the Author and Finisher of that mercy, an All-sufficient Saviour to them that believe.* All which signifies no more, than that Absolution is before and without Faith; for this apprehending the truth and goodness of the Promise, and rolling it self on Christ according to the Doctors notion, constitute the justifying Act of Faith.

And

And therefore when the Doctor elsewhere tells us, that the Elect, till the full time of their actual deliverance, determined and appointed to them in their several Generations, be accomplished, are personally under the Curse of the Law, and on that account are legally obnoxious to the wrath of God. He only chuses to contradict himself, to avoid the imputation of *Antinomianism*: For by their actual deliverance, I presume he must understand the time of their actual believing; and if they are absolved before they actually believe, how can they be under the Law, or legally obnoxious to the wrath of God? And therefore he immediately qualifies this, that though they are obnoxious to the Law and the Curse thereof, yet not at all with its primitive intention of execution upon them; which is as much as to say, that they are obnoxious to the Curse of the Law, but not obnoxious to the execution of that Curse, which I take to be non-sense. How then are they obnoxious to the Curse of the Law? Why, as it is a means appointed to help forward their acquaintance with Christ, and acceptance with God on his account: By which I suppose he means, that their Absolution being at present secret, and not terminated and completed in the Conscience, they are terrified and

and scared with the threatnings of the Law, as fancying themselves to be under it; when they are not, and this makes them fly to Christ for refuge and sanctuary. And though Dr. Crisp indeed do not like this way of affrighting men to Christ by the Law, yet the difference is not great; and makes no material alteration in the Scheme of their Religion.

And therefore when Dr. Owen adds; That it was determined by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that the way of the actual personal deliverance of the Elect from the Sentence and Curse of the Law, should be in and by such a way and dispensation, as might lead to the praise of the glorious grace of God, and to glorify the whole Trinity, by ascending to the Fathers love through the works of the Spirit and Blood of the Son. All that he means by it is this, that we shall have no sense of our Absolution by the Blood of Christ till we actually believe, nor be actually possessed of Eternal Life, till we be renewed and sanctified, all which Dr. Crisp will own, and is consistent enough with our Justification, or Absolution from Eternity, since Faith and all other blessings are the effect of our antecedent Absolution in Christ, as the Doctor confesses. And this is all Mr. Ferguson means, when he

Ibid

tells us, That Christ's own discharge was an immediate consequent of his sufferings, and they for whom he suffered had also immediately a fundamental right of being acquitted, but their actual deliverance was to be in the way and order, that he, who had substituted himself in our room, and he, who had both admitted and been the Author of the substitution thought fit to appoint. This is the necessary consequence of this Doctrine, that if Christ acted as a Surety in the name and stead of particular persons, then those for whom he acted are absolved and justified by the undertaking or actual performance of Christ, either from Eternity, or from the first moment of their being.

I might add several other Consequences, which necessarily result from this Doctrine, and are the peculiar Principles of *Antinomianism*, as that we must not pray for the forgiveness of sins, because they are long since removed by the death of Christ, but only for the sense of this forgiveness; that God sees no sin in his people, because their sins are laid on Christ, and that therefore we must not lay sin upon our own Consciences neither, unless we will make our Conscience a Christ: But this is enough to shew how fruitful this Principle is of absurdities,

absurdities, and what reason I have to reject our Union to the Person of Christ, considered as one, who hath done all for us, in our name and stead.

And now I need not insist long on the second thing proposed, *viz. our immediate Union to the Person of Christ*: For though all Christians are in some sense immediately united to Christ, as I have shewn above, yet in the *Antinomian* sense of an immediate Union, I do utterly reject it, whereby they understand an Union to the Person of Christ, without any intervening Conditions on our part. And this they must necessarily do according to their notion of the Person of Christ. They explain this, as I observed in my former Discourse, by a Conjugal Relation, and a Legal Union.

As for a Conjugal Relation, which consists in such a Union of Persons, as is between a Man and his Wife, which intitles us to all the personal excellencies and perfections, Beauty, Comeliness, Riches, and Righteousness of Christ, as Marriage intitles a Woman to her Husband's Estate, and secures us from the Wrath of God, and the Accusations of the Law, as a woman under Covert is not liable to any Action or Arrest. I perceive

ceive Mr. *Ferguson* gives it over as indefensible; for among all the sorts of Unions, which he reckons up, he takes no notice of this, which is the most charming and inviting Union, and most acceptable to the Sisterhood, the best Friends to Conventicles of any other: But I suppose Mr. *Vincent* will not give it over so, and therefore I observe, that this must be an immediate Union, which requires nothing else but an embracing and clasping Faith, which unites their persons to each other: This Faith is no condition of Union, but only such a consent to have Christ, as is necessary to make the Match or rather like joyning hands, which is the Ceremony of Marriage: Though indeed the Marriage was made before, as they say all Marriages are, in Heaven. Eternal Election marries them to Christ, and this consenting Faith gives them only a comfortable sense of their Matrimonial Union, as will appear by considering the nature of Legal Union, whereby we are united to Christ, as to our Surety and Mediator, who does all for us in our name and stead.

Now it is a plain demonstration, that this Union to Christ, as to our Surety and Mediator, is immediate, for it is entirely

entirely Gods act in electing some particular persons, and giving them to Christ, to do all for them in their name and stead. And therefore Dr. *Cripp* truly argues, that it is God, and only God, that can lay our sins upon Christ, that our Repentance, and Faith, and new Obedience cannot do it: For this work of laying sin on Christ, in making him our Surety to do all for us, was done long since, and is not to be done now. Christ hath already died for all, that he will die for; and if he did not die for us, nothing that we can do now can lay our sins upon him; For as the Doctor reasons, if we could afresh by our Repentance and Faith lay our sins on Christ, as our Surety, how should he get rid of them again? For there is no getting rid of sin, but by dying for it, and Christ hath already done that, and is not to die again.

If Christ's Suretiship consists in his dying and performing all righteousness for particular persons, elected and chosen by God, our Union to Christ as to our Surety must be from Eternity, or at least from the time of his appearing in the world; for if he did not act as our Surety then, he cannot do so since, unless we should suppose, that he must come into the

world again, to act over the same part in the name and stead of those who were left out of the first Roll of Election, and therefore I do not wonder, that these men are so much blundered, and talk backward and forward in those directions, they give to their hearers, how to get into Christ; for the truth is, if we are not in Christ already, there is no getting into Christ now, according to their Principles, Election alone, and Gods giving us to Christ unites us to him, not any act of our own, neither Faith, Repentance, or new Obedience; these at best can only give us a comfortable sense of our Union to Christ, but can contribute nothing at all to our Union it self.

Of the
death of
Christ.
p.77.

And therefore Dr. Owen does roundly acknowledge, that Christ is reckoned to us in order of nature before we believe; and by Gods reckoning Christ to us, he means, the imputing of Christ unto ungodly unbelieving sinners, for whom he died, so far as to account him theirs, to bestow Faith and Grace upon them for his sake. And if God reckon Christ to men before Faith, he must reckon him theirs from the time of his giving them to Christ, for there can be no other reason of his reckoning Christ to them at all. And to shew how free and absolute this gift

gift of Christ is; he tells us, That there is no condition at all in this stipulation. That God should engage upon the death of Christ, to make out Grace and Glory, Liberty and Beauty, unto those for whom he died, upon condition they do so, or so, leaves no proper place for the merit of Christ; and is very improperly ascribed unto God. And therefore though the Covenant of Grace seem to run conditionally, that if we repent and believe, we shall be saved; yet the Covenant is indeed absolute, because these very conditions are part of Christs Purchase, and are promised without any condition; and though God will bring us to Heaven in such a way and method, as he has thought fit to prescribe to himself for the Glory of the Trinity, yet all this, in all the parts of it, is no less fully procured for us, nor less freely bestowed on us, for Christs sake, and on his account, as part of his Purchase and Merits, than if all of us immediately upon his death, had been translated into heaven.

Communion
p.206.

From all this it appears, what they mean by an immediate Union to the Person of Christ, such an Union to Christ as our Mediator and Surety, as is founded only on Electing Grace, without any thing required on our part, and in this sense, though I deny not particular Election, yet

I disown our immediate Union to the Person of Christ.

Christ is the Surety and Mediator of the Covenant, who having with his own blood made a general Atonement and Propitiation for the sins of the whole world, purchased and sealed the Covenant of Grace, wherein he promises pardon of sin, and Eternal Life to all those who repent and believe the Gospel. Such a faith in Christ, as makes us members of his Body, which is his Church, alone entitles us to all the benefits of his Death and Passion; and therefore he is said to redeem his Church with his own blood; for though his Sacrifice was general and universal, yet none have an actual interest in it, but his Church, and the particular Members of it. This unites us to Christ, and applies his Universal grace and mercy particularly to our selves. But to imagine, that Christ was appointed by God to be a Surety only for particular Persons, and to act in their name and stead, necessarily precipitates men into the very dregs of *Antinomianism*, which in this loose, phantastical, and degenerate Age is the only popular and taking frenzy.

It

It is time now to proceed to the vindication of my third and fourth Propositions in my Chapter of Union, from the misrepresentations of Mr. *Ferguson*, for this is all the skill he has shewn here, to pervert my sense, and to affix such Doctrines to me, as I never dreamt of. The third Proposition is this, *That the Union between Christ and Christians is not a Natural, but Political Union; that is such an Union as there is between a Prince and his Subjects.* The fourth is this, *That Fellowship and Communion with God, according to the Scripture notion, signifies what we call a Political Union; that is, that to be in Fellowship with God and Christ signifies to be of that Society, which puts us into a peculiar relation to God, that God is our Father, and we his Children, that Christ is our Head and Husband, our Lord and Master, we his Disciples and Followers, his Spouse and his Body.* These two Propositions our Author tells us, are according to the best understanding of enunciations he has, coincident and equipollent; which is a plain demonstration, how little his understanding is in these matters, when the third Proposition concerns the nature of our Union, and the fourth the explication of a Scripture term, which had been perverted to a very different, if not contrary sense.

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Chap. 4.
sect. 1.

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son, &c.
p. 623.

But to let pass this, and a great many other things of this nature, (as any man must do, who would not undertake such a trifling task, as to prove, that our Author neither understands Logick nor Philosophy, nor any other part of good learning, of which there are abundant evidences in this very Treatise, where he makes a great shew and flourish with that little undigested knowledge he has) his great Artifice in what follows is to conceal and misrepresent my notion of *Political Union*, and then to scuffle learnedly and valiantly with his own shadow and dreams. Sometimes he represents this Political Union to be only such an External Relation as is between a Prince and his Subjects, and ever denies, that I own any influences of Grace from Christ, as an *influential head*, as he is pleased to call him. And therefore all his reasonings, proceeding upon such an ignorant or wilful mistake, all I have to do, is to clear my own notion, and to give an account of the reason, why I stated it in this manner. As for the first: By a Political Union I understand such a Union between Christ and Christians, as there is between a Prince and his Subjects, which consists in our belief of his Revelations, obedience

to his Laws, and subjection to his Authority; and that this is the true notion of it, I gave sufficient evidence in my former Discourse, to which I must refer my Reader. But then I observed, that this Political Union, between Christ and his Church, may be either only *external and visible*; and so hypocritical Professors may be said to be united to Christ by the Ligaments of an external Profession; or *true and real*, which imports the truth and sincerity of our obedience to our Lord and Master, that we really are what we profess to be: And herein consists a material difference between that External Union which is between a temporal Prince and his Subjects, and the Union between Christ, who is a spiritual Head and King, and the true Church, or true and sincere Christians, who are spiritual Subjects. For, as the Authority of Earthly Princes can reach only the External man, because they cannot know our thoughts any other ways than as they are expressed in our outward actions, so the Union consists in an external Government, and an external Subjection: But Christ, being a spiritual Prince, governs hearts and thoughts too, and therefore our subjection to Christ, and consequently our Union to him, must not

be only external and visible, but internal and spiritual, which consists in the subjection of our hearts and minds, of our thoughts and passions to his Government. And this real and spiritual Union I explained in four particulars.

First, as I have already observed, it consists in the subjection of our minds and spirits to Christ, as our spiritual King. And secondly, this is represented in Scripture, by a participation of the same nature, which is the necessary effect of the subjection of our minds to him: Upon which account I observed, that our Union to Christ is described *by having the Spirit of Christ, Rom. 8 9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*: Which as it respects the cause, whereby we are transformed into a Divine Nature, so it signifies the Holy Spirit dwelling in us; as it signifies the effect, or that *Divine Nature, New Creature*, (which Mr. Ferguson himself acknowledges to be the *very bond of our cohesion to Christ*) so it is that *same temper and disposition of mind, which Christ had*; which, as I expressly observed, is called, *having the Spirit of Christ by an ordinary figure of the cause for the effect, for all those virtues and graces, wherein our conformity to Christ consists, are called the fruits of the Spirit,*

Interest
of Reason &c.
P. 441.

spirit. And in the Page before, that it is called *being born of the Spirit, because all Christian Graces and Vertues are in Scripture attributed to the Spirit of God as the Author of them.* And now I dare trust any man of common ingenuity to judge, whether I make our Union to Christ a meer external thing, or leave out the consideration of the Spirit of God in our Union to Christ, when I assert, that that new nature, all those Christian graces, wherein our conformity and internal Union to Christ consists, are owing to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And whereas Mr. Ferguson is so critical, that it will not satisfy him, that *the Spirit is present in the hearts of Believers in respect of that New Creature, Divine Nature, and spiritual being, which he hath wrought in them, but immediately also*; I would fain learn of him, what he means by this immediate presence of the Spirit; for if the Holy Spirit be a divine and infinite being, which is present every where, how can he be more immediately present in one place, or in one person, than in another, but only by a more peculiar manifestation of himself in his effects and operations? As God, who fills all places with his presence, is said to dwell in Heaven, because there he manifests his glory in a more peculiar manner. But

Ibid.
p. 646.

But I cannot without some indignation observe, how our Author has prophaned this holy Union between Christ and Believers by comparing it with the impure mixtures of a man with a Harlot, and representing the Apostle to argue at this rate. The Apostle tells us, *That he who is joynd to the Lord is one spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. Which I thus explained, *That herein consists our Union to Christ, that we have the same temper of mind which he had, (wrought in us by the same Holy Spirit, which animates both the Head and the Body, and every member of it, as I acknowledged before) for there can be no Union between Souls and Spirits without this, that they are acted by the same principles, and love and chuse the same things, &c.* Mr. Ferguson disproves this from that opposition, which the Apostle (as he says) makes between the Union of a man to a Harlot, and our Union to Christ; *Know ye not, that he which is joynd to a Harlot is one body, but he that is joynd to the Lord is one spirit.* From whence he argues, *If the Union betwixt a man and a Harlot, in the virtue of which they are one body, import more than merely a likeness of temper and moral disposition, as surely it doth, forasmuch as there may be a similitude in sensual propensions and inclinations,*
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where the becoming one flesh through carnal conjunction interposeth not; much more doth a Believer's, being one spirit with the Lord, imply a higher kind of Union than an affinity of dispositions. What fine work might a prophane Wit make of this! And indeed I would not have defiled my Paper with it, but only to have vindicated our Apostle, and Christianity together from such sordid and impure abuses: And any one, who consults the place, will easily perceive, that this prophane comparison is owing wholly to our Author, and that the Apostle has nothing to do with it. For in the fifteenth verse he dissuades them from Fornication by this Argument, *Know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ, shall I take then the members of Christ, and make them members of an Harlot, God forbid.* The undecency of this is very evident, that the members of Christ should be made the members of an Harlot, and therefore the Apostle distinctly proves these two Propositions, that our bodies, as we are Christians, are the members of Christ; and that that body which is joynd to the Harlot, becomes one flesh and body with her. This last he proves from the primitive institution of Marriage, *Two, saith he, shall be one flesh;* For an Harlot is an *uxor usuraria,*

usuraria, who unlawfully supplies the place of Wife; and he proves the latter, that our bodies also are the members of Christ, from that intimate Union of Souls and Spirits betwixt Christ and Believers; *He that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit*, and therefore his body too is a member of Christ, for that intimate Union between the body and the soul will not admit a separation; Christ first takes possession of our souls, and then challenges an interest and propriety in our bodies, which must be preserved holy and pure, as the Temples of God.

But then thirdly I observed, That *there is a closer Union still, which results from this, which consists in a mutual and reciprocal love; when we are transformed into the Image of Christ, he loves us, as being like to him, and we love him too, as partaking of his nature; He loves us, as the price of his blood, as his own workmanship created unto good works, and we love him, as our Redeemer and Saviour; for which I produced Job. 14. 20. At that day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you: Where by day Mr. Ferguson very wisely understands the glorified state, this Union being such a Mystery, as cannot be understood in this world, whereas the Circumstances of the*
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Ibid.
p. 655.

place determine it to our Saviours Resurrection, and the descent of the Holy Spirit, and he himself explains the meaning of this Union, *Verf. 21. He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest my self to him.* To the same purpose Christ prays for his Disciples, *Joh. 17. 21. That they may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* These Scriptures are alleadged by Mr. Ferguson too, but to prove he knows not what: He acknowledges, *That it is not an oneness of Essence betwixt Christ and Believers, that is here to be understood; nor yet is it meerly an oneness of will and affection between the Father and the Son, but it is an Essential Unity here meant.* Well, Is there an Essential Unity then here meant betwixt Christ and Believers? No, that he rejected before; What then? Why, though we plead not for the same kind of oneness between Christ and Believers, as is between the Father and the Son, yet we affirm that something more sublime than barely a Political Relation is adumbrated and shadowed forth to us. Something more than External-Political Union I believe is intended by them; but what sublime thing

Ibid.
p. 628.

is that, which is *adumbrated and shadowed forth to us* in these words (which expressions argue, that our Author is not very clear in it) that he tells us, that *by alluding to that incomprehensible Identity, which is between the persons of the blessed Trinity through a numericalness of nature, he would instruct us, that the Union between Christ, and those that are born of God, is intimate, great, and Mysterious, as well as true and real.* But Mr. Ferguson else-where tells us, that all Unions are *Mysterious*, and there are several sorts of *intimate, and great, and true, and real Unions* ; so that we are never the wiser for this account of our Union to Christ. But our Saviours plain and obvious meaning is this, that as there is a perfect harmony of will, and affections, and design, and a perfect agreement in Doctrine between the Father and himself, founded on the unity of nature ; so he prays that his Disciples may be one also among themselves, and with God from their agreement in the same belief, and participation of the same nature, and a unity and harmony of Affections.

But then I observed fourthly, that this Union is expressed in Scripture by resembling the Christian Church to Gods Temple, wherein he dwells, as formerly he did

did in the Temple at *Jerusalem*. That God now dwells in the Christian Church by his Holy Spirit, as he formerly did in the Jewish Temple by Types and Figures, and that he does not dwell thus in the Christian Church only, as a spiritual Society, but in every particular Christian, as I explained at large in my former Discourse ; which is a plain demonstration of our Authors honesty in charging me with rejecting the Inhabitation of the Holy Spirit, and making a meer External-Political Union between Christ and Christians.

This is sufficient to vindicate my own notion from the false representations of this Author, and I might honourably enough retreat, and leave him to skirmish with his own shadow, but to do all the right that may be to my cause, and to satisfy all unprejudiced & teachable minds, I shall give some farther account of the reason, why I stated the notion of our Union to Christ in this manner.

And first, the true reason, why I did not more particularly discourse of the influences of the Divine Spirit, but was contented to give some plain and short intimations of it, was, because I principally designed to consider, what was necessary

on our part, as matter of duty, in order to our Union with Christ: For here are the great and dangerous mistakes; here it is, that my Adversaries have confounded the plain Notions of Religion, and lead men into intricate Labyrinths and Meanders. What is necessary on Christ's part, he will be sure to effect, whether we do so clearly and perfectly understand it or not; but unless we understand, what is necessary on our part, it is impossible we should do it, unless it be by perfect chance and accident: These new Divines cannot to this day direct men how to get into Christ, or to be united to him. They talk of a Legal and a Mystical Union, but what we must do to be thus Legally and Mystically united to Christ they know not; we must expect till God gives Christ to us, or till Christ unite us to himself, or rather till he give us a sense and knowledge that we are united. And this is a very hard case, that when our Eternal happiness depends on our Union to Christ, we should be so perfectly ignorant how to attain to this Union.

Nay, they had so ordered the matter, that a very good man, who heartily believes the Gospel of Christ, and makes conscience of obeying it, if he be so
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weak as to hearken to their preachments, may be perplexed with Eternal Scruples about his Union to Christ; while a bad man, who hath a warm and Enthusiastick fancy, and can work his imagination into all the various Scenes of the New Birth, shall live in the perpetual embraces of Christ, and in the Raptures and Extasies of assurance, and despise the low attainments of morality and a good life.

Now my principal design was to rectifie these dangerous mistakes, to give men such a notion of our Union to Christ, that they may certainly know by what means they may attain this Union; and that good men may reap the comfort of it, and bad men, though never such Seraphical hypocrites, may see all their hopes confuted, and be forced either to let go all their pretences of Union to Christ, or enter upon a new course of life: And I could not better do this, than by making it appear, that to be united to Christ signifies to be his Disciples, to be incorporated into his Church by a publick profession of Faith and obedience, and to conform our hearts and lives to the Laws of the Gospel: And therefore I chose all along to expound those expressions of
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being *one Spirit with Christ*, of having the *Spirit of Christ*, of *Christ's dwelling in us*, and the like, so as to explain what they signified on our part, *viz.* to be transformed into the Image of Christ, to be animated by the same love of vertue and goodness, to have the same Spirit, the same temper of mind which he had, than to dispute concerning the manner of the Divine Spirits inhabitation, and operation in us, which possibly will never be determined (as very few modes of things are) and is not much material whether it be or not, so long as we heartily believe, and importunately beg, and constantly rely on the assistances of the Divine Grace.

Secondly, There is a further account to be given of this, because the gift of the Spirit is consequent to our Union to Christ, but does not constitute the formal nature of it. That there are some antecedaneous operations of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are disposed to believe the Gospel, and to list our selves into the number of Christ's Disciples, I do not deny; but these are of a very different consideration from that gift of the Holy Spirit which is bestowed on those who are actually incorporated into the Christian

ian Church, and made the Members of Christ: For Christ has promised his Holy Spirit only to those who are actually united to him, and indeed in order of nature a member must first be united to the body, before it can receive any influences from the Head. The gift of the Holy Spirit is an act of Christs Kingly Power and Authority, and concerns only his Church, and the members of it: Just as Temporal Princes can exercise no jurisdiction but over their own Subjects, and therefore we must first be united to Christ, as members of his Church, before we can expect to partake of the benefits and advantages (of which the gift of the Holy Spirit is none of the least) of his Government.

God vouchsafes the assistances of the Holy Spirit to all men, to whom the Gospel is preached, to work Faith in them, but when men do actually believe, and give themselves up to Christ in such regular ways, as he has appointed, then the Holy Spirit is a constant Principle in them upon Covenant and Promise; upon which account he is said to dwell in them, and to make his abode with them, because he is always present as a Principle of a divine life; and therefore according to

the sense of Scripture, of the ancient Church, and of the Church of *England*, the Baptism of the Spirit is annexed to our Baptism with water, which is the Ceremony of our Initiation into the Christian Church, which upon that account in the ancient Church was called *φωτισμός*, or illumination, because the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge was then bestowed on them.

And indeed *Dr. Owen* and all my Adversaries, though they differ from me in their Notion of our Union to Christ, yet do, and according to their Principles must acknowledge, that we are first united to Christ, before the Holy Spirit is bestowed on us. And *Dr. Owen* proves, that Christ is first reckoned unto us before we believe, (and I can understand no difference between Christs being reckoned to us, and our being united to him, that is, our being reckoned to him) because the Holy Spirit, which works faith in us, is bestowed on us for Christ's sake, and upon account of our Union to him: And then certainly the Holy Spirit does not primarily unite us to Christ, but is an effect and consequent of our Union to him. And this I expressly asserted in my former Discourse, that *this Union to Christ entitles us to his*
peculiar

Of the
Death of
Christ in
answer to
M. Baxter
p. 77, &c.

peculiar care and providence, to the influences of his grace, to the power of his Intercession, &c.

And thirdly, for the same reason I did not so largely and particularly discourse of Christ's being an *Influential Head* (though I expressly own those influences of grace, which we receive from Christ) because he is so only as he is a Political Head. That is, as Temporal Princes govern their Subjects by external Arts, and Methods of Discipline: So Christ, who is a Spiritual Prince, governs his Subjects, and dwells in them by his Spirit. The gift of the Spirit is an Act of his Regal Power, is bestowed only on his Subjects, and is dispensed in such regular ways, as he has prescribed for the external Conduct and Government of his Church. Thus the Spirit is at first conferred on us in Baptism, and the daily supplies of it are administered upon our constant and devout Prayers, as our Saviour has promised, that God will give his Spirit to them, who ask him: And we must expect the constant illuminations of the Spirit, and the supplies of Grace in the administration of the Word and Sacrament of the Lords Supper: By these means Christ as our Prince and Saviour conveys his Grace to us, which requires our Communion
with

with his Church in all Sacred Institutions, and is the true basis and security of Ecclesiastical Authority. Thus St. Paul tells us, That *Christ is the Head from whom the whole body fitly joynd together and compacted, by that which every joynt supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying it self in love, Eph. 4. 15, 16. and Col. 2. 18. And not holding the Head from which all the body with joynts and bands having nourishment ministred and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.* In which places the Apostle represents the nourishment and increase of the Christian Church, and of every member in it, by the growth of the natural body; in which every member does not receive its influences and nourishment immediately from the Head; but one member communicates to another in such just and equal proportions, and regular ways, as may be most for the good of the whole body. Thus every Christian, who is a member of the Church and body of Christ, does receive the influences of Grace from Christ, for his increase and nourishment, but he does not receive these influences immediately, but they are bestowed on him by the Ministry of men in the regular administration of those

those holy Institutions, which our Saviour has appointed for that end; and this is for the publick benefit and advantage of the Christian Church, to secure the Authority of Church Governours, and to preserve the Unity of Christians among themselves.

This gives a plain account, why I would not call the Person of Christ the Fountain of Grace, nor send Persons immediately to Christ for life, and power, and all spiritual supplies, because though Christ be the great Minister of Grace, yet we must not derive it immediately from his Person, but he dispenses his Grace in the Preaching of the Word, or the administration of Sacraments, and such other regular Methods, as he has appointed for the Government of his Church, and the increase and growth of his spiritual body.

Whereas Dr. Owen, and Dr. Crisp, and the rest of the *Antinomians*, represent Christ as such a Person, who has not only done all for us, but has undertaken to do all in us, and that by such natural conveyances of Grace from his Person, as there is of the animal spirits from the head to the rest of the members, and that men must first be united to Christ before they can be capable of any spiritual motion. So

Dr. Crisp,

Christ alone exalted.
Vol. 1.
p. 160. &c

Dr. Crisp, very agreeably to what Dr. Owen asserts, tells us, That *Christ is the Head; now the Head is the Fountain of all animal Spirits, and of all motion; without a Head, a man cannot hear, see, walk, feel, stir, nor do any thing, seeing all these operations come from the Head; Christ is the Head of his Church, he is the Fountain of all spiritual sense and motion; you may as soon conceive that a man is able to see, whilst he hath not a Head, as to think a man may have spiritual eyes, whether the eye of Faith to behold Christ, or the eyes of mourning to lament his wretchedness, before there be actually the conjunction of Christ the Head to such a Body. Thus Christ is called Life, and can any one be an active Creature before there be life breathed into him? — As a Body without a Soul is dead, so every Person in spiritual Actions is wholly dead, till Christ, the Soul of that Soul, be infused into him to animate and enliven him.*

For these men, as I observed before, having destroyed all the Arguments to a good life, and all the regular and ordinary Methods of Grace, are forced to resolve the renovation of our minds into a Natural, and Physical, and Immediate operation of Christ upon our minds, which makes all his Institutions very insipid and useless things, and destroys the Authority, and Necessity of Christian Societies,

Societies, if all Grace be so immediately derived from the Person of Christ.

These things deserve a larger discourse; but I am now hastening towards a conclusion, and this is sufficient to vindicate my self, and my notions, from that unjust and scandalous Imputation of *Pelagianism*, which can be attributed only either to the ignorance of my Adversaries, or to their want of better Arguments, or possibly to both.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Containing an Answer to the charge of Socinianism, and the Conclusion of the whole.

I Am now come to the last part of my Task, which may be dispatched in a few words. Dr. Owen, and Mr. Ferguson, and the rest of my Adversaries, do at every turn, especially when they have nothing else to answer, charge me with *Socinianizing*. A charge which was as much unexpected, as undeserved; but is now grown a very familiar Art among these accusers of the Brethren, to blast the Reputation of those men, who make it their design to vindicate Christianity from those absurd, and senseless, and pernicious Doctrines, which they have broached under the name of Gospel Mysteries, and to reduce people to the Communion of the Church of *England*, from which they have been seduced through the Witchcraft and Enchantments of sublime and Seraphical non-sense; and if ever it be just to express some indignation, it is in this case,
for

for as the Father observes, *In causa hareseos neminem decet esse patientem*; It becomes no man to be tame and gentle when he is charged with Heresie; and therefore I did not think fit wholly to pass over this charge in silence, nor yet shall I insist long on it, since there is no other foundation for it, but unchristian spight and malice. I suppose it will signifie no great matter to vindicate my self, nor those who suffer with me under the same Imputation, by a publick abrenunciation of *Socinianism*; for if this would do it, our Subscription to the Articles of our Church, our constant use of the *Liturgy*, especially the *Litany*, and *Gloria Patri*, the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds, the old and allowed Tests of Orthodox Christians, which no *Socinian* will allow, and is the true cause why they renounce our Communion, would be a sufficient justification both of my self and them; But they who have made such a familiar practice of it to dispense with the most Sacred Oaths and Promises, are apt to suspect all men to be as faithless, as they have proved themselves: But however because the clamours of these men have abused some innocent persons, and betrayed them to very unjust apprehensions of my self, and
many

many others, I do heartily declare, that I am no *Socinian*, and that I do not know any Divine of the Church of *England*, who can reasonably be suspected of that *Heresie*; though it is notoriously evident, that those *Seĉtaries*, who are so ready to charge us with *Socinianism*, have derived the greatest strength of their cause from *Socinian Writers*, especially in the case of *Anabaptism*, *Liberty of Conscience*, and unlimited *Toleration*, and rejecting the *Authority of Civil Magistrates* in the *External Conduct of Religious Affairs*, as they have borrowed their other *Principles of Rebellion* and deposing *Princes* from the worst of *Papists*.

The reason why *Socinus* has so ill a Character in the *Christian Church*, is his denial of the *Eternal Godhead* and satisfaction of our *Saviour*; but both these I own, and make them the foundation of my *Religion*: I expressly call him the *Eternal Son of God, that Eternal Son of God by whom the worlds were made*. I acknowledge that *Christ* died as a *Sacrifice and Expiation for sin, that by his Death he made Atonement for sin. That he purchased, and procured, and sealed the Covenant of Grace in his own blood; That Christ by his Death expiated our sins, and confirmed an Everlasting Covenant; and being ascended*

Know-
ledge of
Christ.
p. 81, 82.
Edit. 2.
p. 56
Ibid.
p. 330.
328.
Edit. 2.
p. 229. &c.

ascended up into *Heaven*, he there appears in the presence of *God* for us, and perpetually intercedes in the virtue of his blood once offered, which is of infinite more value than the repeated *Sacrifices of the Law*. At this rate I discoursed not once or twice, but as often as occasion served; and if this be *Socinianism*, I acknowledge my self to be a *Socinian*, and if it be not, let others judge what my *Adversaries* are.

But let us consider, what pretences they have for charging me with *Socinianism*. And first *Dr. Owen* affirms, that I maintain the *Socinian Notion of Justification*: And now I am very well contented to be a *Socinian*, for I have very good company in it, even the *Church of England* herself, as I have made appear above: For my notion of *Justification* is no other than what the *Church of England* does own and assert. But what is this *Socinian Notion of Justification*? That we are justified by believing and obeying the *Gospel of Christ*. This indeed the *Socinians* do assert, and so do I; and yet there is a vast difference between us; because they reject the satisfaction of *Christ*, as the meritorious cause of our *Justification*, which I own.

Upon the same account *Ravensbergerus* (such another zealous Bigot as my *Adversaries*)

Ll.

verfaries)

Vindicat.
p. 227.

versaries) charged *Grotius* with *Socinianism*, even when he writ against *Socinus* at a better rate than these men are acquainted with, because he attributed our Justification and pardon of sin to Faith in Christ, and repentance from dead works, as *Socinus* does, and the answer, which *Vossius* gives to him, may serve my Adversaries. *Socinus, ut ipse censor agnoscit, nullo alio medio interveniente hanc fidei attribuit securitatem, id est, liberationem a pœna: Grotius vero aliud statuit medium intervenire, nempe perpassiones Christi, habentes rationem pœnae, propter quas Deus nos à pœnis velit liberare; Grotius igitur prius est medium satisfactionis, quam fidei, at Socino solum medium est fides, non satisfactio. i. e. Socinus attributes our security from the wrath of God, or our deliverance from punishment, only to Faith, without any other medium; i. e. without the intervention of the Death and Sacrifice of Christ: But Grotius asserts another medium of our Pardon and Justification; viz. the sufferings of Christ under the notion of punishments, for which God was pleased to deliver us from punishment. And therefore Grotius first attributes our Justification to the satisfaction of Christ as the meritorious cause of it, and then to Faith, as the Condition; But Socinus acknowledges Faith, but rejects Satisfaction. And therefore*

Dr. Owen

Vossii resp.
ad Judic.
Raverisp.
p. 285.

Dr. Owen himself, when he formerly charged Mr. Baxter with *Socinianism* upon the very same score, and drew a parallel between that account, which Mr. Baxter gave of justification, and what is given by *Slitchtingius*, and some other Socinians, was so modest then as to confess, that he was a Socinian in this point, as far as any one could be, who acknowledges satisfaction; which is as much as to say, that he was no Socinian.

Thus to proceed, they almost every where charge me with transcribing my interpretations of Scripture out of the Socinian Expositors, and therefore I must be a Socinian. Now suppose this were true, that I did make use of those Expositions, which the Socinians give of many places of Scripture, what hurt is there in it if there be no Socinianism in them? For I have heard men, who understand very well what belongs to expounding Scripture, acknowledge the Socinians to be excellent Expositors, where their own peculiar Notions are not concerned, though no men play more tricks with Scripture, where they are: I do very often make use of Mr. Calvin's Expositions, and why do not they hence conclude me to be a Calvinist? And indeed in most of

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those

those places, where they charge me with transcribing out of the *Socinians*, they might as justly have charged me with transcribing out of *Calvin*, and, had they known all, with greater reason too: For *Calvin* I did consult upon all occasions, but the *Socinians* I never did.

I have already taken notice of and vindicated most of those Expositions which my Adversaries charge with Socinianism, as I have occasionally met with them, but *Mr. Ferguson* has put together some Texts, which he thinks I have so expounded, as to destroy their evidence for the *Godhead of Christ*. *I would not* (says our Author) *be thought to impeach Mr. Sherlock of opposing the God-head of Christ, but this I affirm, that if his glosses of Col. 1. 19. Col. 2. 3, 8. Joh. 14. 20. Joh. 1. 14. (which are the very same that the Socinians impose upon those places) be admitted; we have some of the main proofs of it, wrested out of our hands.* I always suspect our Author of some ill design, when he speaks fairly; he will not impeach me of opposing the God-head of Christ; but he will strongly insinuate, that I secretly undermine the foundations of that belief, and that I expound those Scriptures, which are produced for the confirmation of it, just as the *Socinians* do,

Interest
of Reason,
&c.
p. 475.

do, who deny it. I presume our Author was secure, that his Profelytes would take his word for this, and never concern themselves to examine the truth of it; for the imposture is so very obvious, that no man can miss the discovery of it, who takes never so little pains in the inquiry.

Most of these places concern that account I gave of the *fulness of Christ*, and in what sense the *fulness of the God-head is said to dwell bodily in him*, Col. 1. 19. Joh. 1. 14. Col. 2. 8. And the account I gave of it in short was this, that the Evangelist and Apostles in these expressions had a peculiar respect to the perfection of the Gospel-revelation, that Christ had now made a full and perfect revelation of Gods will to the world; and much to the same purpose, I confess, *Stitchtingius*, and other Socinians expound those Texts; but then *Mr. Ferguson* might have observed, that I gave a large account of the reason of that phrase, why the Apostle expresses the perfection of the Gospel-revelation by the *fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Christ*, viz. *That this is an allusion to Gods dwelling in the Temple at Jerusalem by Types and Figures, which were the Symbols of his presence.* — *And this Symbolical presence of God*

Know-
ledge of
Christ.
p. 216. &c.
Edit. 2.
p. 151.

in the Temple, was very agreeable to that Symbolical and Ceremonial worship, which he then instituted and commanded. But now he hath sent his Son to tabernacle among us, Joh. 1. 14. The Deity it self now dwells in the Temple of Christs body, not by Types and Figures, as he formerly dwelt in the Temple at Jerusalem, but by a real and immediate presence and union. And therefore those revelations, which are made by Christ, are answerable to the inhabitation of the Godhead in him, contain a true and perfect declaration of Gods will in opposition to the imperfect rudiments, and obscure Types and Figures of the Law; so that *οὐκ ἔστιν ὁμοιωσις*, bodily is opposed to Figurative and Typical, and this is a plain demonstration of the perfection of the Gospel revelation, that the fulness of the Deity dwelt substantially in Christ, and we need not doubt, but that so excellent a Prophet as he was, in whom the Deity it self inhabited, hath perfectly revealed Gods will to us. And now our Author had need rub his forehead hard to maintain this to be the very same account which the Socinians give of these Texts, or that this does evacuate the testimony of these Scriptures for the Godhead of our Saviour, when indeed this is the only way to wrest these Scriptures out of the Socinians hands: whoever denies, that the Apostle did by that

that expression of *the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Christ*, intend to signifie the perfection of that revelation, which Christ hath made to the world, must of necessity be baffled by the Socinians, there being so many evident proofs of this from the whole design of the Apostle in that place, that it cannot be avoided; and therefore the only way to vindicate these testimonies for the Deity of our Saviour, is not to argue from the primary intension and design of the Apostle in that place, but from the nature and reason of the expression; why the Apostle should describe the perfection of the Gospel Revelation, by *the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Christ*, which no man can give any tolerable account of, who denies the Deity of Christ.

But what will Mr. Ferguso say, if Mr. Calvin gives the very same account of the words, which I do? and yet if he will but consult him upon the place, he will find, that my gloss is much more like Mr. Calvins than *Slitotinius's*, or any other Socinian's. His words are these, *Cum dicit plenitudinem Deitatis habitare in Christo,* Calvin. in locum. *nihil aliud sibi vult, quam totum Deum in ipso inveniri, ut aliquid Deo melius ac prestantius appetat, qui solo Christo non est contentus:*

i. e. when the Apostle says, that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ, he means no more, than that all God is to be found in him, and therefore he must desire something better and more excellent than God, who is not contented with Christ alone. And what he means by this he further explains, *Summa est, quod Deus in Christo se nobis plenè ac in solidum exhibuerit.* The sum is this, that God hath fully and perfectly declared himself to us in Christ. Here is the perfection of the Gospel Revelation, which Mr. Calvin says is the sum of what the Apostle intended in that expression; and therefore he tells us, that the Apostle by Corporaliter bodily, understands substantialiter substantially: For the Apostle opposes that manifestation, which Christ hath made of God, to all others, that ever were before; *Deus enim sapius se exhibuit hominibus, sed in parte, in Christo autem totum se nobis communicat, alias etiam se manifestavit, sed in figuris, in Christo autem essentialiter nobis apparuit.* For God did often manifest himself before, but those were partial and imperfect revelations, but now he hath communicated his whole self to us in Christ, i. e. the perfect knowledge of his will: He manifested himself also in other ways, but it was in Types and Figures, but now he hath appeared essentially to us in Christ, that is, as he is in himself.

Thus

Thus on Joh. 1.14. The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. Mr. Calvin has this note, *Simpliciter interpretor, Christum Apostolis inde agnitum fuisse pro filio Dei, quod complementum omnium, quæ ad spirituale Dei regnum pertinent, in se haberet, denique quod in omnibus verè & præsterit redemptorem & Messiam.* I expound this (says he) in the most plain and simple manner, that hence the Apostles knew Christ to be the Son of God, because in him was found the completion and perfection of whatever appertained to the spiritual Kingdom of God, a fulness of truth and grace, and that in all things he acquitted himself as a true Redeemer and Messiah.

On Joh. 14.20. At that day shall you know, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you, Mr. Calvin expressly asserts, that our Saviour does not speak *de eternâ suâ essentia simpliciter sed divinam illam virtutem, quæ in eo fuit patefacta, commendat; Simply of his Eternal Essence, but commends that divine power and vertue, which appeared in him;* and accounts this the best answer to the Arrians objection from these words, *That Christ was God participatione tantum & gratiâ, only by participation and by Grace.*

On

On Joh. 17. 21. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. Mr. Calvin observes, *Tenendum est, quoties unum se cum patre esse in hoc capite pronunciat Christus, sermonem non habere simpliciter de divinâ ejus essentiâ, sed unum vocari in personâ mediatoris, & quatenus caput nostrum est; That is, we must acknowledge and own, that as often as Christ calls himself one with the Father in this Chapter, it does not simply and primarily refer to the unity of the Divine Essence, but he is one with the Father considered as Mediator, and head of the Church; That is, as he acts in Gods name and authority, and does his will. And he adds, That many of the Fathers expound these words, of Christs being one with the Father, as he was Eternal God, but this they were forced to by their contention with the Arrians, longè autem aliud Christi consilium fuit, quam ad nudam arcanae suae divinitatis speculationem nos evchere, But Christ had a quite different design in these words, than to raise them to a naked contemplation of his secret and unsearchable divinity. And now if Mr. Ferguson will be a just and impartial Judge, he must accost Mr. Calvin as he has done me. I would not be thought to impeach Mr. Calvin of opposing the Godhead of Christ, but this I affirm, that if his glosses of Col. 1. 19. Col. 2. 3. and 2. 8. Joh. 14.*

Joh. 14. 20. Joh. 1. 14. and add Joh. 17. 21. (which are as much the same as Mr. Sherlock's with those the Socinians impose upon those places) be admitted, we have some of the main proofs of it wrested out of our hands.

But to proceed, Dr. Owen hath given in his charge against me very fully and emphatically: He that shall consider what reflexions are cast in this discourse, on the necessity of satisfaction to be made unto divine Justice, and from whom they are borrowed, the miserable weak attempt that is made therein, to reduce all Christ's mediatory actings to his Kingly Office, and in particular his Intercession; the faint mention that is made of the satisfaction of Christ, clogged with the addition of ignorance of the Philosophy of it, as it is called, well enough complying with them, who grant that the Lord Christ did what God was satisfied withal, with sundry other things of the like nature, will not be to seek whence these things come, nor whither they are going, nor to whom our Author is beholden for most of his rare notions, which it is an easie thing at any time to acquaint him withal.

The Doctors chief skill lies in scandalous insinuations, but he is just like other men, when he comes to reason: As for that attempt to reduce all Christ's Mediatorial actings to his Kingly Office, I have given a sufficient

sufficient account of that in answer to Mr. Ferguson, and suppose I shall hear no more of it: As for my faint mention of the satisfaction of Christ, clogged with an ignorance of the Philosophy of it; what he calls a faint mention I cannot tell, but I did more than once expressly assert it, and that very heartily, but I must beg his pardon, that I dare not pretend to understand the strict Philosophy of that Atonement made by Christ; so long as I assert, that every Christian may easily learn all that is useful and necessary for him to know; We may all know, whatever the Scripture has revealed about it, that Christ died for our sins, that he died for us, that he is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, that his blood is the blood of the Covenant, that he has redeemed his Church with his own blood, and hath purchased and ratified the New Testament with his blood; which gives us the greatest assurance of the pardon of our sins, and the promises of eternal life upon the conditions of a lively active faith, which is made perfect by works. But then there are some enquiries concerning this matter of a nicer speculation, as wherein the proper nature of

of atonement and expiation consists, in what sense the death of Christ may be said to satisfy the justice of God, whether Christ died as the Surety of particular Persons, or as the Surety of the Covenant; whether Christ suffered the *Idem* or the *tantundem*; what is the immediate effect of Christs death, whether to give an actual right to those for whom he died to pardon and life, or to seal the Covenant of grace with mankind, and to put all men into a possibility of salvation. I presume the Doctor knows, that these and a great many more such questions are hotly disputed among those very men, who do not use to make a very faint mention neither of the satisfaction of Christ; and methinks the Doctor should for once have commended the *young mans* modesty, that he would not peremptorily determine these matters, rather than blame me for professing my ignorance.

And as for what the Doctor adds, that this favours of a compliance with them, who grant that the Lord Christ did what God was satisfied withal. If I mistake not, this is the utmost of what he himself can bring it to, whether right or wrong I shall not now determine; for he expressly affirms, that Christ could not merit of God,

Of the death of Christ, in answer to M. Baxter, ser. p. 52.

with

with that kind of merit, which ariseth from an absolute proportion of things, and gives this wise reason for it, because Christ in respect of his humane nature, though united to the Deity, is a Creature, and so could not absolutely satisfy, nor merit any thing at the hand of God. This merit (from an absolute proportion) can be found only among Creatures, and the advancement of Christs humanity takes it not out of that number; neither in this sense can any satisfaction be made to God for sin. And therefore he founds the merit and satisfaction of Christ upon Gods constitution and determination, predestinating Christ unto that work, and appointing the work by him to be accomplished, to be satisfactory, equalizing (by that constitution) the end and the means. Which at most signifies no more but this; that what Christ did was not in its own nature satisfactory, but was only what God was satisfied with upon account of his own constitution and determination. And therefore all the merit the Doctor ascribes to Christ is the accomplishment of that condition, which God required to make way, that the Obligation, which he had freely put upon himself, might be in actual force. Which he says is no more than what Mr. Baxter assigns to our own works: By which we may learn what a lame and conditional

Ibid.
p.66.

conditional merit and satisfaction he attributes to Christ: Nay, he is so far from attributing any merit and satisfaction to what Christ did, that he affirms, that the will of God is not moved thereby, nor changed into any other respect towards those for whom Christ died, than what it had before, which I take to be complying with those who assert, that God was not moved by the death of Christ to forgive sin, and who those are, I presume the Doctor knows, since he has so often told me of them.

Ibid.
p.50.

As for what he insinuates, that I deny the necessity of satisfaction to be made unto divine Justice, I own the charge, and have as good company in it, as heart can wish: for, not to take notice of our modern Writers, who (whatever the Doctor may think of it) have writ at a better rate against the Socinians, than the necessity men, Vossius gives us a particular account of the concurring judgment of the ancient Fathers in this point.

Resp ad
Judic. Ra-
vensp.
p.336.

The Author of that Book *de Cardinalibus Christi operibus*, Athanasius, St. Austin, Leo M. Gregorius M. together with several eminent Divines of the Reformed Churches, and particularly a great man of our own the Bishop of Coventry

ved Son, was a satisfaction of his natural and unappeasable Vengeance and Fury, is such an account as the Scripture nowhere gives us of the Death of Christ, as is incredible in it self, and irreconcilable with the other Perfections of the Divine Nature.

Vind. p. 43 But let us hear what the Doctor has to say for himself, and he tells us, *That all he intended by that which he asserted, is no more but this, that such is the essential Holiness and Righteousness of the Nature of God, that considering him as the supreme Governour and Ruler of Mankind, it was inconsistent with the holiness and rectitude of his Rule, and the glory of his Government, to pass by Sin absolutely, or to pardon it without Satisfaction, Propitiation or Atonement.* That God being infinitely holy, does perfectly hate all wickedness, and that as he is the supreme Governour of the world, he justly may, and in some cases cannot consistently with his Holiness and Wisdom, and the ends of his Government, do any other than punish sin, is denied by no body that I know: But the Doctor proceeds farther, that God as a holy and just Governour, is under a necessity of Nature to punish every sin that is committed; that though the sinner repent of his sins, and humbly confess and

and bewail them, and sincerely reform, yet Justice must be satisfied either with the punishment of the sinner, or some other in his stead: Thus he states it in his *Diatriba de Justitiâ*, p. 2. *Justitiam peccati vindicatricem Deo esse naturalem contendo, & in exercitio necessariam*, i. e. *I contend and earnestly assert, that that Justice which takes vengeance on sin, is natural to God, and necessary in the exercise of it.* Now this is a very different thing from the Justice of Government, which allows the most just and righteous Judges to pardon Offences, when the ends of Government may as well be attained by Indulgence as by Punishment.

And therefore the Doctor distinguishes between *Jus Regiminis positivum & naturale*, Diatriba de Justit. p. 160. between a positive and natural Right of Government: The Positive Right is such as Magistrates have over their Subjects, and this (he asserts) they may recede from in some extraordinary cases, when it is for the Publick Good and Benefit not to punish; because the Safety of the People and the Publick Benefit, is the supreme Law to such Governours: But the Natural Right of Government is that which God has over his Creatures, and this is immutable, and therefore God cannot recede from it; which as it is said with-

out any reason (for whether the Right be Positive or Natural, it does not alter the Nature, nor the prudent Rules and Methods of Government) so it gives a plain account, what the Doctor means by Gods Right of punishing as Governour, which answers to what we call Revenge in private persons, which immediately respects himself and not the publick ends of Government; which is the true difference between private Revenge and publick Justice; and though this be all the Doctor intends, yet that all is enough in all reason, and is the very all which I charged him with.

Well but I say as much as this comes to, when I assert, *that God is an irreconcilable enemy to all wickedness*: By no means, for this does not prove, that God must necessarily punish the sinner, but that he will certainly either destroy sin or the sinner, that he can never be reconciled to any wicked man, while he continues wicked, and that he will certainly express his displeasure against all obstinate and incorrigible sinners; the difference is just as much as between such a Justice as punishes the penitent, and that which punishes the incorrigible; the first is such Severity at best, as becomes not a good Man, and a
wife

wise Governour; the second is justified and applauded by the universal consent of Mankind.

But the Doctor would retort all these ill consequences, which I cast upon his Notion upon my self: *He presumes, I own the Satisfaction of Christ*, and this is the first time he hath guessed right, but what then? *Therefore also I own, that God would not pardon any Sin, but upon a supposition of a previous Satisfaction made by Jesus Christ: very right still*, when he had decreed that he would not: *Here then lies all the difference between us, that he says God could not pardon Sin without Satisfaction, and I say, that although he might have done so without the least diminution of his glory, yet he would not*: and this is a good wide difference between *could not* and *would not*: The first represents Satisfaction to be the effect of a private Revenge, the second to be the effect of Wisdom and Counsel in choosing the most convenient way to dispense his Pardon. God, we presume, had more ways than one to secure the Authority of his Laws, the Glory of his Government, and to vindicate the Holiness of his Nature, but he chose this as the best and fittest. It had not been consistent with the Wisdom of God, as Governour of the world,

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to have pardoned sin in such a way as would have reflected any disparagement on his Holiness, or loosened the Reins of Government; and therefore if he had not chose this way, he would certainly have chose some other, and then he might have rejected this, but could not wisely reject all: Christ, according to these Principles, did not die for sinners, because God could not forgive sin without such a penal satisfaction, but because he preferred this way before all other, as the most effectual to attain its end.

And now I presume my Readers may be as glad as my self, to see a Conclusion of this long Dispute: Some possibly will think I have said too much, and some too little: I have taken notice of every thing which was material in my Adversaries, and of too many things which were not; and though I have not particularly taken notice of Mr. *POLHILL* and *ANTISOZZO*, it was because there was no need of it: Whatever is considerable in them is answered in these Papers; and as for *ANTISOZZO*, I had no mind to play the Buffoon, as he does, and I know no other way of answering him: And I hope the world will be sufficiently convinced

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vinced, what a desperate case Fanaticism is reduced to, when they are forced upon all occasions to take Sanctuary in Buffoonry; but others may do as they please, as for my part I am resolved this Controversie shall never end in a Trial of Wit.

F I N I S.

A
Defence and Continuation
OF THE
DISCOURSE
Concerning the
K N O W L E D G E
OF
Jesus Christ,

And O U R
Union and Communion with Him.

With a particular respect to the
Doctrine of the Church of *England,*

And the Charge of
Socinianism and Pelagianism.

By the same AUTHOR.

L O N D O N :

Printed by *A. C.* for *Walter Kettilby,* at the
Bishops-Head in *St. Pauls Church-yard,*

M. D C. L X X V.

T O
The most Reverend Father in God,
GILBERT, *Millon*
By Divine Providence,
L O R D A R C H B I S H O P
O F
C A N T E R B U R Y,
Primate of all England, and Metropolitan,
A N D
One of His Majesties most Honourable
Privy-Council, &c.

May it please your Grace,

I *is not unknown to your Grace,*
that in a late Discourse, accor-
ding to my mean Abilities, I en-
deavoured to vindicate Christian
Religion from those uncouth and absurd
Representations, which some modern Di-
vines, who are the great Fomenters of our
present Factions, have made of it: And
herein I thought, I should do good service,

A 2

not

The Epistle Dedicatory.

not only to the common Cause of Christianity (which is exposed to the scorn of Atheistical Wits, for the sake of such Doctrins, as are so far from belonging to Christianity, that they seem to be invented on purpose to affront the general sense and understanding of Mankind,) but also to the best constituted Church in the World, which is rent and torn into a thousand Factions for the sake of these new Discoveries, which are admired for no other reason, but because they are not understood.

And I have met with such a Reward, as those men use to do, who oppose any popular and inveterate mistakes, hard Words and hard Censures; though as soft and gentle Arguments, as I could wish: But my Adversaries have used one extraordinary piece of Art, which alone, I hope, will be sufficient to make my Apology for this Address.

It is well known, my Lord, what Friends they are to the Church of England, and yet now they take Sanctuary in our Church, and pretend a mighty Zeal for the antient Catholick Doctrin of it: Their great
quarrel

The Epistle Dedicatory.

quarrel with me is, that I have contradicted the Doctrin of our Church, and they are very jealous lest the Church should by this means be disadvantageously represented to the world; and think it the concernment of the Reverend Bishops either to confute or censure such Doctrins: And indeed would those grave and wise Persons hearken either to Papists or Fanaticks, they should never want work; for whenever they find themselves gravelled, they call upon the Church of England, to defend them against her most zealous Advocates and hearty Friends.

My Lord, were I in the least conscious to my self of having deserted the Doctrin of our Church, there is no Person, whom I should so justly dread as your Grace, whose quick and piercing Judgment would easily detect such a Prevarication, and whose great Authority could as easily crush so weak an Adversary, and whose sincere and hearty Zeal and Fatherly Care and Affection for this Church would not suffer such Tares to grow up in the midst of the Wheat. But these excellent Accomplishments,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ments, wherewith God has in great goodness endowed your Grace for the Preservation and wise Government of this Church in such dangerous and critical times, render you as sure a Refuge and Sanctuary to the Friends of our Church, as they make you formidable to her Enemies.

In this Assurance it is, that I humbly lay this my Defence at your Graces Feet, and entirely submit it and its Author to your Judgment and Censure. If I have said any thing blame-worthy, it has been hitherto out of invincible Ignorance and Mistake, which I hope will plead my excuse: And if I have (as I am verily persuaded I have) made a true and faithful Representation of the Doctrine of our Church, and vindicated it from such Fanatical Innovations, as give the greatest and the justest cause of Scandal to all wise and considering men, I humbly beg your Graces Patronage, which is the only Security and Protection I desire from the rude Clamors and vehement Reproaches of my Adversaries.

I be-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

I beseech Almighty God to preserve your Grace long among us in Health and Vigor, to protect his Church by your wise Counsels and Conduct, and to adorn your See with your exemplary Virtues, which is the hearty Prayer of

YOUR GRACES

Most Humble and

Dutiful Servant,

William Sherlock.

Imprimatur,

Ex *Aed. Lambethanis*
April. 2. 1675.

Tho. Tomkyns.

THE INTRODUCTION.

CHAP. I.

ALL Error hath some appearance of Truth, it being impossible to believe a plain and undisguised Falshood; but yet most men are so easie and credulous, so impatient of severe Inquiries, or byassed by so many corrupt Passions and Interests, that they are too often imposed on by very slight Appearances: And commonly the first and fundamental Mistake, is in a confusion of Names, in a doubtful and ambiguous use of Words, especially in matters of Religion, which depend upon Revelation, and must be judged by the Publick and Authentick Records of Inspired Men: for it happens too often in this case, that men consider nothing but the Sound of Words, and from thence form such uncouth *Ideas* of Religion, as are fitted to the meanness of their understandings, or gratifie their natural Genius and Disposition; or are calculated to serve an Interest. And thus the Gospel of our Saviour is defaced and obscured by affected Mysteries, and Paradoxes, and senseless Propositions; and Christ Himself, who was the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person, who in the most plain and perspicuous manner declared the Will

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of

The Introduction,

of God to us, is represented with a thicker Vail upon his Face than *Moses*; and the Glory of the Second Covenant is much more obscured with a Mist of Words, than the first was with Types and Figures.

This will appear to any man, who shall observe what strange Interpretations are commonly made of those Texts of Scripture, especially in St. Paul's Epistles, wherein Christ is mentioned; what absurd Propositions are built on them, what pernicious Consequences drawn from them, to defeat the great Ends of Christs appearing in the Flesh?

I always took it for granted, that Christ and his Religion were very well agreed; but, if we believe some men, there is as irreconcilable a difference between the Religion of *Christs Person*, and of his *Gospel*, as between the *Law* and *Grace*: For the *Gospel* of Christ is as severe a Dispensation as the *Law*, which dooms all men to Eternal Misery, who live not very innocent and vertuous Lives; but the Person of Christ (as these men represent it) is all Grace, a meer Refuge and Sanctuary for the Wicked and Ungodly.

Surely here must be a mistake somewhere; for I am still of the mind, that the *Person* of Christ is not at odds with his *Gospel*; and that the Person of Christ will save none whom his *Gospel* condemns; or if Christ would save those whom his *Gospel* condemns, *viz.* impenitent and incorrigible Sinners, I cannot imagine how men should know this without a particular Revelation, and I hope, they do not mean this by the private Testimony of the Spirit to work assurance in them; And yet we can think of no other way, since the *Gospel* is so silent in this matter: But it is easie to observe, where the mistake lies: for some men, where-ever they meet with the word *Christ* in Scripture, always understand by it the *Person* of *Christ*; and thus *Faith in Christ*, and *Hope in Christ*, and the

The Introduction.

the like Phrases, are expounded of a *fiducial reliance* and *recumbency on the Person of Christ for Salvation*, in contra-distinction to obedience to his Laws, which sets up a *Religion of the Person of Christ*, in opposition to the *Religion of his Gospel*. And therefore the best way of rectifying this mistake, which sets the Person and the Gospel of Christ at such odds, is to examine the various significations of this Name *Christ* in Scripture, which shall serve as an Introduction to what follows.

And first *Christ* is originally the Name of an Office, which the Jews call the *Messias*, or one anointed by God: For under the Law, their Prophets, Priests, and Kings, were invested in their several Offices by the Ceremony of anointing them with Oil, which was typical of that Divine *Unction* which the Holy Jesus received at his Baptism, when the Spirit of God descended on him like a Dove. All those legal *Unctions* were accomplisht in *Jesus of Nazareth*, whom God *anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with Power*, Acts x. 38. which was his Consecration to the Mediatory Function, and virtually contained all those offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, which are not properly distinct Offices in Christ, but the several Parts and different Administrations of his Mediatory Kingdom.

His Preaching the *Gospel* (which we commonly call his *Prophetical Office*) was the exercise of his *Regal Power and Authority*, in publishing his Laws, and the Conditions of Eternal Life. Hence the *Gospel* is so often called the Kingdom of Heaven, and our Saviour tells *Pilate*, that he was born to be a King, and the principal exercise of his Kingly Power in this World consists in *bearing witness to the Truth*; John xviii. 37. that is, it was an Act of his *Regal Power* to conquer Error and Ignorance, to destroy

The various significations

the Kingdom of Darknes by the brightnes of his appearing, and to erect his Throne in the Hearts and Consciences of Men, by the Power and Evidence of Truth, which is a true spiritual Kingdom.

And he was a Kingly Priest, a Priest after the Order of Melchizedeck, who was King of Salem, (the New Jerusalem which comes down from Heaven) and Priest of the most high God, *Hebr. vii. 1.* When he offered himself a Sacrifice for Sin, he acted like a King. *No man took his Life from him, but he had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it again, St. John x. 18.* Herein he differed from other Kings, that he laid the Foundation of his Kingdom in his own Blood; purchas'd and redeem'd his Subjects by the Sacrifice of himself.

And that, to which we commonly appropriate the Name of Regal Power, that Authority he is invested with, to govern his Church, to send his Spirit, to forgive Sins, to dispence his Grace, and supernatural Assistances, to answer Prayers, to raise the Dead, and judge the World, and bestow Immortal Life on all his sincere Disciples; all this is the Reward of his Death and Sufferings, and is therefore called his Intercession; because like the Intercession of the High Priest under the Law, it is founded on his Expiation and Sacrifice. *With his own Blood he entred once into the holy place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us, Hebr. ix. 12.* So that Intercession signifies the Administration of his Mediatory Kingdom; the Power of a Regal Priest, to expiate and forgive Sins.

This is a true account of the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, and the Method whereby it is erected. He first conquers the Minds of Men by the power of his Word and Spirit; and reduces them into subjection to God; and then he pardons their Sins, and raiseth them into an immortal Life by the expiation of his Sacrifice,

of the Name Christ.

Sacrifice, and that Power and Authority which is founded on it.

And this is the Interpretation of the Name *Christ*, which signifies a *Mediatory King*, immediately appointed by God to that Office, and consecrated to it by a Divine and Supernatural Unction. And thus the Name *Christ* signifies in those places of Scripture, where *Jesus* is said to be the *Christ*, *i. e.* that Messias whom God promised to send; which are so many and so obvious that I need not name them.

Secondly, Though Christ is originally the name of an Office, yet it is used in Scripture to signify the Person who is invested with this Office: for the use of Names being for distinction, and the Office of a Mediator, which is the first signification of the Name *Christ*, being appropriate to Him, it might well serve for a proper name, when once it was known who was the *Christ*; and therefore though before his designation to this Office was publicly owned, he was only called *Jesus*, the Name given him by the Angel, before he was Born, yet when by his Resurrection from the Dead, He was declared with power to be the Son and the *Christ* of God, *Christ* became as much his proper Name, as *Jesus* was before. In the Gospels, which contain the History of his Life and Death, He is always called *Jesus*, because all his time it was disputed, whether he were the *Christ* or not; but in the Epistles which are directed to the Christian Churches, which were founded on this Faith, That *Jesus* is the *Christ*, he is as familiarly called *Christ*, as *Jesus*; and often-times by both, *Jesus Christ*. For there can be no mistake in the Person, by what Name soever he be called, whether it belong to his Office, or Nature, or circumstances of his Life and Fortune, if there be but *One*, to whom that Name belongs.

The various significations

Thirdly, *Christ* signifies the Gospel, and Religion of *Christ*; as *Moses* signifies the Writings and Laws of *Moses*; and the *Prophets*, the Writings or Sermons of the *Prophets*: St. Luke xvi. 29. *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them; and Verf. 31. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rise from the dead.* And there is nothing more usual in common speech, than to call any Laws, or Religion, or Philosophy, by the name of the first Authors. Thus Gal. vi. 15. *In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a new Creature:* that is, in the Gospel and Religion of *Christ*, nothing is of any value to recommend us to the favour of God, but a new Nature, an holy and vertuous Life: The Law prefer'd Circumcision before Uncircumcision, but the Gospel of *Christ* makes no such distinction; but instead of those external signs requires the inward Purity of Heart. Thus Col. ii. 8. *Beware lest men spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit, after the Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ:* Where *after Christ* is opposed to the *Traditions of Men*, and the *Rudiments of the World*, and therefore must signify not the *Person* but the *Religion* or *Gospel* of *Christ*; i. e. Have a care, lest you be corrupted with the foolish Opinions and Superstitions of Men, which are inconsistent with the Christian Philosophy, and a plain Contradiction to the Doctrine and Religion of *Christ*. And in Verf. 6. *As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him; i. e. obey the Doctrine of Christ, as you have been taught it by us; for so in the next Verse he calls it, Being established in the Faith, as you have been taught.* The like we may see in *Ephes.* iv. 20, 21. *But you have not so learned Christ, if so be you have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth*
is

of the Name *Christ*.

is in *Jesus*. Now what can *learning Christ* signifie, but learning the Gospel of *Christ*? And how could the *Ephesians*, who never saw *Christ* in the flesh, be said to *hear him*, in any other sense, than as they heard his Gospel Preach'd to them, Verf. 8. and to be instructed in him as the truth is in *Jesus*, (for so ἐν αὐτῷ ἐδιδάχθητε signifies, not, as our Translators render it, being taught by him, but instructed in him) must be expounded of his Religion in its genuine and primitive simplicity, so as *Christ* taught it his Disciples, without the mixture of such corrupt and impure Doctrines as the Gnostick Hereticks had taught under the Name of Christianity. These I take to be very convincing Allegations of the use of the Name *Christ*, for his Doctrine and Religion.

Fourthly, It is acknowledg'd by all, that *Christ* sometimes signifies the Church of *Christ*, which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all: And thus we must understand those Phrases of being in *Christ*, engrafted into *Christ*, and united to *Christ*; which signifie no more than to be a Christian, One, who belongs to that Society, whereof *Christ* is the Head and Governour: Thus it is used in Rom. xii. 5. *We being many are One Body in Christ; i. e. we are all but one Christian Society, which is the One Body of Christ.* Thus, *Brethren in Christ*, i. e. Christian Brethren, Col. i. 2. And, *if any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17. i. e. every sincere Christian is a New Creature; or, whoever professeth the Faith of *Christ*, and lives in Society with the Christian Church, hath obliged himself to live a new Life: But of this more in its proper place.

Thus variously is the Name *Christ* used in the Writings of the Apostles, which hath occasioned very great Mistakes in some Mens Divinity, who are very zealous to advance *Christ's Person*, to the Prejudice

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The various significations &c.

and Reproach of his *Religion*. Who, instead of those substantial Duties of the love of God, and Men, and an Universal Holiness of Life, have introduced a fanciful *application* of Christ to our selves, and *Union* to him, set off with all those choice Phrases of *closing with Christ, and embracing Christ, and getting into Christ, and getting an interest in Christ, and trusting, and relying, and rowling our Souls on Christ*: And instead of Obedience to the Gospel, and the Laws of Christ, have advanced a kind of Amorous and Enthusiastick Devotion, which consists in a Passionate Love to the Person of Christ, in admiring his *Personal Excellencies and Perfections, Fulness, Beauty, Loveliness, Riches, &c.* The Foundation of all which Riddles and Mysteries, is, That these Men make the Person of Christ almost the sole Object of the Christian Religion; and whatever is spoken of Christ, with respect to his Offices, his Laws, and his Religion, they understand of his Person, and Personal Excellencies. And therefore the design of this Discourse is to reconcile the *Person* of Christ with his *Religion*, that Men may not abuse themselves with a pretended Devotion to our Saviour, while they condemn his Laws, and purposely defeat the great End of his coming into the World. And to that end I shall discourse on these following arguments.

First, of what Use the consideration of Christ's Person is, in the Christian Religion; Secondly, What the Knowledge of Christ is; Thirdly, Wherein our Union to Christ, and Communion with him consists; Fourthly, Christ's Love to us, and our Love to Christ.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of what Use the Consideration of Christ's Person is, in the Christian Religion.

THe first thing to be stated is, Of what Use the consideration of Christ's *Person* is, in the Christian Religion: For those men, who talk so much of the *Person*, and *Personal Excellencies* of Christ, frequently without any Sence, and generally without any just ground from Reason or Scripture, are very clamorous, and alarm the World with strange Jealousies and Fears; as if there were a party of men started up, who design to make *Christ useless*, and to reduce Religion to its first Natural State, which knew no Priest, nor Sacrifice, nor Mediator. A design, which, I profess I am wholly a Stranger to, as I believe all those are, who are so much charged with it. The Foundation of *my Hope* is that, which is the Foundation of the *Christian Religion, the Sacrifice and Intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ*. But I doubt not, it will appear in the Sequel, what the ground of these Calumnies are, *viz.* That *we are charged with making Christ useless, only because we dare not make his Laws and Religion so*: And to prevent such scandals for the future, I shall lay the Foundation of all in this Inquiry; Of what Use the consideration of Christ's Person is, in the Christian Religion.

By the *Person of Christ* I mean, what all men ought to mean, who talk of Christ's Person, *viz.* *Christ himself*, as every mans Person is himself: and the only proper consideration here, is the greatness of his *Person*, who is the Θεοῦ υἱός, or *God-Man*, the Son

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Son of God, in whom his Soul was well pleased, who left the Glories of an Eternal Throne, to undertake the Work of Mans Redemption, and this suggests many useful considerations, which have a great influence upon Religion.

As first, This is a plain Demonstration of Gods Love to Mankind, that he sent so *Great*, and so *Dear* a Person, as his onely begotten Son, into the World to save Sinners. All Religion is founded on a belief of Gods Goodness, *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. xi. 6. that is, must believe his Being and his Providence, that he loves, and takes care of good men; for no man will serve God, who does not hope to be the better by it. And therefore every Religion had its proper Demonstrations of Gods Goodness. *Natural Religion* was founded on those Natural Evidences of the Divine Bounty and Goodness, in Making and Governing the World; the *Mosaick Religion* on those Miraculous Deliverances which God wrought for *Israel*, and that particular Providence which watched over them: The *Christian Religion*, on the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of the Son of God; a Work of such stupendious love, that it is the Wonder of Angels, and the Astonishment as well as Praise of Men. No Man can doubt of Gods good will to Sinners, who sees the Son of God clothed with our flesh, and dying as a Sacrifice for our Sins, this gives Relief to our guilty Fears, and does encourage us to retrieve our past Follies by new Obedience, that we have so great an assurance of Gods goodness; for he had nothing greater to bestow on us, than his Son; And *he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Rom. viii. 32.

Secondly,

Person is in the Christian Religion.

Secondly, This gives great Reverence and Authority to the Gospel, that it was preached by so great a Person as the Son of God. Laws always partake of the fate and condition of the Law-giver; the greater opinion we have of his Wisdom, and Reverence for his Person, the more Sacred Regard have we for his Laws; and therefore *Numa* pretended, that he received his Laws from the Goddess *Ageria*, to procure a greater Veneration for them: Thus God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed Heir of all things, by whom also he made the Worlds, Heb. i. 1, 2. And his Greatness and Authority gives an inviolable Sanction and just Reverence to his Laws. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip; for if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, Heb. ii. 1, 2, 3. To the same purpose is that Parable in *Luke* xx. 9, &c.

Thirdly, The Greatness of his Person gives great Authority to his Example: He came to be our Prophet and our Guide, to teach us by his Precepts and his Life: Now we love to imitate Great Persons, and none is so Great as He, who was the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person: His Example secures the Honour and Reputation of Vertue, and gives us an evident Demonstration wherein the Perfection of our Nature consists; for he lived up to the perfection of Human Nature, and the only way to be perfect, is to live as he lived. Nay the Greatness of his Person makes all the Expressions of his Love and Goodness the more wonderful.

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derful. That the Son of God should become Man, that when he was rich, for our sakes he should become poor, that the Great Lord of the Creation should become a Minister and Servant, that the Lord of Life and Glory should suffer and die: These are such Expressions of Love and Goodness as we can never fully imitate, because we can never fully imitate, because we can never be so great as he was; but yet they powerfully convince us, how reasonable it is for us to stoop to the meanest Offices of Kindness, since we can never stoop so low as the Son of God did, when he came down from Heaven, and took up his Lodging in the Grave.

Fourthly, This assures us of the infinite value of his *Sacrifice*, and the power of his *Intercession*: He was a Priest of a higher Order than that of *Aaron*, and his Sacrifice of a greater value than the Blood of Bulls and Goats: God cannot but be pleased, when his own Son undertakes to be a Ransome, and to make Attonement for Sinners, which is so great a Vindication of Gods Dominion and Sovereignty, of the Authority of his Laws, and the Wisdom and Justice of his Providence, that he may securely pardon humble and penitent Sinners, without reproaching any of his Attributes. And we can reasonably desire no greater security for the performance of this Gospel Covenant, than that it was sealed with the Blood of the Son of God, which is such a confirmation of Gods Covenant and Promise, as the World never had before; Christ is the Surety of a better Testament, *Heb. vii. 22. εἰς τοῦτο*, one who undertakes for the performance of it, and the security he gives us depends on the virtue of his Priesthood and Sacrifice, and on the power of his Intercession; for so in *Vers. 21*. The Apostle tells us, that God had confirmed the Priesthood of Christ by Oath, *The Lord hath sworn,*

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sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchisedec: And whereas other Priests died, and left their Priesthood their Successors, He continueth for ever, and therefore hath an unchangeable Priesthood, and is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Vers. 23, 24, 25. And who can desire a more powerful Mediator than the Son of God, to whom God hath given such signal Demonstrations of his Favour and Acceptance, by a Voice from Heaven, and by the Glory of his Miracles, and by his Resurrection from the Dead?

And that the virtue of Christ's Sacrifice and Intercession depends very much on the Greatness of his Person, is plain from the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; the design of which is to show how much the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ excels that of the Law, and the Foundation of all is laid in the first Chapter, where the Apostle discourses of his Greatness and Excellency, that he was the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person; the Heir of all things, by whom he made the Worlds, exalted above all Angels, who hath an everlasting Throne and Scepter, and shall continue, when all other things moulder and vanish away.

But Fifthly, The Person of Christ is of no other consideration in the Christian Religion, than as it hath an influence upon the great ends of his Undertaking, *i. e.* we must expect no more from Christ upon account of his Personal Excellencies and Perfections, than what he hath promised in his Gospel: He hath told us there, whatever he intends to do for us, and hath charged us to expect no more from him. *Matth. vii. 21. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in Heaven.* That

is,

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is, you must not expect that I will be better to you than my word, and receive you into the Kingdom of Heaven upon easier terms than I have promised; I shall be moved with none of your flattering speeches, but how good and kind soever you may fancy me, unless you obey those Laws I publish in my Fathers Name, I declare before hand, that I will disown you, when I come to Judgment.

For indeed should Christ absolve and justify those men, whom the Gospel condemns, that is, wilful and incorrigible Sinners, this were to disannul that Covenant which he had sealed with his Blood: Christ is the Object of our Faith and Hope, only as he is our Saviour; and he is our Saviour in no other sense, than as he is our Mediator; and he mediates for us as our Priest, that is, in virtue of that Covenant, which he hath sealed with his Blood: And therefore we have no reason to expect any thing from the Person of Christ, which is not contained in his Covenant, much less any thing which contradicts it; for that would be in effect to renounce his Mediation, and to trust to the Goodness of his Nature. And let any man judge whether this be not to set up a New Religion, which hath no Covenant, and no Promise; for whatever we can expect from Christ by virtue of a promise, is contained in the Gospel, and if we expect any thing else from him upon his Personal Account, it is without a Promise: which at best reduces us to the same state in which the World was, before God had made an express Revelation of his Will, when all their Hopes were founded on that Natural Perswasion they had of the Divine Goodness, on that Faith which is the Foundation of Natural Religion, that God is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. xi. 6. Thus these Men trust in the Person of Christ without any Promise, nay (which makes the case

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case much worse) in contradiction to the terms of that Covenant, which he sealed with his Blood: They quit his Promise and his Covenant, to rely and rowl upon his Person.

This is so very absurd at first sight, that I know no man will be so senseless as to own it in so many words, nor do I charge any man with it; but I say this is the natural interpretation of trusting in the Person of Christ, in his Blood, and Merits, and Satisfaction, Fulness, and All-sufficiency, and of relying and rowling the Soul on Christ for Salvation, and the like Phrases of a late date, in which some men place the whole Mystery of the Gospel; if they understand any thing more by them, than expecting to be saved according to the terms of the Gospel-Covenant; that is, by believing and obeying the Gospel of Christ: And certainly they must mean something more than this, or else they raise a great noise and clamour in the World, and confound mens minds with obscure and unscriptural phrases to no purpose: as will appear more in what follows.

CHAP. III.

Of the Knowledge of Christ.

SECT. I.

THe Happiness of Mankind consists in the Knowledge and Love of God, who is the greatest and the best Being; and therefore our good God, who is never wanting to his own Glory, and the Happiness of his Creatures, hath taken care in all Ages

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Ages by one means or other to make known himself and his Will to the World.

In the first Creation of all things he left such visible Impressions of his own Divine Wisdom and Power on the Works of Nature, and planted in the Mind of Man such a Natural Knowledge of himself; that it was as easie to discover the first Author of all things, as it is now for a well-disposed Eye to see the Sun when it shines; And while Man preserved his Innocence God himself did not disdain to converse with him, and to give him very present and sensible Demonstrations of his Power and Providence.

In after Ages, as Mankind grew more corrupt, and declined to Idolatry, God afforded good men the frequent Apparitions of Angels, who were the great Ministers of his Providence; and to instruct the more degenerate part of Mankind, he raised up some great Examples and Preachers of Righteousness, such as *Enoch*, and *Noah*; and *Abraham*; and gave such plain and undeniable Proofs of his Acceptance of these Men, as might reasonably encourage others to imitate their Examples. He translated *Enoch* immediately to Heaven, and preserved *Noah* and his Family in the Ark, when he destroyed the rest of the World by a Deluge of Waters, which was a signal Warning to that corrupt Generation, while the Ark was preparing, and a great Example to Posterity; he sent *Lot* out of the Ruins of *Sodom*, and made *Abraham* the Father of a great Nation, which was a convincing Argument how dear these Good Men were to God, and what others might expect from him, who would worship and fear him as they did.

But when the World would not be reformed by these single Examples, God chose the Posterity of *Abraham*, to be a publick and constant Demonstration of his Power and Providence, and care of good men

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For when God chose the Posterity of *Abraham* to be his peculiar People, he did not design to exclude the rest of the World from his Care and Providence, and all possible means of Salvation, as the Apostle argues in *Rom.iii.29. Is he the God of the Jews only; Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.* Which Argument, if it have any force in it, must prove Gods respect to the Gentiles before the preaching of the Gospel, as well as since; because it is founded on that Natural Relation which God owns to all Mankind, as their merciful Creator and Governour, which gives the Gentiles as well as Jews an interest in his Care and Providence. This plainly evinces, that all those particular Favours which God bestowed on *Israel*, were not owing to any partial Fondness and Respect to that People, but the design of all was to encourage the whole World to worship the God of *Israel*, who gave so many Demonstrations of his Power and Providence. For this reason God brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, with great Signs and Wonders, and a mighty Hand, (when he could have done it with less Noise and Observation) that he might the more gloriously triumph over the numerous Gods of *Egypt*, and all their Enchantments and Divinations, and that he might be honoured on *Pharaoh* and all his Host. For this reason he maintained them in the Wilderness at the constant Expence of Miracles, fought all their Battels for them, and many times by weak and contemptible means overthrew great and puissant Armies, drove out the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, and gave them possession of that good Land. I say one great and principal design of all this was to convince the World of the Majesty and Power of the God of *Israel*, that they might renounce their foolish Idolatries and Country Gods, and consent in the worship of that One God who alone doth wondrous

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Things; this account the *Psalmist* gives of it, that God wrought such visible and miraculous Deliverances for *Israel*, to make his Glory and his Power known among the *Heathen*; *The Lord hath made known his Salvation, his Righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the Heathen, Psal. xcvi. 2. That the Heathen might fear the Name of the Lord, and all the Kings of the Earth his Glory, i. e. that all Nations might worship God, and all Kings submit their Crowns and Scepters to him, Psal. cii. 15.* that by this means they might be instructed in that important Truth, *That the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised, that he is to be feared above all Gods; for all the Gods of the Nations are Idols, but he made the Heavens, Psal. xcvi. 4, 5.*

And as God set up the People of *Israel* as a visible demonstration to all the World of his Power and Providence, so he committed his Laws and Oracles to them, from whence the rest of the World, when they pleased, might fetch the best Rules of Life, and the most certain Notices of the Divine Will.

In such ways God instructed the World in former Ages, by the Light of Nature, and the Examples of good Men, and the Sermons of the Prophets, and the Publick Example of a whole Nation, which God chose for that very purpose.

But when long and sad experience had proved all these ways ineffectual to reform the World, at last God sent his own Son into the World, to make a full and perfect Declaration of his Will, to give the best Rules of Life, and to encourage our Obedience by the most express Promises of a blessed Immortality. This was one great design of Christs appearing in the World, to reveal and declare God to us: *Joh. i. 18. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him: and in Mat. xi. 27. All things are delivered*

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unto me of my Father; no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son, and he, to whom the Son will reveal him. That is, God hath now committed unto Christ all the secret purposes of his Counsel concerning the Salvation of Mankind, which were concealed from Ages. None of the Prophets, which lived before, did so fully understand it, nor have we any other certain way of knowing this, but by the Revelation, which Christ hath made to us.

Thus in *Joh. xiv. 6, 7. Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. If you had known me, you should have known my Father also, and henceforth you have known him, and have seen him.* That is, I alone declare the true way to Life and Happiness, and no man can thoroughly understand the Will of God, but by learning of me, and therefore whoever knows me, *i. e.* whoever is acquainted with the Doctrine and Religion I preach, knows my Father also, that is, is thoroughly instructed in Gods mind and will, as he proves in the following Verses. So that *to know God*, is to understand the will of God concerning the Salvation of Mankind, and *to know Christ*, is to understand that Declaration he hath made of Gods will to the World, *i. e.* the Gospel, which he preached; which is therefore called, *The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6.* That is, that glorious manifestation, which God hath made of himself to the World by Christ: For the *face of Christ*, signifies all that, whereby he made himself known, as a man is known by his face, that is, his Laws, and Religion, and Miracles, whereby it appeared, that he was the Son of God, the great Prophet and Saviour of the World; by all this, the glory of God was manifested; in which the Apostle

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alludes to that shining glory, which appeared on the face of *Moses*, when he came down from the Mount; which was but typical of that bright and glorious manifestation God would make of himself by Christ. God was seen in Christ, *he that hath seen me, hath seen my Father*; that is in plain words, the will of God was fully declared to the World by Christ: Upon which account too (as well as with respect to his Divine Nature) he is called the *Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person, Heb. i. 1.* those Discoveries Christ hath made of God, being a bright and glorious Reflection of the Nature and Attributes of God, of his Eternal Wisdom, and Truth, and Holiness, as true a Representation of the Divine Nature and Will, as any Picture is of the Person it represents. It is plain, that in this sense Christ is called the Image of God, *2 Cor. iv. 4. Lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* Where Christs being the Image of God comes in very abruptly, unless we understand it in this sense, that he is the Image of God with respect to the glorious Revelations of the Gospel, which contain a true and faithful account of Gods Nature and Will.

The result of all is this, That God is the last and highest Object of religious and saving Knowledge, *i. e.* that the only Knowledge necessary to the purposes of Religion, is such a Knowledge of Gods Nature and Will, as is sufficient to direct our Actions, and to encourage our Obedience: And whereas God was formerly known by the Light of Nature, and by the Works of Creation and Providence, and by those partial and occasional Revelations of his Will, which he made to the World; now the only true medium of knowing God, is the Knowledge of Christ, who came into the World to declare God to us.

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He knows God best, who is best acquainted with those Revelations which Christ hath made of God's will, *i. e.* who understands the Gospel in its full extent and latitude. This is the meaning of that expression in *John xvii. 3. This is Life Eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, i. e.* the only way to Eternal Life is to know the Nature and Will of God, and the only certain way of attaining to the knowledge of God, is by knowing Christ, whom God sent into the World to publish the Everlasting Gospel, who hath made more perfect Revelations of Gods Will, than ever the World had before, and who alone hath brought Life and Immortality to light; so that to know Christ, is not merely to know his Person, which we can have no other knowledge of, than what he hath been pleased to reveal to us, but to be acquainted with the whole Doctrine of the Gospel in its native simplicity, as he published it to the World, which I observed before. The Apostle calls this, *learning Christ*, and being instructed *in him, as the truth is in Jesus.* For when we speak of the Knowledge of Christ, we must consider him as our Prophet, and so to know Christ, signifies to know his Gospel; and to preach Christ, is to preach his Gospel, to expound all those Rules of Life, and Articles of Faith, which are contained in it; whether they concern the Nature of God, or a future State, or his own Nature, and Office, and Mediation. Thus *Philip* preached Christ to the *Samaritans*, *Acts viii. 5.* which in *vers. 12.* is called, *Preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ.* That is, the whole Doctrine of the Gospel.

This would make all considering men ashamed of those unreasonable and groundless clamours, that Christ is not preached, unless he be named in every

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See Ch. 1. concerning the signification of the Name Christ.

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sentence, whether the Argument require it or not; as if *preaching Christ* were to be understood in a literal sense of preaching nothing, but *the Name of Christ*. Those preach Christ most, who are careful to confirm men in the belief of the Gospel, and of that great Promise of Immortal Life, who expound his Laws, and the true nature and design of his Mediation; for every part of the Gospel is part of the Knowledge of Christ, and his Laws as principal a part as any; because the design of the whole Gospel is to make us obedient to these Eternal Rules of Righteousness, whereby we are transformed into the Nature and Image of God, and are qualified for the Happiness of Heaven.

There is indeed a larger notion of the Knowledge of God and Christ, which includes the virtue and efficacy of this Knowledge: For the design of all Religious Knowledge being the Government of our Lives and Actions, how true soever our Speculations are, the Scripture brands all those as ignorant of God, who do not love, and reverence, and obey him: And though we be acquainted with the whole Doctrine of the Gospel, unless we heartily believe it, and obey all those Revelations which Christ hath made, we know him not: 1 *John* ii. 3. *Hereby we know that we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments:* And *Vers.* 4. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar, and the truth is not in him:* And 1 *John* ii. 6. *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not, whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.* Not but that bad men may have as true a speculative Knowledge of the Nature and Design of the Gospel, as good men have; but the meaning is, that this is a Knowledge which serves no end, which wants Life and Sense, and makes men no better, than if they were perfectly ignorant; and therefore is of

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no other account with God than ignorance, unless it be to aggravate their sins, and their condemnation.

SECT. II.

Of Acquaintance with the Person of Christ.

AFTER this plain account wherein the Knowledge of Christ consists, the sum of which is, that to know Christ is to understand his Gospel, which contains all those Revelations he made of Gods will, it will be necessary to examine another notion of the knowledge of Christ, very distinct from this, which contains a greater Secret, than at first one would imagine; and that is, an *Acquaintance with the Person of Christ*, which, if we will believe some men, is the only Fountain of saving Knowledge.

I shall not envy the Author of the glory of this discovery, and therefore shall honestly confess where I had it, *viz.* In a Book entituled; *Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each Person distinctly.* Written by *John Owen, D. D.* And that I may not do this Author wrong, I must tell you what he means by *Acquaintance with Christs Person*; an account of which we have in *Digression 2. Pag. 87. Of the Excellency of Christ Jesus.* Where he tells us, that *Christ is not only the Wisdom of God, but made Wisdom to us, not only by teaching us Wisdom, (that is, by the Doctrines he preached, and those Revelations he hath made of Gods will) as he is the great Prophet of the Church, but also because by the knowing of him, we become acquainted with the Wisdom of God, which is our Wisdom.* To which purpose he applies that Text,

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which speaks of the Doctrines and Revelations of Christ, to his Person, Col. ii. 3. *For in him dwell all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.* So that our Acquaintance with Christs Person, in this Mans Divinity, signifies such a knowledge of what Christ is, hath done, and suffered for us, from whence we may learn those greater, deeper, and more saving Mysteries of the Gospel, which Christ hath not expressly revealed to us: For so he adds soon after, *that these Properties of God (his pardoning mercy, &c.) Christ hath revealed in his Doctrine, in that Revelation he hath made of God and his will; but the life of this knowledge lies in an acquaintance with his Person, wherein the express image and beams of this glory of his Father doth shine forth:* That is, that these things are clearly, eminently, and savingly, only to be discovered in Jesus Christ, as he explains himself. So that it seems, the Gospel of Christ makes a very imperfect and obscure discovery of the Nature, and Attributes, and Will of God, and the Methods of our Recovery; we may thoroughly understand whatever is revealed in the Gospel, and yet not have a clear and saving knowledge of these things, unless we gain a more intimate acquaintance with the Person of Christ. This indeed advances the Person of Christ very much, but is no great commendation of his Gospel and Prophetick Office: It sets up a new Rule of Faith above the Gospel, viz. an acquaintance with Christs Person, in whom dwell all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.

But that you may better understand the whole Mystery of this Acquaintance with the Person of Christ; I shall first shew you what Additions these men make to the Gospel of Christ; from an Acquaintance with his Person; and secondly, shew you what an unsafe way of arguing this is, and how prejudicial to the Christian Religion. First, To shew you what Additions

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tions these men make to the Gospel of Christ, from an Acquaintance with his Person: And I confess I am very much beholden to this Author, for acknowledging whence they fetch all their *Orthodox*, and *Gospel Mysteries*; for I had almost pored my Eyes out with seeking for them in the Gospel, and could never find them; but I learn now that indeed they are not to be found there, unless we be first acquainted with the Person of Christ. This is an Argument well worth considering, and if this discourse should prove long, (as I fear it will) I doubt not but the Usefulness of it will be a sufficient Reward both to the Writer and Reader. And since I owe this Discovery to Dr. John Owen, I shall confine my self to his method, who in the place above-mentioned tells us, *That the sum of all true Wisdom and Knowledge may be reduced to these three heads.*

First, *The Knowledge of God, his Nature and Properties.* Digr. 2. Of the Excellency of Christ Jesus, p. 89.

Secondly, *The knowledge of our selves, with reference to the Will of God concerning us.*

Thirdly, *Skill to walk in Communion with God.*

In these three is summed up all true Wisdom and Knowledge, and not any of them is to any purpose to be obtained, or is manifested, but only in and by the Lord Christ.

Where By is fallaciously added to include the Revelations Christ hath made, whereas his first undertaking was to shew how impossible it is to understand these things savingly and clearly, notwithstanding all those Revelations God hath made of Himself and his Will, by Moses, and the Prophets, and by Christ himself, without an acquaintance with his Person.

But to let that pass, I shall begin with the Knowledge of God, his Nature and Properties; and I shall

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shall not particularly examine every thing he says, but principally take notice of those peculiar Discoveries of the Nature of God, which the World was ignorant of before, and of which Revelation is wholly silent, but are now *clearly* and *savingly* learnt (as the Doctor pretends) from an *Acquaintance with Christ's Person.*

The Light of Nature, and the Works of Creation and Providence, and those manifold Revelations God hath made of himself to the World, especially that last and most perfect Revelation by *Jesus Christ our Lord*, assure us, that God is infinite in all Perfection; that he is so powerful, that he can do whatever he pleases; so wise, that he knows how to order every thing for the best; so good, that he desires and designs the happiness of all his Creatures according to the capacity of their natures; so holy, that he hath a natural love for all good men, and will not fail to reward them; but hates all sin and wickedness, and will as certainly punish all obstinate and incorrigible Sinners; but yet that he is very patient and long-suffering towards the worst of men, and uses various methods of kindness and severity to reclaim them, and is as ready to pardon them, when they return to their duty, as a kind Father is to receive an humble and penitent Prodigal. These Properties of God are plainly revealed in the Scripture, without any further Acquaintance with the Person of Christ; And had Christ never appeared in the World, yet we had reason to believe that God is thus wise, and good, and holy, and merciful, because not only the Works of Nature and Providence, but the Word of God, assure us that he is so. The Appearance of Christ did not first discover the Nature of God to us, but only gave us a greater expression of Gods goodness than ever we had before, and confirms

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confirms us in the belief of what we had learnt before from Nature and Revelation; just as his Resurrection, which is an ocular Demonstration of another Life, confirms us in the belief of that blessed Immortality which he hath promised; and yet we could not have learnt this neither from the Person of Christ, had he not told us for what ends he came into the World, as will appear more anon.

And is not this a confident man to tell us, that *the Love of God to Sinners, and his pardoning Mercy, could never have entred into the heart of man but by Christ;* when the experience of the whole World confutes him; for whatever becomes of his new Theories, both *Jews and Heathens* (who understood nothing at all of what Christ was to do in order to our Recovery) did believe God to be gracious and merciful to Sinners, and had reason to do so, because God himself had assured the *Jews*, that *he was a gracious and merciful God, pardoning iniquity, transgressions, and sins:* And those natural notions the *Heathens* had of God, and all those discoveries God had made of himself in the Works of Creation and Providence, did assure them, that God is very good, and it is not possible to understand what Goodness is, without pardoning Grace.

But yet the truth is, considering what these men mean by the Love, and pardoning Grace, and Justice, and Patience, and Long-suffering of God, I must acknowledge, that these Properties could never have been discovered but by a too familiar acquaintance with Christ's Person; for Nature and Revelation say nothing of them:

As for instance, He tells us, that in Christ (that is, in his Death and Sufferings for our Sins) *God hath manifested the naturalness of this Righteousness (i. e. Vindictive Justice in punishing Sin) unto him, in that it*

Digr. 2. p. 90.

Digr. 2. p. 93.

was

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was impossible that it should be diverted from Sinners, without the interposing of a Propitiation. That is, that God is so just and righteous, that he cannot pardon Sin without satisfaction to his Justice: Now this indeed is such a notion of Justice as is perfectly new, which neither Scripture nor Nature acquaints us with: For all Mankind have accounted it an act of Goodness (without the least suspicion of Injustice in it) to remit Injuries and Offences, without exacting any punishment: And that he is so far from being just, that he is cruel and savage, who will remit no offence, till he hath satisfied his revenge. That part of Justice which consists in punishing Offenders, was always look'd on as an Instrument of Government, and therefore the exacting or remitting punishment was referred to the Wisdom of Governours, who might spare, or punish, as they saw Reason for it, without being unjust in either: And therefore had not one who pretends to so great and personal an Acquaintance with Christ said so, I should rather have thought, that God's requiring such a Sacrifice as the Death of Christ, for the expiation of our Sins, was not because he could not do otherwise, but because his infinite Wisdom judged this the best and most effectual way of dispensing his Grace.

But though this be a very terrible discovery of the naturalness of Gods Righteousness, or Vindictive Justice, yet he makes some amends for it in that comfortable discovery of his Patience and Long-suffering towards Sinners; for now (as he adds) in Christ *the very Nature of God is discovered to be Love and Kindness*: A happy change this, from all Justice to all Love! But how comes this to pass? Why the account of that is very plain: Because (if I may take liberty to put his words into plain English) the Justice of God hath glutted it self with revenge on Sin
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ibid. p. 95.

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in the Death of Christ, and so henceforward we may be sure, he will be very kind, as a revengeful man is, when his passion is over; for so he speaks very honourably of God, *Whatever discoveries were made of the Patience and Lenity of God unto us, yet if it were not withal revealed, that the other Properties of God, as his Justice and Revenge for Sin, had their a^{ct}ings also assigned them to the full, there could be little consolation gathered from the former.* That is, he would not believe God himself, though he should make never so many promises of being good and gracious to Sinners, unless he were sure that he had first satisfied his Revenge, which indeed is such a Character of the Love and Patience of God, as we could never have learnt, had not some men falsely pretended to such an Acquaintance with the Person of Christ as contradicts those natural notions which all men have of God, and the plain Revelations of the Gospel. The sum of which is, that God is all Love and Patience, when he hath taken his fill of Revenge, as others use to say, *That the Devil is very good when he is pleased.*

But however Sinners have great reason to rejoice in it, when they consider the nature and end of God's Patience and Forbearance towards them, *viz. That it is Gods taking a course in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, that we should not be destroyed, notwithstanding our sins.* That as before the least Sin could not escape without a just punishment, Justice being so natural to God, that he cannot forgive without punishing; so the Justice of God being now satisfied by the death of Christ, the greatest sins can do us no hurt, but we shall escape with a *Notwithstanding our sins.* This it seems we learn from an Acquaintance with the Person of Christ, though his Gospel instructs us otherwise, that *without Holiness no man shall see God.* As

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As for the *Wisdom of God*, (which is another property he instanceth in) no doubt, but the Gospel of Christ makes great and glorious Discoveries of it; but then this is not very consistent with those other Discoveries of the Nature of God which these men say they learn from the Person of Christ: For if Justice be so natural to God, that nothing could satisfie him but the Death of his own Son; the Redemption of the World by Christ may discover his Justice or his Goodness, but not his Wisdom; for Wisdom consists in the choice of the best and fittest means to attain an end, when there are more ways than one of doing it.

But it requires no great Wisdom to chuse, when there is but one possible way: And whatever Wisdom there is in Gods redeeming the World by his own Son, the knowledge of it is wholly owing to the Revelations of the Gospel, and not to such a fanciful Acquaintance with Christ as these men talk of.

Thus you see what excellent Discoveries of the Nature of God are owing to an *Acquaintance with the Person of Christ*: And the second thing we learn from hence is, *The Knowledge of our Selves, and that in respect of Sin, and in respect of Righteousness.*

As for Sin, the Gospel assures us, that God is an irreconcilable Enemy to all wickedness, it being so contrary to his own most holy Nature, that if he have any love for himself, and any esteem and value for his own Perfections and Works, he must hate sin, which is so unlike himself, and which destroys the Beauty and Perfection of his Workmanship. For this end he sent his Son into the World to destroy the works of the Devil, and to reduce Mankind to their obedience to their great Creator, to restore them to the Uprightness and Integrity of their Natures,

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Natures, and thereby to a State of Friendship with God: This was the end of his holy Laws, and precious Promises, and exemplary Life, and meritorious Death, and glorious Resurrection, and powerful Intercession for us, to deliver us from the Power and Dominion of Sin; to make us first holy, as God is, and then to receive us into that Blessed place where God dwells.

But now *Acquaintance with the Person of Christ* makes just such a discovery of Sin, as it did of the *naturalness of God's Justice to him; i. e.* "That the desert and demerit of Sin is such, that it is impossible to make any Atonement and Satisfaction to the Justice and Wrath of God, but only by the Death of Christ, otherwise Christ had died in vain: That is, that God could not forgive it without full Satisfaction, which nothing but the Death of Christ could make.

Thus we learn *our disability to answer the Mind and Will of God in all or any of the obedience he requireth:* P. 110. That is, that it is impossible for us to do any thing that is good, but we must be acted like Machines, by an external force, by the irresistible power of the Grace and Spirit of God: This I am sure is a new Discovery; we learn no such thing from the Gospel; and I do not see how he proves it from an Acquaintance with Christ.

But still there is a more glorious discovery than this behind, and that is, *The glorious end whereunto Sin is appointed and ordained,* (I suppose he means by God) *is discovered in Christ, viz.* for the demonstration P. 112. of Gods *Vindictive Justice, in measuring out to it a meet recompence of Reward, and for the praise of Gods glorious Grace in the pardon and forgiveness of it.* That is, it could not be known how just and severe God is, but by punishing Sin; nor how good and gracious God

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God is, but by pardoning it; and therefore lest his Justice and Mercy should never be known to the World, he appoints and ordains Sin to this end; that is, Decrees that men shall sin, that he may make some of them the Vessels of his Wrath, and the Examples of his fierce Vengeance and Displeasure; and others the Vessels of his Mercy, to the praise and glory of his free Grace in Christ: This indeed is such a Discovery as Nature and Revelation could not make. For Nature would teach us, that so infinitely a glorious Being, as God is, needs not Sin and Misery to recommend his Glory and Perfections; and that so holy a God, who so perfectly hates every thing that is wicked, would not truck and barter with Sin and the Devil for his glory; and that so good a God had much rather be glorious in the Happiness, and Perfection, and Obedience of his Creatures, than in their Sin and Misery: And Revelation tells us the same thing, that as much as Sin is for the glory of his Vindictive Justice, yet God takes no pleasure in punishing, *delights not in the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should return and live:* That is, he had rather there were no occasion for punishing, than be made glorious by such Acts of Vengeance: And therefore though God be so holy as to punish incorrigible Sinners, and so merciful, as to forgive all true Penitents, through our Lord Jesus Christ, yet he did not ordain, and appoint, and decree Sin to this end: For Vindictive Justice and Pardoning Mercy are but secondary Attributes of the Divine Nature, and therefore God cannot primarily design the glorifying of them; for that cannot be without primarily deligning the Sin and Misery of his Creatures, which would be inconsistent with the Goodness and Holiness of his Nature. Thus Nature and Revelation teaches, though these men pretend to have

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have learnt otherwise, from an Acquaintance with Christ.

Thus much for the knowledge of our selves with respect to Sin, *which is hid only in the Lord Jesus.* But then we learn what our Righteousness is, *wherewith we must appear before God, from an Acquaintance with Christ.* We have already learnt how unable we are to make atonement for our Sins, without which they can never be forgiven, and how unable we are to do any thing that is good: And yet nothing can deliver us from the Justice and Wrath of God, but a full Satisfaction for our Sins; and nothing can give us a title to a Reward, but a perfect and unfinning Righteousness: What shall we do in this case? How shall we escape Hell, or get to Heaven, when we can neither expiate for our past Sins, nor do any good for the time to come? Why, here we are relieved again by an *Acquaintance with Christ:* His Death expiates former Iniquities, and removes the whole guilt of Sin: But *this is not enough that we are not guilty; we must also be actually righteous; not only all Sin is to be answered for, but all Righteousness is to be fulfilled.* Now this Righteousness we find only in Christ, *We are reconciled to God by his Death, and saved by his Life; that Actual obedience be yielded to the whole Law of God, is that Righteousness whereby we are saved:* We are innocent by virtue of his Sacrifice and Expiation, and righteous with his Righteousness. P. 117.

Now this is a mighty comfortable discovery, how we may be righteous without doing any thing that is good or righteous. And I confess we could never have known this *clearly and savingly* by the Gospel of Christ; for that makes a different representation of it; tells us expressly, that *he is righteous that doth righteousness, that without Holiness no man shall see God:* That the only way to obtain the pardon of our

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Sins, is to repent of them, and forsake them; and the only thing that gives a right to the Promises of future glory, is to obey the Laws, and imitate the Example of our Saviour, and to be transformed into the Nature and Likeness of God: And though our Obedience be not in every thing exact and perfect, yet if it be sincere, we shall be accepted for the sake of Christ, and by virtue of that Covenant of Grace which he hath sealed with his Blood, which admits of an Evangelical, instead of a strict Legal Perfection: Such different Discoveries doth an Acquaintance with the Gospel, and with the Person of Christ, make.

*Digr. 2.
p. 119.*

*The third part of our Wisdom is to walk with God, and to that is required Agreement, acquaintance, a way, strength, boldness, and aiming at the same end: And all these, with the Wisdom of them, are hid in the Lord Jesus. The sum of which in short is this: "That Christ having expiated our Sins, and fulfilled all Righteousness for us, though we have no personal Righteousness of our own, but are as contrary to God, as Darknes to Light, and Death to Life, and an universal Pollution and Defilement to an universal and glorious Holiness, and Hatred to Love; yet the Righteousness of Christ is a sufficient, nay, the only Foundation of our agreement, and upon that, of our walking with God: Though St. John tells us, If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth; but if we walk in the Light, as God is in the light, then have we fellowship one with another, and (then) the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sins, 1 Joh. i. 6, 7. And besides this, our only acquaintance with God, and knowledge of him is hid in Christ, which his Word and Works could not discover, as you heard above. "And he is the only way, wherein we must walk with
"God,*

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"God, and we receive all our strength from him; and he makes us bold and confident too, having removed the guilt of sin, that now we may look Justice in the face, and *whet our Knife at the Counter-door*, all our Debts being discharged by Christ, as *these bold Acquaintances and Familiars of Christ* use to speak. *And in Christ we design the same end that God doth*, which is the advancement of his own glory: That is, I suppose, by trusting to the Expiation and Righteousness of Christ for Salvation, without doing any thing our selves, we take care that God shall not be robbed of the glory of his free Grace by a competition of any Merits and Deserts of our own.

These are those great Gospel-Mysteries and Soul-saving Truths, which (as these men would have us believe) are learnt from an Acquaintance with Christ's Person, which his Gospel is so silent in, or speaks so darkly and imperfectly of, that it was impossible to understand them, without being first acquainted with his Person. And that you may the better understand the whole design and contrivance of it, I shall put every thing into its just and natural order:

God then from the beginning designed to glorify his Justice, and his Mercy; and because there had been no occasion either to punish or pardon, unless Man had sinned, he appointed and ordained Sin for the glory of his Vindictive Justice, and Pardoning Grace: And accordingly (since nothing can withstand the Decrees and Appointments of God) it pleaseth God that Man should sin, but when he hath sinned he is extremely displeas'd with it, and now his Justice must be satisfied; for it is impossible for God to forgive the least sin without a compleat and perfect Satisfaction; this falls hard upon those miserable
D 2 Wretches,

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Wretches, whose ill fortune it was, without any fault of theirs, to be left out of the Roll of Election, and who have no way to satisfy the Divine Justice, but by their Eternal Torments; by this it appears how rigorously Just God is, that he will never pardon the least Sin, when he can serve his own glory by the misery and confusion of Sinners.

But this is but one part of the glory of God, to be Just in punishing Sin, the other is to shew Mercy in sparing and rewarding the Sinner; now here was the great difficulty, how God should be Just, and Merciful too; when Justice requires a full Satisfaction, and Mercy excludes all Desert. For the demerit of Sin being infinite, no Creature can expiate Sin, but by enduring infinite, that is, endless Torments; and those who must be always miserable, can never be the Subjects of God's Mercy.

To unite these two extremes, and reconcile such contradictions, was a work of infinite Wisdom, as well as Goodness: And it was effected thus: God sends his only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ into the World, to fulfil all Righteousness in his Life, and to make a full Satisfaction for Sin by his Death. For his Blood being of infinite value, (as being the blood of the Son of God) could expiate an infinite guilt, and so make a compleat satisfaction to Justice; which is more glorified by the Death of Christ, than by the Eternal miseries of all the Sinners in the World, because it discovers the *naturalness of Justice to God* (which is the *Position* to be maintained) that he could not pardon without full satisfaction, that is, that he is so just, that he hath not one dram of goodness in him, till his rage and vengeance be satisfied; which is, I confess, a glorious kind of Justice:

But

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But now the Justice and Vengeance of God having their *actings assigned them to the full*; that is, (for I can make no better of it) being glutted and satiated with the Blood of Christ; God may pardon as many and great Sins as he pleases, without fear of the least imputation of Injustice: And now a glorious and more comfortable Scene of Mercy begins to appear; now God embraces Sinners as a kind Father, and accounts them perfectly innocent in Virtue of that Satisfaction Christ hath made for their Sins; but this is not enough, the Law of God must be fulfilled, as well as his Justice satisfied; we must be righteous, as well as innocent, otherwise we may escape Punishment, but can expect no Reward, (though I confess I should have thought, that Christ had satisfied for Sins of Omission, together with Sins of Commission: And as by his Satisfaction for our doing what we ought not to do, we are reputed by God as having never done any thing amiss, so by his Satisfaction for our neglecting what we ought to have done, we might by the same reason be reputed by God perfectly righteous, to have done all, that we ought, to have kept the whole Law, but it seems this was not sufficient) and therefore as the satisfaction of Christ is imputed to us for the forgiveness of sins, so the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us to make us perfectly righteous; and this makes the Grace of God perfectly free without any suspicion of merit or desert in us.

And now God and Sinners may agree very well, and walk comfortably together, for though they have Guilt enough, and be Justice enough to destroy a World, yet there is no danger, since Christ hath satisfied Justice; and though he be infinitely holy and pure, perfect Light, and Sinners abominably filthy, yet there is no fear he should loath and abhor them,

D 3 when

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when they are clothed with the white and spotless Robes of Christs righteousness; and they are so well acquainted now with the design of God to advance the glory of his free Grace in their Salvation that they are very secure, that neither their past sins, nor present habitual impurities can do them any hurt: But they *shall be saved with a notwithstanding their sins.*

These are those fundamental Doctrines, with which these men have blessed the World from a pretended acquaintance with Christs Person, which are so unlike the *holy Religion of our Saviour*, that for distinction-sake, it ought to be called the *Religion of Christs Person*, in opposition to the Religion of his Gospel.

And since we have discovered the Principles of this new Religion of Christs Person, I cannot forbear inquiring briefly into the practical inferences from it, that we may at once view the grand Mystery of this Religion both in its Principles and Practice.

Now the Practice of this Religion consists in *accepting of Christ, and coming to him, and applying his Merits, and Satisfaction, and Righteousness to our selves for pardon and justification; and in those Duties which are consequent upon such an Union and Closure with Christ.* For Christ having satisfied for our Sins, and fulfilled the Righteousness of the Law for us, it is a plain and necessary consequence, that we have nothing to do, but to get an interest in the Satisfaction and Righteousness of Christ, that they may be imputed to us; for he is very ignorant of Christ, who hopes that any thing else will avail him to Salvation.

Now that we may thus come to Christ, and close with him, it is absolutely necessary that we be sensible of our lost and undone condition out of Christ. How impossible
it

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it is for us to atone the wrath of God, or to have any Righteousness of our own, which can bear the severe scrutiny of his Justice; and in a sence of this we must work our Imagination and Fancy into great Terrors and Agonies, and a dismal fear of the unsupportable wrath of God, and his natural and inexorable justice: This is the *spirit of bondage*, which we must lie under, before we can attain to the Spirit of Adoption: For we shall never value and prize Christ, and go to him for Salvation, till we are convinced of our necessity of him, and driven to him by the threatenings and terrors of the Law; and the Promise of Ease and Rest, is made only to the *wearied and heavy laden*; and these only shall be satisfied, who hunger and thirst after the *imputed Righteousness of Christ.*

And now being thus stung with sin, it is time for us to look up to Christ, as the *Israelites* did on the brazen Serpent, that we may be healed; now we must begin to see his Fulness, and Perfection, and Suitableness to the Wants and Necessities of our Souls, that he is our Atonement and Expiation, our Wisdom and Righteousness, all that we can desire or need.

And if it should so happen, that the sence of our Sins and Unworthiness makes us afraid to come to Christ, and apply him to our Souls, we must then have recourse to our acquaintance with the Person of Christ, to answer all our Doubts, and quiet our Consciences. As for instance: *Dost thou object, I am a great sinner, and will Christ save me? The Answer is easie, Whom did Christ come to save? Whom doth God justify, but the Ungodly? Did he take our Flesh upon him, and not our Sins? Ballance all things together, your Sins and Christs Merits, together, and the greatness of your Sins should not so much discourage you from*
D 4 *coming*

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coming to Christ, as the greatness of his Merits should encourage you to come to him: For where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound. Compare your Distress and Christ's Compassion together, your Wants and Christ's Fulness together, your unworthiness and Christ's Freedom together, your Desires and Christ's Invitations together, your own Weakness and Christ's Strength together, Satans Objections and Christ's Answers together; and now if Christ do not prevail above all thy fears, thou art not worthy to be acquainted with him.

Shepherd's
Sound Be-
liever,
p. 80.

Nay further, *If thou objectest, What have I to do with Christ? Why should he have to do with me, who have such an unholy, vile, hard, blind, and most wicked heart?* (The Objection you see is full, and home to the purpose, but mark the Answer) *O for the Lords sake dishonour not the Grace of Christ; it is true, thou canst not come to Christ, till thou art laden, humble, and separated from thy sins — yet remember for ever, that no more sorrow for sin, no more separation from sin, is necessary to thy closing with Christ, than so much as makes thee willing, or rather not unwilling, that the Lord should take it away; and know, if thou seekest for a greater measure of humiliation, antecedent to thy closing with Christ, than this, thou shewest the more pride therein, who wilt rather go into thy self, to make thy self holy and humble, than go out of thy self unto the Lord Jesus, to take away thy sin. In a word, who thinkest, Christ cannot love thee, until thou makest thy self fair, and when thou thinkest thy self so (which is pride) thou wilt then think otherwise of Christ.*

And now the reason of all this is very plain to those who are thus acquainted with the Person of Christ, "For he is our Physician, and therefore we must not think of healing our selves, but must go to him with all our diseases and sores about us, that

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that he alone may have the honour of healing us. He is a Fountain set open for sin and for uncleanness, and therefore we must go to him with all our filthiness to be cleansed and washed, for if we be first clean, there is no need of a Fountain. He is all Fulness, and therefore it is not fit we should carry any thing to him, as if he needed any thing from us. He is our Righteousness, and therefore, if we have any, we must leave all our Righteousness behind us, when we go to him. He is all Beauty and Loveliness, and therefore we must not carry any beauty to him, but receive it all from him: So that all we have to do in this great Work, is to go to Christ, weary, and sick, and filthy, and naked, stripped of every thing, but our sins and impurities, to receive ease, and health, and fulness, and beauty from him. Christ is the Gift of God, and therefore we must only receive him by the hand of Faith and apply him to our Souls: And then what a blessed change and metamorphosis is there presently made in us! for though we continue as we were, yet we have all in Christ. We are now united to him, and made his Members and Spouse, and so have an interest in all his Merits and Fulness. * *Christ saith to * watson's a Believer, With my Body, yea, with my Blood, I endow Christs thee; and a Believer saith to Christ, With my Soul I Loveliness, thee worship, (as if Christ and a Believer were married by the Liturgy:)* And now a Sinner may with the greatest confidence look Justice in the face, as being out of its reach. *A Soul in Christ is actually united to him, and one with him, and being so, no sentence of condemnation can fall on him, but the same must light upon Christ himself, (and who would desire to be more secure than Christ is) as a Woman in marriage, though she own never so many Debts, yet the Arrest doth not light upon her, but upon her Husband: O blessed Priviledge!*

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Priviledge! and who would be afraid of running into debt with God, when he hath such a Husband to discharge all? And then how vile and impure soever men are, *Here is their comfort when they are married to Christ, this is their glorious priviledge, Christs Beauty and Loveliness shall be put upon them; his Lilly-Whiteness shall be put upon the Saints.* And to crown all, when they are oncc thus engrafted into Christ; and made his Spouse, and Members of his Body, they are secure to Eternity. *For nothing that ever was a Member can be lost to Eternity; for is Christ divided? Can he lose a Member of his Body? Then his Body is not perfect: No, no, fear not, O ye Saints, neither Sin nor Satan can dissolve your Union with Christ: (But what if Sin should make them no Saints, would not that endanger the dissolving of this Union?)* For as the same Author sweetly reasons, *If any branch be pluckt away from Christ, it is either because Christ is not able to keep it, or because he is willing to lose it; (and why not because it will not stay?) he is able surely to keep it, for he is strengthened with the Godhead; and he is not willing to lose it; for why then should he shed his Blood for it? And as another great Acquaintant of Christs speaks, Weakness (that is, no Strength, no Grace, no, nor so much as sense of poverty) do not debar us from Gods Mercy; and the reason is very precious and convincing; for the Husband is bound to bear with the Wife as the weaker Vessel, and shall we think God will exempt himself from his own Rules, and not bear with his weak Spouse? Christ hath taken upon him to purge his Spouse, and make her fit for himself; so that if she be not purged, and cleansed, and made fair and lovely, whose fault can it be but his own, and surely that can be no just reason for a divorce. Thus you see, what it is to come to Christ, and accept of him, and close with him; the result of which is (so far as I can understand*

*Watson's
Christ's
Loveliness,
p. 467.*

*Watson's
Christian
Character,
p. 60.*

*The Spiritu-
al Vine,
p. 167.*

*Shepherd's
Sincere
Convert,
p. 77.*

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understand it) to be content to be saved by Christ, without being either humble or holy, fair or beautiful, any otherwise, than as he is pleased to make us so, by his satisfaction for our sins, and the imputation of his Righteousness to us.

Let us now consider what Duties are consequent upon such an union and closure of the Soul with Christ, and they are *consequential, conjugal Affections.* As first, a mighty love for her Saviour, and Head, and Husband: The Soul must be enamoured with the Beauty, and Loveliness, and Preciousness of Christ, must form pleasant and charming Ideas of him, and feel great Ravishments and Transports of Passion for him: *You must be sick of love to Christ, O ye Saints! and let him lie as a bundle of Myrrh always between your breasts; Christ is maxime diligibilis (as the School-men speak) he is the very Abstract and Quintessence of Beauty, he is a whole Paradise of Delight, he is the flower of Sharon, enriched with Orient colours, and perfumed with the sweetest savour: O wear this flower not in your bosoms, but in your hearts, and be always smelling to it, and shew your love to this lovely Saviour. You must delight in his embraces, and thirst after a more intimate acquaintance with him; you must never be satisfied one moment without him, but must follow him from one Ordinance to another, and never be satisfied unless you meet with Christ, and enjoy Communion with him in Ordinances: This is the Foundation of the Saints love to Ordinances, that there they meet with the Beloved of their Souls, and enjoy the sweet Caresses and Endearments of his Love; there they hear of his Beauty, and Loveliness, and Riches, and Fulness, and All-sufficiency; and though Evangelical Truths will not down with a Natural Heart, such an one as had rather bear some quaint point of some Vertue or Vice stood upon,*

*Watson's
Christ's
Loveliness,
p. 462.*

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upon, than any thing in Christ; yet when the grace of God hath altered him, then of all Truths the Truths of Christ savour best, those Truths that come out of the mouth of Christ, and out of the Ministry concerning Christ, they are most sweet of all. Such sanctified Souls and Ears loath all dull, insipid, Moral Discourses, which are perpetually inculcating their Duty on them, and troubling them with a great many Rules and Directions for a good Life, which he is pleased to call the *quaint Points of Vertue and Vice*; for this is not to enjoy Christ in Ordinances, they go away from such entertainment without having met with the Beloved of their Soul, without hearing any news from him, or having the least glimpse of his Beauty and Perfections; which is a plain contradiction to the nature and design of Ordinances, which are only for our enjoyment of *Communion with Jesus Christ*; that is, to unload our Consciences, and disburden our sins on him in our Confessions, and to beg of him the imputation of his Righteousness to make us lovely, and to put our Souls into some Raptures and amorous Passions to him, and to hear some good news from him by his Ministers, how much he loves us, and longs after us, how pitiful he is to us, ready to overlook all our miscarriages, and cover all our Deformities with his own Beauty and Loveliness, and to take us to the enjoyment of himself, that where he is, we also may be, perpetually to behold his Glory, and so lace our selves in his Love.

Secondly, Another *consequential conjugal Act* is *Obedience to our spiritual Husband*; but though the Gospel of Christ be very plain and exprefs in exacting this from us, and inculcates it so much that it favours too strong of a legal Spirit and Dispensation, yet it is very hard to find a proper place for it in this new Religion, or to deduce it from an acquaintance with Christ's Person.

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For (as these men state it) this is not necessary at all to our coming to Christ, and closing with him, nay, it is a great hindrance to it, for we must bring nothing to Christ with us, the Marriage is consummated without it, and then we have less need of it than before; for then we are adorned with the Beauty of Christ, are holy with his Holiness, we are delivered from the guilt of sin by his expiation, he must look to it to see the debt discharged, which he hath now taken upon himself, and we are righteous with his Righteousness, which gives us an actual right to Glory, and then we can need no Righteousness of our own to save us, which were to suppose a defect in the Righteousness of Christ; so that, how Obedience should come in, is hard to say. It is concluded on all hands by those who are most intimately acquainted with the Person of Christ, that it is but a *consequential Duty*, that which ought to follow our Espousals with Christ, and Justification by him, as a Fruit and Effect of it; but yet the reason of that is not evident. Some tell us, that it is due upon account of Gratitude and Thankfulness to our Saviour, which I cannot so well understand, unless our Righteousness and Obedience be due to Christ in thankfulness to him, for saving us without Obedience and Righteousness, which is just as broad as long, and we get nothing by the bargain. Especially considering that this is hardly reconcilable with that essential condition of *accepting Christ*, wherein these spiritual Espousals consist; viz. *That the Soul consents to take Christ* J.O.com. on his own terms, to save him in his own way, and saith, *munition*, Lord, I would have had Thee and Salvation in my way, p. 63. *that it might have been partly of mine Endeavours, and as it were by the works of the Law, (that is, by obeying the Laws of the Gospel) but I am now willing to receive thee, and to be saved in thy way, meerly by Grace:*

that

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that is, without doing any thing, without obeying thee; the most contented Spouse certainly that ever was in the World, to submit to such hard conditions as to be saved for nothing; but what a pretty complement doth the Soul make to Christ after all this, when she adds? *And though I would have walkt according to my own Mind, yet now I wholly give up my self to be ruled by thy Spirit.* But the Mystery of this will appear in what follows: For others make Obedience necessary upon account of our participation of Christ's Fulness, for this is one part of his Fulness, a power and ability to do the will of God; and this proves that it will be so, but makes it no otherwise necessary to us, than as we are necessarily passive in it; and this is all the Soul means in giving it self up to be ruled by the Spirit of Christ, to be passively, not actively good, to submit, (as needs it must) to the irresistible working of the Divine Spirit, and to obey, when it can rebel no longer.

Thus, Reader, I have given thee an entire Scheme of a new Religion, resulting from a pretended Acquaintance with Christ's Person, in all its fundamental Principles and Practices; here is every jot and tittle of Reason it is founded on, or pretends to, and the most obvious and easie connexion of one part with another, whereby thou mayst easily judge of the whole Fabrick and Contrivance; and I think there needs no more to expose it to the scorn of every considering man, who cannot but discover how inconsistent the Religion of *Christ's Person* is with the Religion of his *Gospel*: This is that Knowledge of Christ these men glory in, as containing greater Mysteries and more Soul-saving Truths, than are revealed in the Gospel.

SECT.

SECT. III.

How unsafe it is to found Religion upon a pretended Acquaintance with Christ's Person.

HAVING thus shewed you what that Religion is, which these men pretend to learn from an Acquaintance with Christ's Person, it is time now to consider this way of Reasoning, and shew you what an unsafe Foundation it is, whereon to build any Religion.

And first, this is at best to build Religion upon uncertain Conjectures, or ambiguous and doubtful Reasons; for suppose men were wary and cautious in drawing conclusions from the *Person of Christ*, (which few of these men are) yet what assurance can they have that their inferences are true? Had we seen Christ in the flesh, and been Witnesses of the many Miracles he wrought, of his Death upon the Cross, and his Resurrection from the Dead, had he not acquainted us with the end and design of all this, we might have ghest, and gheit till we had been weary, but it is great odds we had never ghest right, or at best, could never have been secure we had.

We may understand necessary Causes from necessary Effects, and necessary Effects from necessary Causes; if we see a Fire, we know it burns something; and if we see Smoke, we may safely conclude, there is some Fire: But where the connexion of the Effect with the Cause is not necessary, but arbitrary, doth not depend upon the nature of things,
but

No Acquaintance with Christ

but the Institution and Appointment of free Agents, we can understand no more of the Design, than the principal Agent is pleased to tell us. This is the case here: Christ's coming into the World, and all that he did and suffered for us, is the pure effect of God's free Grace, and the design of his unsearchable Wisdom and Counsel, and therefore none can understand the reasons and contrivance of this, but he who lay in the bosom of his Father, and those who learn from him: So that whoever would understand the Religion of our Saviour, must learn it from his Doctrine, not from his Person; because there is not a natural and necessary connexion between the Person of Christ, and what he did and suffered, and the Salvation of Mankind: the Incarnation, and Life, and Death, and Resurrection of Christ, were available to those ends for which God designed them, but the virtue and efficacy of them doth depend upon Gods Institution and Appointment, and therefore can be know only by Revelation.

When we are acquainted by Christ for what end he came into the World, and suffered, and died, and rose again, we may discover the Wisdom and Goodness of God in it, in sending us such a Saviour, and in qualifying him in so excellent a manner for the Work of our Redemption; but we cannot safely draw any one conclusion from the Person of Christ, which his Gospel hath not expressly taught, because we can know no more of the design of it, than what is there revealed.

And is it not intolerable presumption for men to mould and shape Religion according to their Fancies and Humours, and to stuff it with an infinite number of Orthodox Propositions, none of which are to be found in express terms in Scripture, but are only pretended to be deduced from thence by such
imaginary

but by Revelation.

imaginary consequences, from some little hints and appearances of things? Especially, is not this unpardonable in those men who cry down Reason for such a prophanè and carnal thing, as must not presume to intermeddle in holy matters, and yet lay the Foundation of their Religion, and erect such glorious and magnificent Fabricks, on nothing else but some little shews and appearances of Reason? But the plain truth is this, when men argue from the Nature of God, and his Works and Providences, from the nature of Mankind, and those Eternal Notions of Good and Evil, and the essential differences of things; that is, when men argue from plain and undeniable Principles, which have an immutable and unchangeable nature, and so can bear the stress and weight of a just consequence, this is carnal Reason; but when men argue from Fancies and Imaginations which have no stable nature, from some pretty Allusions and Similitudes, and Allegories, which have no certain shape, nor form, but what every mans fancy gives them, this is sanctified and spiritual Reason, but why I cannot imagine, unless that it so much resembles Ghosts and Shadows, which have nothing solid and substantial in them.

Secondly, How dangerous this way of reasoning from an Acquaintance with Christs Person is, appears in this, that it will serve any mans turn, who hath any quickness and vigour of fancy. It is an ealie matter at this rate to set up the trade of making new Hypotheses of Religion. I have already given you one draught and Scheme of Religion from a pretended acquaintance with Christ's Person, and it were ealie to present you with many more, with as fair colours and pretences, and as exact and regular proportions, and fanciful consequences, and artificial connexions; I need not tell you what use all
E out

Another Scheme of Religion

our Allegorical Divines would make of this, who have the peculiar knack and gift of adapting every similitude and resemblance, to what purposes they please: We know how the *Valentinians* of old perverted all the passages of our Saviours Life and Death, by such fanciful Applications to confirm the Doctrine of their *Aones*, and the portentous production of their Gods, and to patronize all their vilest practices; and if we allow of this way, I know not why one mans fancy should not be admitted as well as anothers. But to shew how easily this acquaintance with Christ's Person may be made to serve different purposes, I shall oppose another Scheme of Religion, which is much more plainly deducible from an acquaintance with Christ's Person, to what these men advance for the great Mystery of the Gospel, and the only Spiritual Wisdom. And thus I argue:

Since we see the Eternal Son of God leave his Fathers Throne, and condescend to come into the World in the nature and likeness of a Man, we may certainly conclude that it was upon a design of Love and Goodness; for had he intended to destroy the World, he would have clothed himself with Thunder and Lightning, he would have appeared like himself with an awful and astonishing Majesty, and with all the terrible Solemnities of Vengeance and Judgment, incircled with Legions of Angels, and and with Clouds of Smoak and Fire: But we now see nothing dreadful in his Looks, nor in his Conversation; he was made a man, as we are, which argues a good will and kindness to Humane Nature, he had all the sweetness of Innocence, and an obliging Goodness, that we have no reason to suspect any ill design under so charming and inviting an appearance; his Miracles were great and glorious, but not frightful

from an Acquaintance with Christ.

frightful and astonishing; they surprized with wonder, not with terrour and fear: his Almighty Power was displayed and manifested in Methods of Love and Kindness, in healing the Sick, and dispossessing Devils, in feeding the hungry, and raising the Dead, not in overturning Kingdoms and Empires, or bringing fire from Heaven to consume his Enemies. From all this we may safely conclude, that he came upon an Embassie of Peace, to assure the World of Gods good will towards them, and to reconcile the differences between God and Men. And when we consider further, that this Heavenly Embassadour and Mediator is no less than the Eternal Son of God, by whom the Worlds were made, we may reasonably conclude, that he came upon no less design than of Universal Goodness; for he can have no temptation to partiality, as being equally concerned in the happiness of all men, and we cannot imagine why he should lay a narrower design of Love in the Redemption, than in the Creation of Mankind; that when in the first Creation he designed all men for Happiness, in this new and second Creation he should design and intend the Happiness only of some few, which is, to make him less good in redeeming than in creating Mankind, though Creation cost him no more than the exercise of his Power, but Redemption the expence of his Blood: no sure, his Goodness did not become less infinite and boundless, when he became Man; the design of his appearing was to restore Mankind to that Honour, and Happiness, and Immortality they had lost; and to repair the sullied Glory of the first Creation by making all things new again.

Thus when we consider the Innocence and Holiness of his Life, that he was a great Example of an unaffected Piety towards God, and all the Vertues

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of an innocent and useful conversation with men, we may reasonably conclude, that his greatest design was to reform the debauched manners of the World, to reduce Mankind to the Obedience of God, to teach men how to live as well as talk, and to restore the practice of Piety and Justice, of Meekness and Humility, and an universal good will, which had been banished out of the World by the hypocritical Pretences of a more refined Sanctity in washing Hands, and Dilhes, in tithing Mint and Cummin, and such-like pieces of legal and ceremonial Righteousness: But now our Saviour by his Example as well as Laws, taught us another Lesson, that as we lost our Happiness at first by sin, so the way to regain the Favour of God, and an immortal Life, is by the practice of a sincere and universal Righteousness. He came to be our Example and Guide to Heaven, as well as our Mediator and Advocate; and therefore we must imitate his Life, if we would enjoy the benefits of his Death and Intercession; for so holy a Person can never be the Patron of Vice, nor an Advocate for impenitent and incorrigible Sinners.

When we remember, that Christ died as a Sacrifice and Propitiation for sin, this gives us a great Demonstration of Gods good will to us, how ready he is to pass by all our former Sins, in that he hath appointed an Atonement for us, and given no less Person than his own Son for our Ransom, which is the greatest assurance God could give us of his readiness to accept of true Penitents, and therefore the most powerful motive and encouragement to return to our Duty.

And besides this, the Death of Christ assures us, what the desert of Sin is, and what will be the portion of all impenitent Sinners: For in that he required the

from an Acquaintance with Christ.

the Death of his own Son to be an Atonement for Sin, he hath plainly declared that all Sinners deserve to die, and that none shall escape this just condemnation, but those who are washed and purified in the Blood of Christ: He will not pardon Sin without a Sacrifice, nor accept of any other Atonement but the death of his Son; and accept of that for none, but those, who believe and obey the Gospel; and if God did not think fit to save true Penitents without a Ransom, where shall the Sinner and Ungodly appear? So that though we do not pretend to understand the strict Philosophy of that Atonement made by Christ, yet we may easily learn all that is useful and necessary for us to know; that Christs Death and Sacrifice for Sin seals the Covenant of Grace and Pardon to all penitent and reformed Sinners, and seals the irrevocable Decree of Reprobation against all others; for that Covenant which is sealed with the Blood of so great and stupendious a Sacrifice, must needs be irrevocable and eternal.

In the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, and his Ascension into Heaven, we have an ocular demonstration of the Rewards of Holiness and Obedience, that for the Innocence and Purity of his Life, and the Humility and Obedience of his Death, he is now exalted to the right hand of God, and clothed with Majesty and Glory. That Power and Authority he is now invested with, secures us of the prevalency of his Intercession, of his constant Care and Providence over his Church, of the Influences of his Grace, and the supply of all our spiritual wants, and of that Glory and Happiness to which he will advance us at the last day.

All this we learn from an Acquaintance with Christ's Person (as these men call it) and it were ealie now to draw the whole Plot and Design of Christianity,

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flianity, to search into the deep Counsels of God, and to discover those Principles and Motives he was acted by, and the infinite Wisdom of the Contrivance, and the true Methods of a Sinners Recovery by Christ, and what that Homage and Worship is, which we owe our Saviour.

As to make some short Essay of it. Those natural notions which we have of God, acquaint us, that he is infinitely good, and the History of the Creation assures us, that God made the World to be an Image and representation of his own Glory and Perfections, but especially Man, who was made after the Image of God, and endowed with that Wisdom and Knowledge, and all those Principles of Piety and Vertue, which would have made him a living and active Image of the Divine Perfections. This was the Glory and Happiness of his Nature, to know God, and to be like him, to praise and adore his great Benefactor, and to be inseparably united to him by those natural ties of Love and Obedience. For nothing else can be the Happiness of a reasonable Creature, but Conformity to the Divine Nature, which is the pattern and Measure of all Rational Perfections and Happiness. And therefore when Mankind Apostatized from God, they miserably defeated the end of their Creation, and intercepted those natural Communications of the Divine Goodness, by making themselves unworthy and incapable of them: And now we may easily imagine how much a good God was grieved and offended with this, not as a haughty and imperious Prince should be with the Miscariages and Rebellion of his Subjects, but as a kind Father is displeas'd and grieved for the disobedience of his Children, for their refractory and unmanagable temper; not so much as an affront and contempt of his own Authority, but as it is a
necessary

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necessary cause of the ruine and misery of his Children, whose Happiness he so passionately desires and designs.

This made the Divine Goodness so restlessly zealous and concerned for the Recovery of Mankind; various ways he attempted in former Ages, but * with little success, as I observed before: But at last God sent his own Son our Lord Jesus Christ into the World to be the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, to seek and to save that which was lost. * Of the Knowledge of Christ, p. 19.

And that we may be able in some measure to comprehend the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of this contrivance, and how well the means is fitted to the end, we must consider that the whole Myltery of the Recovery of Mankind, consists only in repairing the Divine Image, which was defaced by Sin; that is, in making all men truly good and vertuous. Sin is our Apostasie from God, and doth as naturally make us miserable, as it makes us unlike the most happy Being. But Holiness restores us to our Primitive State, to the perfect constitution of our Natures, and makes us Good, and therefore Happy, as God is.

And this was the great difficulty to persuade men to be good, to work upon the different tempers, and inclinations and passions of Mankind, and to reduce them to the forsaken and untrodden paths of Vertue; and though the Laws and Precepts, the great Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel, confirmed by so many stupendious Miracles, and by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, have in themselves a mighty power to reform the World, yet the consideration of Christ's Person of what he did, and suffered for us, gives a peculiar force and energy to them.

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Sin and guilt makes men fearful, and it makes them disingenuous, they are apt to distrust Goodness, or to abuse it: will either believe God implacable, which makes them desperate, because there is no hope of pardon; or believe him to be fond and indulgent, which makes them saucy and presumptuous; and to prevent both these Extremes of Superstition, which are such profest Enemies to a sincere and unaffected Religion, God sent his own Son into the World, and by the greatness of his Person, and the manner and circumstances of his Appearance did confute them both.

If guilt make us afraid of God as an angry and severe Judge, behold here the distance taken away, in the Incarnation of the Son of God, who condescended to come down to us clothed with our Nature, as a mild and a gentle Prince, by all the methods of love and sweetness to reduce us to our Allegiance and Subjection to God; in him we see the good will of God to Sinners; here is a demonstration of condescending Goodness, which stooped as low as Earth, and did not disdain the nature and appearance of a Man, nor the Conversation of Sinners, nor the shame of the Cross, nor the pale Terrours and Agonies of Death and the Grave.

And to remove all possible suspicion concerning Gods love to Sinners, the Son of God dies as a Sacrifice for our Sins; to make Atonement for us, and with his Blood seals the Covenant of Grace and Pardon, and all the Promises of Eternal Life. And still to give us the greater security of the performance of all this, our dying and suffering Lord is raised again from the Dead, and advanced to the right hand of Power and Majesty, to intercede for us.

Thus God deals with us after the manner of Men, and to encourage us to return to our Duty, hath given

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given us all the security of our acceptance, that Guilt it self (though infinitely jealous and suspicious) could desire: For what could we wish for more, than that God should send so great and so beloved a Person to us on an Embassie of Peace; than that the Son of God should be our Propitiation and Advocate, our Lord and Judge, he who took our Nature and our Infirmities on him, who knows our Weakness and our Temptations, who died to expiate our Sins, and is entred into the Holy of Holies, to intercede for us in the virtue of his Blood, and in the power of his Glory, and the triumphs of his Conquests, and with a tender and compassionate sense of our Infirmities.

But then on the other hand to cure our Presumption, that we may not think God to be so easie, as to be reconciled to Sinners and to their Vices together; the Death of Christ upon the Cross assures us what the merit is, and what the portion of Sin shall be; that all Sinners deserve to die, and shall certainly have their deserts, without a sincere Repentance and Reformation of their Lives; for to expiate Sin by Death can signifie no less than this, that Death is the proper Recompence of Sin, and therefore that those Sins which are not expiated by the Sacrifice of Christ (as none are, till we repent and reform) shall certainly be expiated by the Death of the Sinner. Especially considering how holy our Priest and Sacrifice was, we cannot reasonably conceive that he died, or that he intercedes for incorrigible Sinners. The Sacrifice of his Death extends no farther than the Example of his Life; *He was made manifest to destroy Sin, and in him was no Sin.*

Now though I dare not be so bold as to say, what infinite Wisdom can do, yet it is not imaginable, how

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how God could have contrived a more effectual way to reform the World, which contains so many powerful Obligations, such forcible Endearments, such ravishing Charms; which makes such a pleasant and inviting Representation of God to the World, which so confirms our Faith, and encourages our Hopes, and enflames our Love, and awakens our Fears, and excites our Emulation, which doth even affect our Senses with the Arguments of Religion, and storm the lower and more brutish Faculties of our Souls, and captivate them to the Love and Obedience of Christ.

From hence it is easie to understand what is the true method of a Sinners Recovery by Christ, and what returns of love and gratitude we owe our Lord and Saviour. When we are so affected with all the powerful Arguments to a new Life, which are contained in his Incarnation, and Life, and Doctrine, and Example, and Miracles, and Death, and Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven, and his Intercession for us, as to be sensible of the shame and folly of sin, and to be reconciled to the love and practice of true Piety and Holiness, then we partake in the Merits of his Sacrifice, and find the benefit of his Intercession, and have a title to all the Blessings and Promises of his Gospel: This was the design of Christ's coming into the World, not to distract our guilty minds with the Terrours of the Law, and the inexorable Justice of God, not to bring us under a legal Dispensation of Fear and Bondage, but to encourage us to forsake our Sins, and reform our Lives, by all the Endearments of Love and Goodness, and the lively Hopes of a blessed Immortality, mixt with an awful regard and reverence for God, who is an holy and righteous Judge, and an irreconcilable Enemy to all Sin. This is such a method of converting Sinners,

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Sinners, as is proper to the Person of Christ, and the manner of his appearance, which was not designed to cause Tempests and Earthquakes in our minds, like the Thunder and Lightning from Mount *Sinai*, but to work a Reformation in the World by more silent and gentle methods, and in more humane ways. If our Faith in Christ have reformed our lives, and rectified the temper and disposition of our minds, and made us sincere Lovers of God and Goodness, though we are not acquainted with these artificial methods of Repentance, have not felt the workings of the Law, nor the amazing terrours of Gods Wrath, nor the raging despair of damned Spirits, and then all on a sudden (as if we had never heard of any such thing before) have had Christ offered to us, to be our Saviour, and heard the wooings and beseechings of Christ to accept of him, and upon this have made a formal Contract and Espousal with Christ, and such-like workings of a heated fancy, and religious distraction; though our Conversion be not managed with so much Art and Method, and by so many steps and gradations, we are never the worse Christians for want of it. For indeed this must needs be the effect of Ignorance, not of Acquaintance with Christ, which suggests so many encouraging considerations to return to God as to a merciful and compassionate Father, and not to tremble at his presence, as a severe and inexorable Judge.

And hence we learn, that the truest expression of love to our Saviour, is not some fond and amorous passions, but obedience to his Laws; and the greatest honour we can do him, is to imitate his example, and to express the power of his Death and Resurrection in the exemplary Holiness of our Lives; for this best answers the end of his coming into the

*See Chap. 5.
Sect. 2.*

How men pervert Scripture,

the World, is the fruit of his Intercession for us, and the greatest Glory and Ornament of his spiritual Kingdom.

Thus I have given you a brief Scheme and Hypothesis of Religion from an Acquaintance with Christ's Person; and if they will own this a safe way, to build Religion on an Acquaintance with Christ's Person, they must own what I have now discoursed, which is much more agreeable to the *Person of Christ*, and the design of his appearing, and more easily and naturally deduced from it, than their own wild and fantastical conceits. If they do not like this, I must advise them to quit this way, as that which will serve others as well as themselves, and let us all fetch our Religion from the plain Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel of Christ, not from any pretended Personal Acquaintance with him.

S E C T. IV.

How Men pervert the Scripture to make it comply with their fancies.

Here is a very obvious Objection against this whole Discourse, the answering of which will further discover the ill consequences of framing such fanciful *Ideas* of Religion from an Acquaintance with Christ's Person; And that is this, That though these men deduce their Religion from an Acquaintance with Christ, yet there are no men that so abound in Scripture-proofs to confirm what they say, and therefore they do not lay the Foundation of their Religion

to fit it to their Hypothesis.

Religion on such uncertain conjectures, and the truth is, if you consult these mens Writings, you shall find their Books stuffed with Scripture, or if you talk with them, their whole discourse is little else but Scripture-phrases: But that *Reverend Doctor* confessed the plain Truth, that their Religion is wholly owing to an Acquaintance with the *Person of Christ*, and could never have been clearly and savingly learnt from his *Gospel*, had they not first grown acquainted with his *Person*. And then it is no wonder if they can accommodate Scripture-expressions to their own dreams and fancies. For when mens fancies are so possess'd with Schemes and *Ideas* of Religion, whatever they look on appears of the same shape and colour, wherewith their Minds are already tinctured, like a man sick of the Jaundies, or that looks through a painted Glass, who seeth every thing of the same colour that his Eye or Glass gives it: All the Metaphors, and Similitudes, and Allegories of Scripture, are easily applied to their purpose; and if any word sound like the tinkling of their own fancies, it is no less than a demonstration that that is the meaning of the Spirit of God; and every little shadow and appearance doth mightily confirm them in their preconceived opinions. As *Irenaeus* observes of the *Valentinians*, that they used one Artifice or other to adapt all the Speeches of our Saviour, and all the Allegories of Scripture *male composito phantasmati*, to the ill contrived figment of their own brain: And thus the minds of men are abused with words and phrases, and the Scripture is prest to serve every new-fangled conceit in Religion.

The wildest and most extravagant Opinions that were ever yet vented under the name of Religion, have pretended the authority of Scripture for their Patronage; though any unprejudiced man would wonder

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wonder how the reading such places of Scripture should suggest such notions to them: But this is no wonder when we consider that men first contrive their Religion (as these *Acquaintants* of Christ do) and possess their fancies throughly with their private opinions, and then read the Scripture with no other design, than to find something there to stamp Divinity on their own conceits. For it is easie to pervert the plainest sense, and by the help of a strong imagination to make anything of any thing; such men doat upon Words and Phrases, Metaphors, and Allusions, as best fitted for their purpose, they found their Religion on obscure Texts, or Mystical Interpretations of plain Texts, and by the help of some arbitrary Distinctions, and Limitations, Glosses, and Paraphrases, by curtalling of Texts, or transplacing Words and Comma's, or separating a single Sentence from the body of the Discourse, make the Scripture speak their sense as plainly, as the Bellsring what every boy will have them. Which is to deal with the Scripture (as *Irenæus* observes) as if a man should take a Picture of the King which consisted of an artificial composition of precious stones, and transplace all these stones into another form, as suppose of an Ape, and then should perswade silly people, that that was the King's Picture: At this rate we may find the *Alcoran* in the Bible, as well as make so many Books so different, and contrary to each other, from the various composition of twenty four Letters. This is plain and evident at the first proposal to any intelligent Reader, but to put it out of all doubt, I shall give you some Instances of it, and shew you how these *familiar Acquaintants of Christ* (and who may better make bold with him than they) take the liberty to pervert his Gospel to serve their opinion.

There

to fit it to their own Hypothesis.

There are two ways of expounding Scripture in great vogue among them: First, by the sound and clink of words and phrases, which is all some men understand by *keeping a form of sound words*. Secondly, when this will not do, they reason about the sense of Scripture from their own pre-conceived notions, and opinions, and prove that this must be the meaning of Scripture, because otherwise it is not reconcilable to their dreams, which is called expounding Scripture by the *Analogy of Faith*.

First, They expound Scripture by the sound of words and phrases, that is, if they can find any words in Scripture, which chime to the tune of their private conceits, without ever considering the use of the words in those places where they are found, they clap their own sense on them, and then they serve for very solid and substantial proofs. I shall give you several instances of this way.

Thus when men are possess with the fancy of an *Acquaintance with Christ's Person*, then to *know Christ*, can signifie nothing else but to know his Person, and all his Personal Excellencies and Beauties, Fulness and Preciousness, &c. And when Christ is said to *be made wisdom to us*, this is a plain proof that we must learn all our spiritual Wisdom from an acquaintance with his Person. Though some duller men can understand no more by it, than the Wisdom of those Revelations Christ hath made of Gods Will to the World.

Thus when men have first learnt from an acquaintance with the Christ, to place all their hopes of Salvation in a *Personal Union* with Christ, from whom they receive the free Communication of Pardon and Grace, Righteousness and Salvation, what more plain proof can any man, who is resolved to believe this, desire of it, than 1 *John* v. 12. *He that hath the*
Son

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Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life. For what can *having the Son* signifie, but having an interest in him, being made one with him; though some will be so perverse as to understand it of believing and obeying his Gospel; but the phrase of *having the Son* confutes that dull and moral interpretation; especially when we remember, that it is called being *in Christ*, and *abiding in him*, which must signifie a very near Union between Christ's Person and us, such as there is between two things which are within one another, which makes all Christ ours, and us Christ's.

Now it is self-evident, that before we can thus be united to Christ, we must go to him, and therefore *Faith*, which is the Instrument of this Union, is very luckily called *coming to Christ*: From whence it is very evident, that to believe in Christ is to go to him for Salvation, which Metaphors of coming and going, are a very intelligible explication of believing. But when the Soul is come to Christ, is this enough? No surely, the Soul then must receive Christ, as St. John tells us, *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God*, John i. 12. That Faith which serves us for Legs to go to Christ, must be a Hand to receive him: And to apply all his Merits, and Fulness, and Righteousness to our Souls; and now when we have received him, we must embrace him in our Arms too, as good old *Simon did, when he found him in the Temple*, which is a little nearer Union; as plainly appears from the example of the *Patriarchs, who saw the Promises afar off, and embraced them*, Heb. xi. 13. And now we have Christ, we must trust and lean upon him, as we are often commanded, *to trust in God, which signifieth that Act of Faith, whereby finding and feeling our own weakness, as unable to support our selves, we do lean*
and

by the sound of words.

and rest on Christ; and if leaning be not enough, we may make a little more bold, and rowl on him, as appears from Psal. xxxvii. 5. *Rowl thy ways on the Lord, as the Original Gal signifies; which is that Act of Faith, whereby we, being laden with sin, and seeking ease, at last discharge our Lord, and cast it on Christ.* And this is plain from the phrase of believing *In Christ*, and *On him*, 1 Pet. ii. 6. for what can that signifie, but leaning and rowling on him, *laying and building our selves on him, as on a Foundation.* And now we have thus brought our Souls to Christ, we must commit them to his trust, to take charge of them, and save them, and if they perish it will be his fault, and he must give account of it. Thus St. Paul did, 2 Tim. i. 12, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* And now we must hide our selves in Christ from the fierce wrath and displeasure of God, as the Dove hides in the Rocks, Cant. ii. 14. *O my Dove in the Clefts of the Rocks: Christs wounds are the*
Clefts of the Rocks, where this believing Soul, Christs ^{travellers} *Love-lines;* Dove, hides it self. And besides this, *A Rock is a Skreen to shade off the heat, so Christ is called, Isa. xxxii. 2. A shadow from the heat; he shades a poor Sinner from the scorchings of Gods wrath. And tlich we must fetch Comfort too from Christ, as Honey came out of the Rock, Deut. xxxii. 13. He made him suck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock: The Honey of the Promise, and the Oyl of Gladness comes out of this blessed Rock.*

But this is not enough yet; for we must be clothed with the Righteousness of Christ, as appears from that expression that we must put on Christ, Rom. xiii. 14. Gal. iii. 27. which can signifie nothing else, but putting on Jesus Christ, that is his Righteousness, as men put on a Garment to cover their nakedness, and

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Watson,
ibidem.

to adorn them. And therefore Christ is resembled to a beautiful Robe, Isa. lxi. 10. He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness: His Righteousness is a lovely Robe; no Robe of Gold or Ermin, wherewith Kings are invested, is so honourable as this. In this Robe we shine as Angels in Gods Eye: The High Priests glorious Vestments, Exod. xxviii. 2. the Mytre, the Robe, the Ephod of Gold, and the Breast-plate of precious Stones, did all but serve to set out the beautiful Robes of Christ's Righteousness, wherewith a Believer is adorned: Thus if we would get the Blessing, we must go to God, as Jacob did, in the Robes of our Elder Brother, though I confess this Resemblance doth not very well please me; for though Jacob was a good man, yet this looks like a cunning trick, to rob his Elder Brother of the Blessing, and to cheat his blind Father; and men must not think that God is thus to be imposed upon. But however that be, this is plain, that when we are thus united to Christ, and made one with him, then *all Christ is ours*, as the Apostle tells us, *All is yours, and you are Christs, and Christ is Gods*: The Merit of his Death is ours to free us from the guilt and punishment of our sins, and his Active Obedience to the Will of God, his Righteousness is ours for our Justification, as is plain, in that he is called the *Lord our Righteousness*. And is said to be *made unto us of God, Righteousness*. And as *J. O.* well observes, we are reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, and saved by his Life, that is, by the *Righteousness of his Life*, which is made ours, *Rom. v. 10.* And now what better proof can you desire for all this, if you will be contented with express words? though I am very much of the Doctor's mind, that we could never have discovered these Mysteries, clearly and savingly, had it not been for an Acquaintance with Christ's Person. No man would ever have dreamt

by the sound of words:

dreamt of such interpretations of Scripture, who had not been prepossessed with the mysterious notion of a fanciful Union to Christ, and application of Christ to us: For here is no other proof of this, but words and phrases, separated from the body of the Text, and the design of the Discourse, and like stragglers pick'd up, and list'd into the service of their Hypothesis.

For indeed the whole mystery of this, and a great deal more stuff of this nature, consists in wresting Metaphorical and Allusive expressions to a proper sense. When the Scripture describes the profession of Christianity, a sincere Belief and Obedience to the Gospel, by having Christ, and being *in* Christ, and coming to him, and receiving him; these men expound these phrases to a proper and natural sense, to signifie I know not what unintelligible union, and spiritual progress and closure of the Soul with him; An union of Persons, instead of an agreement in Faith and Manners, as will appear more hereafter.

Thus when they talk of our spiritual impotency and inability to do any good thing (for after all the noise they make about our coming to Christ, they mean being carried thither with an omnipotent and irresistible power) they prove it wonderfully from *our being dead in trespasses and sins*, and therefore as a dead man can contribute nothing to his own Resurrection, no more can we towards our Conversion: Which is true of natural Death, but will be hard to prove of a moral Death which consists in the prevalency of vicious Habits contracted by long customs (which was the case of the Heathens, whom the Apostle there speaks of) which do so enslave the Will, that it is very difficult, though not impossible, for such persons to return to the love and practice of Vertue: Another argument of the like

nature is, that we are said to be *created to good works*, and to *become new Creatures*, and therefore can contribute no more to it, than we did to our first Creation: And that we are *born again*, which signifies, that we are wholly passive in it: Which were true indeed, if our being *created to good works* did signify the manner and method of our Conversion, and not the nature of the new Creature, which is the true meaning of it; that as in the first Creation we were created after the Image of God, so we are renewed after his Image in the second; which is therefore expressly called in other places the renewing and renovation of our minds.

When this way fails, they take another course with Metaphors and Similitudes to make them serve their purpose, and that is, by considering all the properties and qualifications of those things Christ is compared to, and applying all, that will serve their turn, to Christ, without any regard to the end, for which they are used.

Thus the *Kingdom of Heaven*, that is the Gospel, is compared to a Pearl of great price, *Mat. xiii, 46*. This Pearl in some mens Divinity signifies Christ, and the excellency of Christ appears plainly in this comparison. For other Pearls add no real worth to them that wear them, but Christ, this illustrious Pearl, doth, he makes us worthy with his worthiness. Excellently turned to serve their purpose; though all that the Parable means is, that we should be as ready to part with all for the belief and profession of the Gospel, as other men are, to sell all they have to purchase a Pearl of great value.

*Watson's
Christ's
Loveliness.*

*Idem.
Christ's
Loveliness.*

Thus Christ was prefigured by Mannah, and this Mannah was of a circular figure, and this Circle was a figure of Christ's perfection, this was meat cooked and dressed in Heaven, God himself prepared it, and then served it

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in, thus Jesus Christ was prepared and set apart of his Father to the blessed work of Mediatorship. And Mannah suited it self to every ones Palate, thus Jesus Christ suits himself to every Christians condition; he is full of quickning, strengthening, comforting virtue. That is, he is what every man fancies him to be, relishes according to the gusto of their own Palates: What precious discoveries are here of Christ! and what irrefragable proofs for them! Thus to proceed, Christ was resembled to a Rock, *1 Cor. x. 3*, That Rock was Christ. And then he is a Rock for defence, and a Rock for offence, and a Rock for Comfort to screen us from the wrath of God, and to contain the honey of the Promises.

*Watson,
ibidem.*

Christ is resembled by the brazen Serpent: Now Brass being an inferiour Metal signifies the meanness of his humanity, and it being a firm solid Metal, it signifies the power of his Godhead, and though it shines, it doth not dazzle the eyes, and so signifies the glory of the Godhead veiled with the Manhood: Thus the brazen Serpent was made like a Serpent, but was no real Serpent, so Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, but was no Sinner. The Serpent was lift up, so Christ was lift up in the acclamations of Angels, in the preaching of the Gospel, and upon the Cross, which the Pole was a Type of, and in our hearts by contemplating, admiring, loving him. And the Serpent was lift up to be lookt upon by the stung Israelites, which looking implied a secret hope they had of Cure, so if we do but look on Christ fiducially, we shall be cured of our sins. Never was there so happy a man in expounding Types! Never was any brazen Serpent half so subtil!

*Watson's
true bra-
zen Ser-
pent.*

Thus as the same Author tells us, Christ is compared to a Vine, and that upon several accounts: The Vine of Spiritual it self is weak, and must be supported and born up; so the Humane Nature of Christ, (which it seems is represented by the Vine) was of it self weak, and

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was fain to be supported and underpropt by the Divine Nature. The Vine grows in the Garden, not in the Forest; thus Christ grows in the Garden of the Church, he is not known among the Heathen: But I should have thought it more grand to have said that Christ, this Spiritual Vine, doth not find, but make a Garden where-ever he grows; since the Church owes its Being to him, not he to the Church. Thus the Vine communicates to the Branches, and Christ shoots up his Sap of Grace into Believers, who are the Branches of this Vine: And the Vine hath rare delicious Fruit growing on it; and thus the Promises are the Clusters of Grapes growing upon Christ the true Vine. And whereas other Vines bear but one sort of Fruit, this spiritual Vine bears many, the Fruit of Justification, the Fruit of Sanctification, and the Fruit of Consolation. And the Blood of Christ is the Wine of this Spiritual Vine, which cheers the heart of man, as other Wine doth, as he excellently proves from an old Latine Catch, *Curam metumque juroat dulci Lyxo solvere*, that is, Let us drink away care, &c. And now what fine work might a profane wit make with Scripture, at this rate of expounding Metaphors?

But still they have a fetch beyond all this, which consists in jumbling Metaphors, and Allegories, and Types, and Figures altogether, and proving one thing from another in a most wonderful manner.

As suppose that a man would prove that Christ is infinitely beautiful and lovely, this is a most easie thing to do, if you take the right method: For first, He is lovely in his Titles, he is the Desire of all Nations, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One of Israel, Elect and Precious, these are most lovely Titles, which argue him to be very beautiful.

And then he is lovely in his Types too: He was typified by Persons most lovely: By Moses, and David, and

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Loveliness.

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and Solomon, who were all lovely for one thing or other, either upon account of natural beauty, or education, or office, or those great things done by them. But then he was typified by lovely things; As by the Pillar of Cloud and Fire, which was most lovely to behold; by the Manna, which was very lovely too, because it was of a circular Figure, and extraordinary meat, and suited to every ones Palate; and by the Mercy-Seat, and Brazen Serpent, and Noah's Ark: Who can forbear being smitten with so lovely a Person? Lovely as a Pillar of Cloud and Fire, lovely as Noah's Ark, lovely as any Serpent, yea, as a brazen Serpent? But besides all these, Christ is resembled to a Rose, the Rose of Sharon, the Queen of Flowers, and how lovely is this Rose! To a Vine, the noblest of Plants, and O what lovely Clusters grow upon this Vine! To a Corner-Stone, and O how lovely and precious is this Stone! To a Rock, and a River in a dry ground, and a rich Treasure, and a beautiful Robe, and all these are lovely, (and so should any thing have been, that had come in his way at that time) and who can doubt after all this, but that Christ is the chiefest of ten thousands, yea, that he is altogether lovely?

Thus if I had a mind to imitate these men, and prove that Christ is very powerful, as well as lovely, most of the same Types and Resemblances would serve the turn. For he was prefigured by Moses, who did wonders in Ægypt; He was typified by David, who killed Goliath; by Solomon, who was the most powerful Prince in his days; by the Pillar of Cloud and Fire, out of which God thundred upon the Host of Pharaoh; by the brazen Serpent, which had power to cure the stung Israelites; by Noah's Ark, which was certainly very strong, that it could resist all the force and power of the general Deluge; He is resembled to a Corner stone, which supports the

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whole Building; to a Rock which is for offence and defence; to a rich Treasure; and Riches, all men know, are the Nerves and Sinews of Power, and he is most beautiful, and Beauty is stronger than all the rest, and conquers more than Sword or Fire.

Thus Christ is very rich; for he is rich in Wisdom, and rich in Beauty, and rich in Strength and Power, rich in his Godhead, and rich in his Manhood; and then do but add Husband to all this, and he is a rich, and a powerful, and a beautiful Husband: Thus Christ is Lovely, because he is Rich and Powerful, and he is Powerful, because he is Rich and Lovely, and Rich, because he is Powerful and Lovely: And how is it possible these men should want proofs for any thing? And is there any need now to prove, that all this is the work of fancy and imagination, that it is nothing but Phrase, and Religious rattle, the fruit of precarious *Hypotheses*, and of a pretended acquaintance with Christ's Person; for at this rate it were easie to make any thing of any thing, to find out some pretty Words, and Allusions, Types, or Metaphors, to countenance all the feats of Enthusiasm, and the more godly Romances of Popish Legends. He who would be an honest Reader of Books, who hath no mind to turn every thing into Burlesque, ought carefully to distinguish between proper and allusive or metaphorical expressions, to consider the use of words and Phrases, and the great variety of Dialects, and the peculiar Moods of speaking in every Language, and in every Age, and to urge Metaphors no further than their first intention, without which we may deal by all Authors, as these men deal by the Scripture, make them speak non-sence, or (as they use to call them) venerable Mysteries, and overthrow and contradict their

by the sound of words

their own design: and this is their first way of expounding, otherwise called adulterating and debauching Scripture by the sound of words.

Secondly, When this will not do, then they argue and reason about the sence of Scripture from their own preconceived notions and opinions of Religion, pretend to prove their own Scheme and fancies of Religion from the Scripture, but in truth prove the sence of the Scripture by its agreement with their own Opinions; which is such a trick, as the Papists have got, to prove the Authority of the Church from the Scripture, and the Scripture from the Church. I might give instances of this in abundance, but I shall mention only some few, lest I tire my self and my Reader.

Thus after all their talk of being *justified by the imputation of Christ's Righteousness*, there are a great many places of Scripture, which expressly tell us, *that we are justified by Faith, have Remission of sins by Faith, have peace with God by Faith, are sanctified by Faith, are the Sons of God by Faith, have eternal Life, and are saved by Faith*: Now how do you think shall all these Scriptures be reconciled to their notion of being justified by the imputation of Christ's Righteousness: For Faith certainly is not the Righteousness of Christ in their notion of it: Why, this is plain at first sight to these *Acquaintants* of Christ. *For when Faith is said to justifie and save, &c. we must not understand this absolutely, that is, we must not understand this of Faith, considered as Faith, but we must understand it relatively, that Faith justifies, as it brings us to Christ, and makes us one with him, by whom we are justified: Faith apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, and the Righteousness of Christ justifies*: Now this distinction is plainly owing to their preconceived opinions, without which no man could ever have

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have stumbled on't: That when the Scripture saith, that Faith justifies, the meaning should be, that it justifies, and saves instrumentally and relatively (words which the Scriptures are unacquainted with) that is, not as it is Faith, but as it apprehends the Righteousness of Christ; which in plain words signifies, that Faith does not justify, though the Scripture so often says it does.

But now the reason of this Interpretation is very plain; for should Faith justify, as our own act, (that is, as Faith) it would be as bad as good works, and as perfectly irreconcilable with the free Grace of God, For had Justification been promised to any thing wrought in us, or done by us, it had been of Desert, not of Grace, of Wages, not of Mercy: If God had promised Justification upon any work of ours, had said, we must bring so much Humiliation, so much Repentance, so much breaking of Spirit, so much Grace, so many Prayers, Alms-deeds, (or so much Faith as our own Act) and then we should be justified, it would not have been of Grace, not of free Mercy; though modest men, who are not so apt to dream of meriting by every thing they do, would have thought, that free Grace and Faith might have been easily reconciled, though Faith had justified, as our own Act, since the reward and recompence does so infinitely exceed the work that there can be no suspicion of merit, and where there is no merit, the reward is of Grace, and not of debt, whatever the condition of the promise be.

But this is past all doubt, when it is confirmed by a Metaphor or two, of which there is great variety, some more apt than others: As for instance: *The virtue is not in Faith, but in Christ, as appears in this, A Ring which hath a precious stone in it, which will staunch Blood, we say the Ring stauncheth Blood, but the*

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the virtue doth not barely lie in the Ring, but in the Stone in the Ring: So Faith is the Ring, Christ the precious Stone, all that Faith does, is to bring home Christ's merits to the Soul, and so it justifies: So that if you can but find out an improper and absurd form of speech in use among the Vulgar, or if you can but invent one, as this Gentleman does, for I never met with this before; it is a sufficient reason to expound Scripture as improperly, as unlearned men talk or think; or if you can but fancy Faith a Ring, and Christ a precious Stone, it is enough to answer all those places of Scripture, which speak of that legal and meritorious way of Justification by Faith: And thus Faith justifies, as it is a receptive Grace: It is the receiving the Gold that enriches, so Faith receiving of Christ's merits, and filling the Soul with all the fulness of God, must needs be an enriching Grace: In the Body there are Veins, that suck the nourishment that comes into the Stomach, and turns it into Blood and Spirits; Faith is such a sucking Vein, that it draws virtue from Christ, and therefore is called a precious Faith: Is not this very plain now to him who understands the nature of our Union to Christ, which is like that of the Members of a natural Body, and that we are saved by Christ, just as the Body is nourished by the Stomach?

And now to make all clear, we may give a Philosophical account, why God chose Faith to be the Instrument of our Justification, because it is an humble Grace, and gives the glory of all to free Grace. *If Repentance should fetch Justification from Christ, a man would be ready to say, this was for my tears, (strange deserving Creatures these, who can dream of meriting Heaven with a few tears) but Faith is humble, it is an empty hand, and what merit can there be in that? Doth*

Watson's
Mystery of
the Lords
Supper,
p.64.

Idem. p.65.

Idem.

Doth a poor mans reaching out his hand merit an Alms ? (yes, just as much as a few tears merit Heaven) Faith is only a golden Bucket, that draws Water out of the Well of Life ; But why may not those, who are so apt to be conceited of merit, grow as proud, that they have a golden Bucket, as if the whole Well were their own.

Thus you see, how these men deal with the Scripture, and *poor humble Faith*, make what they please of them, to fit them to their purpose ; that Faith is sometimes Feet to go to Christ, sometimes a Hand to receive him, a Mouth to feed on him, an Eye to look fiducially on him, a Ring to hold this precious Stone, a Vein to suck Justification out of the spiritual Stomach (which by the way is a very new conceit ; for though Christ is called the Head, I never before read that he was the Stomach) a Bucket to draw water out of this *Well, Christ*, though in this they are very civil to Faith, in making it a Golden Bucket ; whereas at other times they tell us, that Faith may be a sore and blear-eyed *Leab*, a shaking and Palfie Hand, weak and bending Legs, and have all the Infirmities that may be, and be never the worse neither as to the purpose of Justification ; so that Faith had need be a very *humble Grace*, else it would take such language very ill from them.

Thus to give you but one instance more ; when these men are prest with those Scriptures that urge the necessity of good works and a holy life : *That without Holiness no man shall see God ; that the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men.* That our acceptation with God depends upon a holy and vertuous Life : *That God is no respecter of persons ; but in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness is accepted with him.* That except our Righteousness exceed the
Righteousness

Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees (those immoral Hypocrites who placed all their Righteousness in observing the Ceremonies of the Law without the purity of their hearts and lives) *We shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* That he who breaks one of the least of these Commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, (that is, shall have no inheritance there) and he that doth, and teacheth them, shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, shall be greatly rewarded, with many more of the like nature, which assert the absolute necessity of a holy life, and keeping the Commandments of God, to entitle us to his love and favour, and the rewards of the next life ; which perfectly overthrow their fundamental notion of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ ; the merits of whose Death they say free us from the guilt of sin, and that punishment which is due to it, make us as perfectly innocent, as if we had never offended, and the righteousness of his life imputed to us makes us righteous, so as to deserve a reward : Gives us an actual title to Glory : Now any one, who is not mightily acquainted with the Person of Christ, would think it a very hard task to reconcile this Doctrine of Justification by the imputation of Christs Righteousness without any thing of our own, with the necessity of a holy life, which the Scripture doth so expressly assert. But these men defie you, if you charge them with destroying the necessity of a holy life : And I wish with all my heart, that whatever the consequence of their Doctrines is, it may have no bad influence upon their lives.

For they tell us, *That this universal obedience and good works* (a very suspicious word, which methinks these men should be afraid to name) are
indispensibly

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Dr. Owen's Communion with Christ, ch. 8. indispensably necessary from the Sovereign appointment and will of God, that is the Will of God, even our Sanctification; It is the Will of the Father, and it is the Will of the Son, I have ordained you, that you bring forth fruit, Joh. xv. 16. and the appointment of the Holy Ghost. And then Holiness is one eminent and special end of the peculiar dispensation of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the business of exalting the Glory of God in our Salvation; It is the end of the Fathers Electing Love, he hath chosen us, that we should be holy, Eph. i. 4. the end of the Sons redeeming love, who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purifie to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, Tit. ii. 14. and of the Spirits sanctifying love, as any one would easily guess.

It is necessary to the Glory of God, to the Glory of the Father, to the glory of the Son, and to the glory of the Holy Ghost, whose Temple we are. And are not these men most mightily injured in being charged with denying the necessity of a Holy Life, who make it necessary upon so many accounts? Is it not great pity they should be so abused? But the truth is, all this is not one syllable to the purpose; for the question was about its necessity to Salvation, and if we be justified and saved without it, all this cannot prove any necessary obligation on us to the practice of it: God hath appointed and commanded obedience, but where is the sanction of this Law, will he damn those who do not obey for their Disobedience? And will he save and reward those who do obey for their Obedience? Not a word of this; for this destroys our Justification by the Righteousness of Christ only: And if after all these Commands, God hath left it indifferent, whether we obey or not, I hope such Commands cannot make Obedience necessary.

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The Father hath elected us to be holy, and the Son redeemed us to be holy: But will the Father elect and the Son redeem none but those who are holy, and reject and reprobate all others? Doth this Election and Redemption suppose Holiness in us, or is it without any regard to it? For if we be elected and redeemed without any regard to our being holy, our Election and Redemption is secure, whether we be holy or not; and so this cannot make Holiness necessary on our parts, though it may be necessary on God's part to make us holy, but that is not our care.

Obedience and a holy Life is for the glory of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit: How so? When the necessity of Holiness is so destructive to free Grace, which is the only glory God designs to advance by Christ. If this will not do, yet Holiness is necessary to our Honour, for it makes us like to God: Prophane men that they are! as if the perfect Righteousness of Christ, his beautiful Robes, were not much more for our Honour, and did not make us more like to God than the Rags and Patches of our own Righteousness: However, if men prefer their Lusts and Interests before their Honour, the necessity of Holiness ceases.

But it is for Peace. What Peace I pray you; Peace of Conscience? Why then must we at last fetch our Peace and Security from our own Duties and Graces. Is not this to renounce Christ? Miserable men that we *J.O. Excellency of Jesus Christ: Digr. 2. p. 113.* are! must we then set about correcting our Lives, amending our Ways, performing Duties required, and so follow after Righteousness according to the Prescript of the Law? Why this is the course, wherein many men continue long with much perplexity, sometimes hoping, oftner fearing, sometimes ready to give quite over, sometimes vowing to continue (their Consciences being no ways satisfied,

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satisfied, nor Righteousness in any measure obtained) all their days ; After they have tired themselves perhaps in the largeness of their ways, they come at length with fear and trembling and disappointment to the conclusion of the Apostle, By the Works of the Law no man is justified ; and with David cry, That if God markes what is done amiss, there is no standing before him. And is this the way in which we must seek for Peace ? Is this the way to enjoy Communion with God by our own Righteousness ? Why doth not all our Wisdom of walking with God consist in our Acquaintance with Christ ? God is light, and in him is no darkness at all, we are darkness, and in us is no light at all. He is Life, a living God, we are dead, dead Sinners, dead in trespasses and sins. He is Holiness, and glorious in it, we wholly defiled, an abominable thing. He is Love, we full of hatred, hating, and being hated. Surely this is no foundation of agreement, or upon that of walking (that is, of Communion) together : Nothing can be more remote than this frame from such a Condition. The Foundation then of this Peace (that is, of Agreement and Communion with God) is laid in Christ, hid in Christ ; He, saith the Apostle, is our Peace ; he hath made peace for us ; he is the new and living Way into the Holy of Holies. I am the Way (saith Christ) and no man cometh to the Father but by me : He is the Medium of all Communication between God and us ; in him we meet, in him we walk. So that if this Gentleman's memory had not failed him, he would never have told us in Chap. 8. that Holiness is necessary to our Peace and Communion with God, when a little before he had disclaimed this, as wholly useless to that purpose.

But however, Holiness is very useful to all the purposes of Life : That it may be, and not necessary to Salvation. It serves for the conviction of the Enemies of God :

ibidem.
p. 119.

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God : How so ? When it is not essentially necessary to his Friends : And it is for the Conversion of others : Why so ? When men may be converted without it. It keeps the Judgments of God from other men, as Ten good men would have preserved Sodom : But why cannot the Righteousness of Christ do this more effectually than the Holiness of Men ? But, It is necessary in respect of the state and condition of Justified Persons : For they are accepted and received into Friendship with an holy God, a God of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, &c. and therefore they must cleanse and purifie themselves : What need of this ? When they are clothed with the Robes of Christ's Righteousness, which is the only Foundation of our Communion with God, as you heard before.

But however, Holiness is necessary with respect to Sanctification, We have in us a New Creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. This New Creature is fed, cherished, nourished, kept alive, by the fruits of Holiness ; to what end hath God given us new Hearts and new Natures ? Is it that we should kill them, stifle the Creature that is found in us in the Womb ? That we should give him to the Old man to be devoured ? The Phrase of this is admirable, and the reasoning unanswerable : For if men be new Creatures, they will certainly live new lives ; and this makes Holiness absolutely necessary by the same reason that every thing necessarily is, what it is, when it is ; but still we enquire after a necessary Obligation to the practice of Holiness, and that we cannot discover yet.

Well ! But Holiness is necessary as the means to the end. This indeed is something to the purpose, but let us hear how : Though it be neither the cause, matter, nor condition of our Justification, (mark the Hypothesis) yet it is the way appointed of God for us to walk in for the obtaining Salvation ; and therefore be that hath

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Hope of Eternal life, purifies himself as he is pure; and none shall ever come to the end, who walketh not in the way; for without Holiness it is impossible to see God.

This I confess is all pertinent, and home to the purpose, but yet there are two little faults in it, that it contradicts it self, and overthrows their darling Opinions, which I can very well pardon, if he can: What? The necessary Way to Eternal Life, and yet neither the Cause, Matter, nor Condition of our Justification, which alone gives us a Title to Eternal Life? At least you might allow the Way to Eternal Life to be the *causa sine qua non*, without which we shall never get thither: and that in spite of all your distinctions will entitle it to the nature of a condition. But not to dispute about words, I am content it should only be a necessary way to Eternal Life: But what becomes of Christ then? Who is the only way, the truth, and the life: Is not the righteousness of Christ able to save us without an additional righteousness of our own? Doth the Active and Passive Righteousness of Christ both free us from guilt and punishment, and give us an actual right and title to glory? And yet can we not be saved without walking in the ways of holiness? What becomes of free Grace then? Is not this to *eke out the righteousness of Christ with our own? to make Christ our Justifier, and our Works our Saviour?*

Thus you see, how men wrest and pervert the Scripture to make it speak their sense, and justify their darling opinions and fancies, though not always with the same success; for some truths are so plain and stubborn, that they will not bend, but must be broke into the most palpable absurdities and contradictions, before they can be fitted to their opinions, and then they agree like new Cloath in an old Garment, which makes the rent the wider.

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It were easie to produce many more instances of this nature, but this is enough to shew you how dangerous it is to pre-possess our fancies with some arbitrary notions in Religion, which naturally force men to pervert the Scriptures to make them speak the Orthodox language. To this we owe all those nice and subtil distinctions, which constitute the body of Systematical Divinity, which commonly have no other design than to evade the force of Scripture, or to bribe it to speak on their side. The Authority of Scripture is sacred and inviolable, and it is dangerous to call that into question, whatever acquaintance men have with the Person of Christ; but as Mr. *Chillingworth* observes of Rome, *That to establish her Tyranny over mens Consciences, she need not either abolish or corrupt the Holy Scripture, (which in regard of the numerous multitude of Copies dispersed through all places, translated into almost all Languages, guarded with all solicitous Care and Industry, had been an impossible attempt) but the more expedite way, and therefore the more likely to be successful, was to gain the opinion and esteem of the Publick and authorized Interpreter of them, and the Authority of adding to them what Doctrines she pleased, under the Title of Traditions or Definitions.* Thus though their fancies and the Scripture agree no better than the Church of Rome and the Scripture do, yet they may be both retained, so their Opinions may but expound the Scriptures, and add such Limitations, Distinctions, Glosses, &c. as are necessary to make them Orthodox.

The sum of all is, That to know Christ, is not to be thus acquainted with his Person, but to understand his Gospel in its full latitude and extent; It is not the Person, but the Gospel of Christ, which is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, *which directs*

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us in the true Way to Life and Happiness. Which instructs us in our Duty, and furnishes us with all the Motives and Arguments to a good Life and gives us the greatest Assurance of our Reward. This Acquaintance with Christ's Person which these men pretend to, is only a work of Fancy, and teaches men the Arts of Hypocrisie, it undermines the fundamental design of the Gospel, makes men incurably ignorant, and yet conceited of their own Knowledge, impertinent and endless Talkers, and insolent Censurers of all Mankind: every Boy, who is acquainted with these notions, learns to despise the ignorance of his Teachers, as if they knew nothing of Christ, and of the Mystery of the Gospel; and now the Laws of Christ will not down with them, this is moral and legal Preaching; nothing appears wholesome and favourable to their Palates, but some Romantick Descriptions of the Beauty, Loveliness, Fulness, and Preciousness of Christ. But I hope hereafter they will see reason to believe, that we are not such Strangers to Christ, as they imagine, but have a greater Reverence for him, than to be so rude and unmannerly, than to make so bold with his Person, and with his Laws; and are too honest to abuse the People with such Dreams and fruitless Speculations.

The wildness and distraction of these men makes me so much the more admire the Wisdom and the Honesty of our Church, who in her publick Catechism hath been careful to prevent these cheats and delusions of fancy: Feeds her Children with wholesome and substantial food, hath taught them a Religion without Art or Subtilty, hath instructed them in the nature of their Baptismal Vow, and those Obligations it lays on them to a virtuous Life: Hath taught them the Apostles Creed, which contains those great
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and essential Articles of Religion, which are the necessary Principles of Action: Hath given them a plain and easie Explication of the Ten Commandments, which are the Rules of a good Life: Hath taught them to pray to God, and what the true design of our Saviours Institution is, without filling their heads with Notions and Artificial Theories of Religion, which serve only to make them giddy with a vain conceit of Knowledge, to talk ill, and to live worse.

And now it is time to dismiss these Acquaintants of Christ, and if nothing will make them wiser, to leave them to their own dreams and Dotage; only advising them, that however they may indulge themselves in these choice Speculations, they would have a care of pretending any acquaintance with Christ's Person for the neglect or contempt of his Laws, lest they fare as ill as another of his Acquaintance did, *Luke xix. 21.* who argued from the severity of his temper and disposition, to apologize for his own sloth and idleness: *For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man, who takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.* But it seems, as great an Acquaintant as he was, he drew a very false conclusion, when he hid his Talent in a Napkin, as his Lord convinced him to his cost: And it will be the same case, though we argue from other Principles, not from the Severity, but from the Fondness and Indulgence of our Saviour, from the Merits of his Death, or the Imputation of his Righteousness: The safest way is to do what he bids us, lest he be too hard for us at Reasoning, and making *Hypotheses.*

But yet there is one thing more, which I must take notice of: That as when the Scripture speaks of the knowledge of Christ, it includes not only the

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speculative part of knowledge, which consists in true Notions and Opinions, but the virtue and efficacy of this Knowledge, in the Government of our Lives, in transforming us into the Likeness of our Lord and Saviour, and in making us obedient to his Laws; without which all our Knowledge is but like a curious piece of Painting, an accurate Image and Picture, without Life or Sense: So these men talk also of an experimental Knowledge of Christ; the meaning of which is, that this Acquaintance with the Person of Christ warms and heats their Fancies, and moves their Passions; sometimes they find great breakings of heart, they melt and dissolve into tears for their sins when they remember what their Lord suffered for them, they see him hang upon the Cross and have all his Agonies and dying Groans in their Ears; and then they curse their Sins that nailed him there, and tremble at the thoughts of the *naturalness of Gods Vindictive Justice to him*: And feel all the horrors and agonies of damned Spirits; At other times they are mightily ravished with his Love, and charm'd and captivated with his Beauty: Fancy they have him in their Arms in the closest Embraces; *they hear Christ call them by name, and say to them as he did to that Woman in the Gospel, Thy sins are forgiven thee.* They are refreshed and ravished with his Comforts, and the sweet Caresses of his Love: They see Christ adorning them with the beautiful Robes of his Righteousness, owning them for his dearest Spouse, and expressing all Conjugal Affections to them; now they taste and relish the sweetness of Christ, which other men only talk of, and have an experimental sense of his Fulness to supply their Wants, of his Love in chearing their Souls, of his Beauty in adorning them, they are all Life and Spirit, which is a plain

Argument,

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Argument, that now Christ hath taken up his abode with them.

This will fall under consideration in what follows; at present I shall only say this; that all this may be no more than the working of a warm and Enthusiastick Fancy, and no man ought to think himself ever the more experimentally acquainted with Christ, unless he find the power of it in governing his Life: It is very desirable to have always such a quick and vigorous sense of the love of our dying Lord, as may constrain us to live to him, who died for us; but without this we are still ignorant of him, however we may be transported with these frantick Raptures and Extasies of Love and Joy.

CHAP. IV.

Of our Union to Christ, and Communion with him.

SECT. I.

Next to the Knowledge of Christ, there is not a greater Mystery than *our Union to him, and Communion with him*; on which, as these men represent it, are built all those wild and fanciful conclusions which so directly oppose both the Doctrines and Practice of Christianity. And therefore it is of great concernment to state this matter, and to examine what is meant in Scripture by our Union to Christ, and Communion with him; for the Scri-

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pture does mention such a relation between Christ and Christians, as may be express'd by an Union, and those phrases of *being in Christ*, and *abiding in him*, can signifie no less.

I. And first, I observe, that those Metaphors, which describe the Relation and union betwixt Christ and Christians, do primarily refer to the Christian Church, not to every individual Christian. Thus Christ is called a *Head*, but he is the Head of his Church, which is his Body, as a Husband is the Head of the Wife, *Eph. v. 23. 24.* No particular Christian is the Body of Christ, but only a Member in this Body. Christ is called a Husband, but then the whole Church or Society of Christians, not every particular Christian, is his Spouse, as *St. Paul* tells the Church of *Corinth*, *2 Cor. xi. 2.* *For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ.* Christ is a *Shepherd*, and the Christian Church is his Flock, *John x.* For the relation between Shepherd and Sheep, doth primarily concern the whole Flock: Christ is the Rock upon which his Church is built, the chief Corner-Stone, and the Christian Church a Holy Temple: So that all these Metaphors in their first and most proper use refer to the whole Society of Christians, and are designed to represent the Union between Christ and his Church.

II. Secondly, I observe further, that the Union of particular Christians to Christ, is by means of their Union to the Christian Church: The Church is the *Body of Christ*, and every Christian by being united to this Body, becomes a Member of Christ, as the Apostle tells the *Corinthians*, *1 Cor. xii. 27.* *Now you are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular.* The Church is the *Temple of God*, built upon the *Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, *Jesus Christ being the*
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chief Corner-Stone, and every Christian is a *lively Stone in this spiritual Building*: The Church is *Christ's Flock*, and every Christian who is of this Fold, is one of *Christ's Sheep*. The Church is *Christ's Spouse*, and every Christian is a Member of that Society which Christ owns for his Spouse: But every Christian is not *Christ's Spouse*: He is a great Enemy to *Polygamy*, and hath but *one Spouse*, as he hath but *one Body and one Church*; which quite spoils the pretences and fantastical Wit of a late *Exhortation to young Women to choose Christ for their Husband, because he is rich, and beautiful, and kind, and hath all the properties of an excellent Husband*; which would have founded much better in a *Popish Nunnery*, than among such *Pretenders to Reformation*: For this is the great Art, whereby those cunning Priests wheedle silly Girls into a profession of *perpetual Virginity*, by persuading them that in so doing they are *married to Christ*. And to give every one their due, the Papists are the most generous sort of Suiters for Christ, for they persuade them to forsake all other Husbands for Christ, which is more honourable and meritorious.

Thus to proceed, Christ is called the *Vine*, and Christians the *Branches* in that *Vine*, *Job. xv.* which must be expounded to the same sense with what goes before: For where Christ, speaking of himself, saith, *I am the true Vine*, the meaning is, that Church which is founded on the belief of my Gospel, is the true *Vine*: I signifies Christ, together with his *Church, which is his Body*: Upon which account the *Church* is elsewhere called *Christ*, as I observed above; and my Reasons for this Exposition are these:

First, because the Jewish Church is frequently in the Old Testament compared to a *Vine*, *Isa. v. Jer. ii. 21. Hos. x. 1.* Now a *Vine* being the Metaphor whereby

whereby the *Church* useth to be described, we cannot reasonably understand it otherwise here; *I am the true Vine*, that is, the Church, which is founded on the belief of my Gospel, is the only true Church, which God now owns; He having rejected the *Jewish Synagogue*, as proving a *degenerate Vine*. Especially when we consider, that Christ himself applies the Parable of the Vineyard to the State of the Gospel, *Mat. xxi. 33, &c.* and the Christian Church is called an *Olive Tree*, and the Members of it expressly called *Branches*, *Rom. xi. 17, 18.* which Metaphor hath the very same nature and signification *with the Vine and Branches.*

Secondly, Because God is called the Husbandman, who takes care to dress this Vine, which cannot be understood of Christ, but of the Church, which is therefore called, *Gods Husbandry.*

Thirdly, Christ speaks of such *Branches in him* as bear no fruit; now there can be no such Branches in the *Person of Christ*; for *our very Union to his Person* (as those men acknowledge, who talk of such an *Union of Persons between Christ and Believers*) will make us fruitful: And therefore being *in him*, can signify no more than being *Members of his visible Church*, which is made up of Hypocrites, as well as sincere Christians.

But fourthly, To confirm all this, and to prevent Objections, it is evident from this very Chapter, that when Christ speaks in the first Person, *I*, and *In me*, he cannot mean this of his *own Person*, but of his *Church, Doctrine, and Religion*, according as the circumstances of the place require: Thus in the fifth Verse, *I am the true Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: For without me ye can do nothing.* I would willingly learn what sense can be made of this, if we understand

understand it of the *Person of Christ*: For it is not very intelligible how we can be or abide in the *Person of Christ*; and it is more unintelligible still, how we can be in the *Person of Christ*, and the *Person of Christ* at the same time be in us, which is a new Piece of Philosophy, called Penetrations of Dimensions; and that our fruitfulness should depend upon such an *Union to the Person of Christ*, is as hard to my Understanding as all the rest.

But if by *He that abideth in me*, we understand the *Christian Church*, i. e. he who makes a publick and visible profession of Faith *in me*, and continues in Society with those who do so; and by *I in him*, the *Christian Doctrine*, both the Sense and Reason of it is very evident: the sense is this; That Church which owns my Doctrine and Religion, is the *true Vine*, and all you who make a Publick Profession of Faith *in me*, (of a belief of my Gospel, and live in Communion with one another, are the *Branches* in this Vine; and whoever of you continue stedfast in this Profession and Communion, and do not only make a visible Profession of Faith in me, but suffer my Doctrine and Precepts to dwell and abide in you, to govern your Will and Affections, and to direct your Conversation in the World, all such of you will be very fruitful in good Works, for without such a sincere and hearty belief of my Gospel, it is impossible you should do any thing that is good.

So that to *abide in Christ*, is to make a publick and visible Profession of Faith in Christ, to be the Members of his visible Church; but because many are so, who do not much credit their Profession (being Branches in him that bear not fruit) hence to distinguish all true Christians from such Hypocritical Professors, he adds, *And I in you*, that is, my words abide in you, *Ver. 7.* if my Doctrines and Precepts take

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take fast hold of your Wills and Affections, they will make you fruitful in good Works.

Thus you see, that the Union of particular Christians to Christ, consists in their Union to the Christian Church: And hence it is, that the Ancient Fathers interpret all those Metaphors, which decipher the *Union between Christ and Christians*, to signify the *entire Love and Unity of Christians among themselves*. Thus St. Chrysostom expounds *Ephes. ii. 19, 20, 21.* where the Apostle speaks of *that spiritual Building, which is erected on the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-Stone*, to signify the *Unity of the Church in all Ages*; that both the Jewish and Christian Church are united in Christ, as the several parts of the Building are kept together by the Corner-Stone; and St. Ambrose to the same purpose tells us, *Duos populos in se suscepit Salvator, & fecit unum in Domino, sicut & lapis angularis duos parietes continet in unitate domus firmatos.* i. e. *That Christ united two People in himself, (the Jew and Gentile) and made them one in the Lord, as the Corner-Stone unites two Walls in a Building, and makes it but one House.* Which is the plain design of the place to prove that Christ hath taken away the enmity and distance which was between the Jew and Gentile, and hath reconciled them both to God in one body by the Cross, ver. 16.

Thus St. Chrysostom observes on *1 Cor. iii. 9.* that the Apostle to dissuade them from Schisms and Factions tells them, *Θες οικοδομή εστε, εἰ γὰρ οικοδομή εστε, & χρὴ διασώδει, &c.* *That they were Gods building, and if they were Gods building, they must not be torn asunder, for then they are no longer a Building; and if they were Gods Husbandry, they must not be divided from each other, but they must be one Enclosure, hedged and walled in by Unity and Agreement.* And adds, *Let*

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us therefore be built on Christ, and cleave to him as to a foundation, and as a branch to the Vine; that there may be no distance between Christ and us to interrupt this Union; for if there be, we immediately perish; for the branch draws nourishment and fatness from the Vine by its Union to it, and the building stands firm by the adhesion of its parts. Which plainly signifies, that our Union to Christ consists in our Union to the Christian Church, and when we divide and separate from the Church, we are broken off from Christ, as a branch is from the Vine; we are then like a Building whose Stones fall asunder, and destroy the whole Fa-
brick.

Thus the same Father argues on *Job. xiv. 21.* to persuade Christians to Peace and Unity: *ἡ γὰρ διὰ πολλῶν ἡμῶς ὑποδειγματῶν ἐνὶ, &c.* for he (Christ) unites us to each other by many examples and patterns of the closest Union; He is the Head and we the Body, and the whole Body by the Union of its several parts must be firmly united to the Head; He is the Foundation, We the Building; He the Vine, We the Branches; He the Husband, We his Spouse; He the Shepherd, We his Sheep; He the Way, We those who are to walk in that Way; We are a spiritual Temple, and He it is who dwells in us; He is the First-born, we his Brethren; He is the Heir, We fellow Heirs with him; He the Life, We those who live by him; He is the Resurrection, We those who rise with him; He the Light, and we are all enlightened by him; *Τὰ πάντα πάντα ἐνώσω ἐμφαίνει, ἡ γὰρ εἶναι μέσον κενὸν ἀφίσιον εἶναι, εἰδὲ τὸ μικροῦτατον.* All these Metaphors describe the nearest and closest Union of Christians to each other, and of all to Christ, which will not admit of the least distance and separation: So that according to the sense of this Holy man, particular Christians are united to Christ by means of their Union to the Christian Church, otherwise I cannot understand how

how our Union to Christ can be an argument to Unity and Concord among our selves, if we are immediately united to the *Person of Christ*, without being first united to his *Church*. Which I wish those men would seriously consider, who boast so much of their *Union to Christ*, and yet *rend his Church* into a thousand little factions, tear the members of his body from each other, and yet pretend to be united to the head, make new Enclosures in the Husbandry, and Vineyard of God, and when Christ hath broken down the middle Wall of Partition, and made Jews and Gentiles but one Church, do now erect more partition Walls in the *Christian*, than ever were in the *Jewish Temple*.

But we need not depend on Authority for the confirmation of this Notion, that the Union of particular Christians with Christ consists in their Union with the Christian Church; for those *Sacraments* our Saviour hath instituted, as *Symbols of our Union with him*, are a plain demonstration of it: Our first undertaking of Christianity is represented in our *Baptism*, wherein we make a publick profession of our Faith in Christ; and it is sufficiently known, that Baptism is the *Sacrament of our admission into the Christian Church*; and if any one should deny this we have the authority of *St. Paul* for the proof of it, *1 Cor. xii. 13. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body*; In which the Apostle seems to allude to Baptism, which confers the same holy Spirit on us all, and thereby makes us all members of that one body of Christ, which is his Church; but more expressly in *Eph. iv. 4, 5. There is one body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*; that is, the Christian Baptism is but one, and is a Sacrament of Union, making us all the Members of that one body of Christ; that is called

called being *baptized into Christ*, i. e. admitted into the Christian Church by a publick profession of our Faith in Christ.

Thus the *Lords Supper* is a Sacrament of Union, and signifies that near Conjunction between *Christ* and the *Christian Church*; and the mutual fellowship of one Christian with another: Hence the Apostle calls the *Cup of Blessing* the *Communion of the Blood of Christ*, and the *Bread* the *Communion of the Body of Christ*; for *we being many are one Bread and one Body* (one Body represented by this one Bread) *for we are all partakers of that one Bread*, *1 Cor. 10. 16, 17.*

For the Intention of our Lord and Saviour in what he did and suffered for us was, not merely to reform and save some single persons, but to erect a Church, and to combine all his Disciples into a publick society, to unite them by holy Mysteries, and to engage them to a mutual discharge of all Christian Offices, whereby the *whole body may edifie it self in love*; and therefore our Saviour does not own any relation to particular men, as such, but as they are members of his body, for he is the *Saviour of the body*, and *redeemed his Church with his own Blood*.

Hence *St. John* tells us in his first Epistle, *Chap. i. ver. 3. That which we have seen and heard* (the whole Doctrine and History of the Gospel) *declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*. First, that ye may have *fellowship with us*, become members of the *Church of Christ*, by which means you have fellowship and communion with God and Christ.

And therefore those publick censures, whereby rotten or dead members are cut off from the body of Christ, consist in casting such persons out of the society

society of Christian people, in debarring them from the communion of Prayers and Sacraments, and all religious offices, which is a plain demonstration, that our Union to Christ is not an Union to his Person, (of which more hereafter) but consists in a sincere and spiritual communion with the Christian Church; otherwise this external communion with the Church could be no visible signification of our Union to Christ, nor could our excision from the visible Church signify our separation from him.

III. But thirdly, It will be requisite now to explain more particularly the nature of this Union between Christ and the Christian Church, which is not a natural but a *political* Union, that is, such an Union as is between a Prince and his Subjects: Christ is a *spiritual King*, and all Christians are his Subjects, and our Union to Christ consists in our belief of his Revelations, obedience to his Laws, and subjection to his Authority: Hence our Saviour tells the Jews, *If ye continue in my words, then are ye my Disciples indeed,* John 8.31. which is the same thing *with being in him*: and by *keeping his Commandments we abide in his love,* Joh. xv.10. & xiv.21. and *to have his word abide in us* is a description of the closest and firmest Union to him, John xv.7. As obedience to our Prince is the strongest bond of a political Union, which is dissolved and broken by disobedience and rebellion. Thus our Saviour calls himself a *Shepherd*, and Christians his *Sheep*, Job. 10. to signify that Authority he hath over his Church, which bears some Analogy to the Government of a *Shepherd*, which is oft-times used as a name of Power and Authority; as God is stiled the *Shepherd of Israel*, Psal. lxxx. 1. and *Kings* are frequently called *Shepherds*, both by prophane and sacred Writers. Though this name is most commonly given

given to *Prophets*, who feed and instruct the Church, which includes Power and Authority; and so does very properly belong to our Saviour, who erected this spiritual Kingdom on the Foundation of his Doctrine and Laws, and by the exercise of his Prophetic Office: For which reason he is called the *Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls*.

Thus he is called a *Head*, and the Church his *Body*; a *Husband*, and the Church his *Spouse*; which two Metaphors signify the same thing, and are both of them names of Power and Authority; as appears from Eph. v. 23, &c. *For Husbands are said to be the Head of their Wives, as Christ is the Head of the Church, and are commanded to love their Wives, as their own bodies, as Christ loves his Church: So that a Husband, as a Husband represents the Head, and the Wife the Body; and what the meaning of all this is, the Apostle plainly tells us: That Christ is called the Head and Husband, because he hath the Rule and Government of us, and therefore exhorts Wives to be subject to their Husbands, as the Church is subject unto Christ the spiritual Head, v.24. For because the Head in the natural body hath the command and government of all the members; hence Head is a common name for Princes and Governours, Deut. xxviii. 13: The Lord shall make thee the Head and not the Tail, and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath, that is, thou shalt rule and govern, Psal. xviii. 3: Thou hast made me the Head of the Heathen, and a people whom I have not known shall serve me. And therefore the Apostles always expound this Metaphor of Christs being a Head by Power and Authority, Eph. id 20, 21, 22. Hath set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all Principalities and Powers— and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his*

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Body, Col. i. 18. *And he is the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things, he might have the prebeminence:* ἵνα γένηται ἐν πάντων αὐτὸς πρῶτος; that is, that he might not only excell other things, but that he might rule and govern them; for so *πρῶτος* signifies him who hath the first place of Authority; because Government is naturally entailed on the greatest excellency and perfection. Thus Christ is the Head of all Principalities and Powers, that is their Lord and Governour, Col. ii. 10. This is the true explication of this relation betwixt Christ and his Church. He is the Head and Husband, because he is invested with Authority to govern; and the Church is his Body and Spouse, because it must be obedient to his Laws, and subject to his Government: As we know it is very familiar to call a Society of men, who live under the same Laws and Civil Government, a *body politick*, which signifies their subjection to the same Authority, as a body hath but one Head; and that regard they must have to the preservation of the whole, and their mutual care of each other, as members of the same body.

Now the true reason why this spiritual Kingdom of Christ is described by the Authority of a Shepherd over his Sheep, and of a Head and Husband over his Body and Spouse, is to signify the mildness and gentleness of his Government, and that great and near concern he hath for the welfare of his Church: That he governs his Church with the care and tenderness of a Shepherd: That he defends and ransoms his Church with his own blood, as a *good Shepherd lays down his life in defence of his Sheep*, John x. That he loves his Church with the natural kindness of a Head or Husband; that his Government is only for the good of his Church; not for his own private advantage;

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advantage; as a kind Husband exerciseth no other authority over his Wife, but what is for her good as well as his own; or as the Head hath no other concern, but that all his members be preserved in their natural state and vigour, and perform their proper and natural offices; and therefore we may be secure, that his yoke is easie and his burden light; that he will be gentle in his Discipline, and favourable in his censures; especially when we consider how dearly he hath purchast his relation to his Church, *that he gave himself for it, that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*, Eph. v. 25, 26. Upon which account we may well be called the Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones, ver. 30. the Church being, as it were taken out of his crucified Body, as the Woman was taken out of the Man; as Christ is said to have reconciled the Gentiles (that is, taken them into his Church) *in the body of his flesh through death*, Col. i. 21, 22. because the Covenant of Grace, which is the Foundation of the Christian Church, and receives Gentiles as well as Jews, was sealed with the Blood of Christ; so that the Church is taken out of the crucified body of Christ, which in the mystical sence answers to the Womans being taken out of the Man, which seems to be the Apostles meaning in that place. For the same reason Christ owns himself our Friend, *Job. 15. 14. Ye are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you*: which does not signify such an equality betwixt Christ and us, as there is betwixt friends, nor encourage any rudeness and unbecoming familiarity in our addreses to him; but acquaints us with the nature of his Government, that he will rule his Church with the same care and tenderness, which one friend expresses to another.

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So that all this is a description of the state of the Gospel, in which our Lord and Master is our Shepherd, our Head and Husband, our Friend and Saviour who hath redeemed and purchased us with his own Blood, who laid the Foundation of his spiritual Kingdom in the most surprising and astonishing goodness, and exerciseth his authority in all the methods of love and compassion. Upon which account God also hath now laid aside in a great measure that severe name of a King, and calls himself our Father, to assure us of his fatherly care and government, and to signify that liberty of Sons, which we now enjoy under the Gospel, in opposition to the bondage and servitude of the Law of *Moses*.

But then we must observe farther, that though Christ be our Lord and Governour, he doth not govern us immediately by himself, for He is ascended up into Heaven, where he powerfully intercedes for his Church, and by a vigilant Providence superintends all the affairs of it, but hath left the visible and external conduct and government of his Church to *Bishops* and *Pastors*, who preside in his name, and by his authority: In the first Ages of Christianity, Christ conferred such extraordinary gifts on men, as qualified them for so great an Office, *Eph. iv. 8. &c.* But though these miraculous gifts ceased, when the Gospel was fully published and sufficiently confirmed, yet the Offices still continue for the Instruction and government of the Church, though managed in more ordinary and humane ways. Christ now governs his Church by men who are invested with his Authority: which is a plain demonstration of what I discoursed above, that the Union of particular Christians to Christ, is by their Union with the Christian Church, which consists in their regular subjection to their spiritual Guides and Rulers, and in concord and unity among themselves.

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For if our Union to Christ consists in our subjection to him as our Lord and Master, our Head and Husband; and this Authority is not immediately exercised by *Christ himself*, but by the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of the Church; it necessarily follows, that we cannot be united to Christ, that is, cannot own his Authority and Government, till we unite our selves to the publick Societies of Christians, and submit to the publick Instructions, Authority, and Discipline of the Church, as no man can be said to submit himself to his Prince, who denies subjection to those subordinate Magistrates, who act by his Princes Commission: For the Union of Bodies Politick (such as the Christian Church is) consists in Order and Government, when all the Members keep their proper places, and are knit to each other by a faithful discharge of their several offices and trusts: Schismatics are in the Church, just as Rebels are in the Kingdom, not as part of it, but as open and profest enemies: But the Apostle tells us wherein the Unity of the Church consists, *Eph. iv. 16.* *Christ is the Head, from whom the whole body fitly joyned together and compacted by that, which every joynt supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of it self in love.* That is, the supreme Power is invested in Christ as Head, to whom the Church is obedient and subject, but to make this Union firm and lasting there must be a regular subordination of the several Members, and a mutual discharge of all Christian offices, which is the most effectual way to advance their spiritual growth in all Christian Graces, and especially to encrease that love and friendship, which is the very life and soul of the Church: This indeed supposes a *visible Society of Christians*, professing the Faith of Christ, and living in Communion with

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each other; for if there be no such visible society (as it may happen in times of persecution, or some great degeneracy of the Church) it must of necessity alter the case: our Union to Christ then consists in an acknowledgment of his Authority and Subjection to his Laws, which makes us Members of the *Universal Church*, though there be no *particular Church* to communicate with: But when there is a visible Church, we are under the necessary obligations of a *visible Communion*, because herein *our subjection to the Authority of Christ*, and consequently *our Union to him*, consists.

And this by the way gives a plain account of the only cause that can justify our separation from any society of Christians: for our Union with the Christian Church being the Medium of our Union to Christ, while the Church, in which we live, acknowledges the Authority, and submits to the Laws of Christ, we are bound to live in communion with it, because this unites us to Christ. When nothing is made the condition of our communion, which is expressly forbid by the Laws of our supreme Lord, we acknowledge his Authority in our subjection to our spiritual Guides; and we disown his Authority in disowning and affronting theirs; as our Saviour tells his Apostles, *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, Luk. x. 16. But when any Church prevaricates in the Laws of Christ, corrupts his Religion, and undermines the fundamental design of it, which is to make men good and virtuous; when we cannot obey our spiritual Rulers, without disobeying the express Laws of Christ, the reason of our communion with such a Church ceases, because it doth not answer (nay, contradicts) the end of Christian Society, which is to *have fellowship with*

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with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. For in this case we cannot own their Authority, but we must renounce the Authority of our Head and Husband: Now as it is in an Army, should any Captain revolt from his Prince, the Souldiers under his command are not bound to turn Rebels, because their Leader is so; or should a whole Troop or Regiment conspire in the Treason, no particular Souldier is obliged to continue in the Company, or submit to the Government of Rebels, no more than he is obliged to be a Rebel; so the same reason holds good as to Christian Societies. If any particular Church apostatize from the Faith of Christ, we are then under the same necessity of deserting their communion, as we are of obeying the Laws, and submitting to the Authority of our Lord and Master; but nothing less than this can justify a separation; while the Church is subject to Christ, we must be subject to the Church; while the fundamental Laws of his spiritual Kingdom are observed, and his Institutions revered, and the great ends of his Religion advanced, to separate from such a Church is to separate from the Body of Christ: for our Union to Christ consists in a subjection to his Authority, and it is plain, that we disown his Authority, when we reject those, who act by his Authority.

Now this Political Union betwixt Christ and his Church may be either only *external and visible*, and so *hypocritical Professors* may be said to be united to Christ; or *true and real*, which imports the truth and sincerity of our obedience and subjection to our Lord and Master: For since Christianity is become the Religion of Nations, and is entailed on us by our Ancestors as part of our inheritance; since it is received into the Laws and Constitutions of Kingdoms, and made a great Instrument of Civil Govern-

vernment, it is too often seen, that many men undertake this Profession only as the Mode and Fashion of their Country, to avoid singularity, and to serve a worldly interest; And thus the Christian Church is filled with *Hypocrites* and *visible Professors*, who are great strangers to the Life and Spirit of the *holy Jesus*; while some under the name of Christians practise all villanies of the Heathen World, and live in publick defiance to the Laws of that Religion, which they pretend to own; others make a fair shew of external conformity to the Laws and Constitutions of this spiritual Kingdom, and conceal their impurities under some glorious and pompous form of Religion, and pass for very good Christians, when they are no better than disguised Hypocrites; and this makes it necessary to distinguish between a meer *external* and *real* Union, between those who do no more than make a visible profession of Christianity, and those who are true and sincere Christians.

Earthly Princes can exact only an external conformity to their Laws, because they can take no cognizance of the secret workings of mens minds, and the end of their Government is attained in the preservation of publick peace and order; But the spiritual Kingdom of our Lord is of another nature, which requires not only an external and visible subjection to Christ our Head and Husband, and a visible Union to the Christian Church, but the homage and obedience of the Soul, the government of our thoughts and passions, the renovation of our minds and spirits, *We must be born again of Water and of the Spirit, if we would enter into the Kingdom of God, Joh.iii.5.* That is, before we can be the Disciples of Christ, the Subjects of his spiritual Kingdom, which is in Scripture called the *Kingdom of God*, and the *Kingdom of Heaven*; *we must be born of Water*, must make

make a publick profession of our Faith in Christ, and obedience to him in our Baptism: But this is not sufficient, unless we be *born of the Spirit* too, that is, unless our minds and spirits become subject to Christ, unless our Faith in Christ and subjection to Him, be sincere and hearty, do govern all the motions and desires of our Souls, and make us really such as we pretend to be; which is called *being born of the Spirit*, because all Christian Graces and Vertues are in Scripture attributed to the Spirit of God, as the Author of them. Hence the Apostle tells us, that *In Christ Jesus nothing availeth but a new Creature*, that is, that none are true Subjects of Christ, such as shall be rewarded by Him, but those whose minds and spirits are transformed into the love of vertue and goodness.

Now as a visible Profession of Christianity is the Foundation of this external political Union betwixt Christ and his Church; so this new Nature is the Foundation of a *real* and *spiritual* Union. And this the Scripture represents to us under several notions. First, by the subjection of our minds and spirits to Christ, as our spiritual King, when we put our Souls as well as Bodies under his Government and conduct: Hence Christ is said *to dwell in our hearts by faith, Eph.iii.17.* that is, to have the sole Command and Empire of our Wills and Affections, to govern our hearts, as a man does the house in which he dwels. And thus all those Metaphors, which signify our subjection to Christ, must be expounded of the subjection of our souls and spirits to Him, as well as of the outward conformity of our actions; because Christ is a spiritual King, who rules and governs hearts, as earthly Princes govern the bodies of their Subjects: Our subjection to him ought to begin in the Soul, in a sincere acknowledgment of his

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his Power and Authority, in a stedfast belief of his Doctrine and Revelations, and in a chearful and willing obedience to his Laws; such a subjection as a Wife ought to yield to her Husband, and Members to their Head, which must be the effect of a free choice not a feigned or forced compliance.

Secondly, By a participation of the same nature, which is the necessary effect of the subjection of our minds to him: For the Gospel of our Saviour is the truest image of his mind, he transcribed his own Nature into his Laws, and therefore a sincere obedience to his Laws is a conformity to his Nature. Hence is that exhortation, *That the same mind be in us, which was in Christ Jesus*, Phil. ii.5. and to be his Disciples is to learn of him who was meek and lowly in mind, Mat. xi. 29. Hence also our Union to Christ is described by having the *Spirit of Christ*, Rom. 8.9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*; that is, unless he have the same temper and disposition of mind which Christ had, which is called *having the Spirit of Christ* by an ordinary figure of the cause for the effect, for all those Vertues and Graces, wherein our conformity to Christ consists, are called the fruits of the Spirit, *the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth*. Eph. v.9. and therefore what the Apostle in that place calls *having the Spirit of Christ*, in the next verse he expresses by *if Christ be in you*: i. e. if you be possessed with the same love of Vertue and Goodness, which appeared so eminently in him; which is much to the same sence with that expression, *of Christs being formed in you*, Gal. iv. 19. *My little Children, of whom I travel in birth again, till Christ be formed in you*: that is, till you be throughly instructed in the Doctrine and Religion of Christ, and are thereby molded into his Likeness and Image. Hence in 1 Cor. vi. 17. the Apostle tells us, *He that is*
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joyned to the Lord is one Spirit: That is, herein consists our Union to Christ, that we have the same temper of mind which he had: For there can be no Union betwixt Souls and Spirits without this, that they are acted by the same Principles, and love and chuse the same things: Bodies are united by an external adhesion of Parts, but Souls by an harmony and consent of Wills. This makes two *one Spirit*, when there is a perfect likeness of disposition, when they agree in the same designs as much as if the same Soul animated them both. When we love God and men, as our Saviour did, when we are meek and humble, and patient and contented, as he was, we are as closely united to him, as if he dwelt in us, and we in him; as if we had but *one Spirit* in us both.

But thirdly, There is a closer Union still, which results from this, which consists in a mutual and reciprocal love. When we are transformed into the Image of Christ, he loves us, as being like to him, and we love him too, as partaking of his Nature. He loves us as the price of his Blood, as his own Workmanship created to good Works, and we love him as our Redeemer and Saviour. Now Love is the great Cement of Union, which unites Interests, and thereby does more firmly unite Hearts: Hence when our Saviour had told his Disciples, *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you*, Joh. xiv. 20. he explains the meaning of it in ver. 21. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest my self unto him*: That is, God, and Christ and Christians, are all united by a mutual and reciprocal Love, founded on a likeness of Dispositions and Actions, on obedience to those Laws, which are but a
Copy

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Copy of the Original Holiness of God, and of the Life of Christ. To the same purpose Christ prays for his Disciples, *John xvii. 21. That they may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* Which refers to their agreement in Doctrine and Love. Thus according to the Scripture-phrase, Love makes us one with God and Christ, and with each other.

Fourthly, This Union is exprest in Scripture by resembling the Christian Church to Gods Temple, wherein he dwells, as formerly he did in the Temple at Jerusalem. While that Typical and Ceremonial Worship was in force, God was pleased to dwell in a Temple made with hands, there he placed the Symbols of his Presence, from thence he gave forth his Oracles, there he received their Sacrifices and Oblations, and returned an answer to their Prayers. But since Christ hath introduced a more manly and spiritual Worship, God dwells no longer in a Temple of Wood and Stones, by such visible signs of his Presence, as formerly he did, but hath chosen the Society of devout Minds and pure Souls for the place of his residence and abode. Thus in *1 Cor. iii. 16. Know you not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* And *Chap. vi. 19. Know you not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?* And *2 Cor. vi. 16. Ye are the Temple of the Living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in (or among) them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* To the same purpose we find in *Rev. xxi. 3.* that after the description of the holy City, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, which signifies the state of the Christian Church, there was heard a great Voice out of Heaven, saying, *Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with*

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with them, and they shall be his People, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Now all this must be expounded in allusion to the Temple at Jerusalem: That as the Temple was the place of Gods peculiar Presence with that People, signifying that he was always ready at hand to assist them in their distress, to supply their wants, to defend them from their Enemies, to hear all the pious Prayers they put up to him: That is, *That he would be their God, and they should be his People,* as the Apostle expounds it; thus it is now with the Christian Church, they are the only Society of Men whom God hath a peculiar regard for, with whom he is always present, whom he protects and defends by a vigilant and more particular Providence, whom he hath chosen for his peculiar people, to dwell among them.

And as in the Temple God placed the Mercy-Seat and the Cherubims as Emblems of his Majesty and Presence, for which reason he is so often said to *dwell between the Cherubims*: So he hath now bestowed his holy Spirit on the Christian Church, which is a surer pledge of his dwelling among them, than those Types and Shadows were, as the Apostle speaks, *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, or among you?* That is, this is a sufficient evidence, that ye are the Temple of God, in that God hath given his Spirit to dwell with you: Which primarily refers to those extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, which God in that Age bestowed on the Christian Church: This was the true *Shecinah* or *Divine Glory* resting on them: for which reason he is called the *Spirit of Glory*, *1 Pet. iv. 14. The Spirit of Glory and of God resteth on you*: That is, that Spirit of God which is the visible manifestation of his glory in the Christian Church, of which that visible glory which sometimes filled the Jewish Tabernacle,

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Tabernacle, was an Emblem. Hence St. Paul tells us, That the glory of the New Covenant, which is the Ministration of the Spirit, which was confirmed by such miraculous and plentiful effusions of the holy Spirit) did far exceed the glory of the first Covenant, written and engraven in Stones, though that was so glorious, that the Children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the Face of Moses, because of the glory of his Countenance, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8. For this was a glorious manifestation of a Divine Presence with the Church, that God did indeed dwell with them, and walk among them: And though these extraordinary gifts are now ceased, yet the virtue and glory of them still remains, they are a lasting demonstration of Gods peculiar presence with his Church in all Ages, as they are of the truth of the Christian Religion: For the Christian Church in all Ages since Christ and his Apostles is but one, and therefore still inherits the glory as well as the Religion of former Ages. In allusion to this, the Christian Church is called God's Building, 1 Cor. iii. 9. and Eph. ii. 20, 21, 22. And are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone, in whom all the Building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy Temple in the Lord, in whom ye are also built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit: ἐν πνεύματι, that is, a Spiritual Temple, in opposition to the material Temple at Jerusalem, which St. Peter calls ἱερόν πνευματικόν, a spiritual House or Temple, 1 Pet. ii. 5. all which refers to this notion, that the Christian Church is Gods Temple wherein he dwells.

Now though all this do most properly belong to the Christian Church, as a spiritual Society, that they are the Temple of the living God; yet it is accommodated in Scripture to particular Christians: And
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Philo also alludes to it, ἡ γὰρ ἐστὶ τῷ ὄντι βασιλεῖον καὶ οἶκος Θεῶν σοφῶν δίκονοις, that the Mind of a wise and good man is in truth and reality the Palace and Temple of God: Every devout Soul is Gods Temple where in he dwells: An enlightned Mind, which is stored with all the Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Knowledge, is his Debir or Oracle; a pure Heart is his Altar, and devout Prayers are spiritual Incense and sweet Perfumes: The Body it self is a consecrated place, and is also called the Temple of God, which must therefore be preserved pure and undefiled, 1 Cor. vi. 19. Nay, our Bodies are Sacrifices too, which we must offer up to God, by devoting them to his service, Rom. xii. 1. for the Scripture loves to allude to the Temple, and Altar, and Sacrifices of the Law, which in a moral sense may very well be accommodated to the Christian Worship and Service, as in their Typical signification they prefigured Christ, whose Body was the true Temple where the Divine Glory dwelt, who was both Priest and Sacrifice, and by his Death put an end to that Typical Dispensation; only we may observe, that when the Scripture mentions Gods or Christs dwelling with particular Christians, it uses a more familiar stile, and seems rather to allude to a private house, than to a publick Temple: Thus in Job, xiv. 23. If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him: And Rev. iii. 20. Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and be with me.

This is all I can find in Scripture concerning the Union betwixt Christ and Christians; and that this is the true account of it (besides what hath been already urged) will evidently appear from those
Institutions

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Institutions of our Saviour, which are the Instruments and Symbols of our Union to him, which we commonly call *Sacraments, Baptism and the Lords Supper*: which represent and signifie both our external and real Union with him.

First our external Union: Thus Baptism is a publick Profession of the Christian Religion, that we believe the Gospel of Christ, own his Authority, and submit to his Government: We are baptized *in the Name of Christ*, that is, we publickly own him for our Instructor and Governour, to believe whatever he hath taught, and to do whatever he hath commanded. And the Lord's Supper is a foederal Rite which answers to the Feasts and Sacrifices under the Law, whereby we renew our Covenant with our Lord, and vow Obedience and Subjection to him: Hence these Institutions were by the Ancients called *Sacraments*, in allusion to that Oath which Souldiers took to be true and faithful to their Prince, when they were listed into his Army; which was called *Sacramentum Militiae*, or the *Military Oath*, of this nature are Baptism and the Lords Supper, a Vow and Covenant to be subject to Christ, as our Head and Husband, wherein our external and visible Union consists.

Secondly, They signifie also our real Union to Christ, thus Baptism signifies our profession of becoming new men, our profession of conformity to Christ in his Death and Resurrection, *We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4.* that is Baptism, or our immersion under water, according to the ancient Rite of administering it, is a figure of our burial with Christ, and of our conformity to his death, and so signifies our dying to sin, and walking in

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in newness of life: For the Death of Christ must be considered, not barely as a natural Death, a separation of soul and body, but as a Sacrifice for sin to destroy the power and dominion of it, and so our dying to sin, (that is, ceasing from the practice of it) is the truest conformity to the Death of Christ; and we must consider his Resurrection, not only as his returning to life again, but as his living to God, his advancement into his spiritual Kingdom, the design of which is to promote the interest of Religion, and a divine life, and so our walking in newness of life (a vertuous and religious life) is our conformity to his Resurrection, makes us the true Subjects of his spiritual Kingdom; which the Apostle tells us, gives us an abundant assurance of a glorious Resurrection, that we shall in a proper sense rise with him; because this new life, wherein our spiritual Conformity to the Resurrection of Christ consists, is an immortal principle of life, which can no more die, than Christ can die again, now he is risen from the dead. Thus Baptism is called *putting on Christ*, Gal. iii. 27. *He that is Baptized into Christ hath put on Christ*; that is, hath engaged himself to be conformed to his Image and Likeness, to adorn his Mind with all those Vertues and Graces which appeared in our Saviours Life.

Thus the Lords Supper is a spiritual feeding on Christ, *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*, which signifies the most intimate Union with him, that *we are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*, Eph. v. 30. That as we are redeemed by his Death and Sufferings, are the purchase of his Blood, and so as it were taken out of his crucified Body, as the Woman was taken out of the Man; so by this spiritual feeding on Christ we are transformed into the same Nature with him, as much as if we were of his flesh

and Bones. This is a Sacrament wherein we celebrate the love of our dying Lord, and express our most passionate love and devotion to him; The memory of what he hath done and suffered for us, excites a just hatred of our sins, sincere purposes and Resolutions of a new life, *to live to him who died for us*; a great hope in God, who hath provided such a Sacrifice and Atonement, such a Mediator and Advocate for us; and a stedfast expectation of a future Reward. This is eating the Fleth and drinking the Bloud of Christ, when these visible figures of his Death and Sufferings affect our Minds with such a strong and passionate sense of his love to us, and excite in us such a firm hope in God, as transforms us into a Divine Nature: And this is our real Union to Christ, as you heard above.

Now I take it for granted, that there can be no better way to understand the nature of our Union to Christ, than to consider the nature of those Sacraments which were designed as the Instruments and Signs of our Union to him; and if we will take that account the Scripture gives of them, all the Union they signifie is only a publick and visible profession of our faith in *Christ*, and subjection to him, as our Lord and Saviour, and a sincere conformity of our hearts and lives to the Nature and Life of Christ.

IV. Fourthly, I observe further, That fellowship and Communion with God, according to the Scripture Notion, signifies what we call a Political Union, that is, that to be in fellowship with God and Christ, signifies to be of that Society, which puts us into a peculiar relation to God; that God is our Father, and we his Children; that Christ is our Head and Husband, our Lord and Master, we his Disciples and Followers, his Spouse and his Body: Thus in *1 John i. 3. That which we have seen and heard,*

heard, declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: Where I observe, that our fellowship with the Father and Son is first founded on our fellowship with the Christian Church, that is, on our profession of the Faith of Christ, Obédience to his Laws, Subjection to his Government and Discipline, which he now visibly exerciseth by the Bishops and Pastors of the Church; this unites us into one Society and Body Politick: And now by virtue of our fellowship with the Christian Church we have fellowship with Christ, who is the supreme Head and Governour of his Church, which is a plain argument, that all the Apostle means by fellowship with God and Christ, is such a Political Union as is between a Prince and his Subjects, between Superiours and Inferiours in the same Society. Now (as you heard before) if this Profession be only external and visible, without the conformity of our hearts and lives to the Laws of Christ, it gives us only an external Fellowship, or relation to God and Christ; that is, such men only appear to be in fellowship with Christ, maintaining a visible fellowship with his Church, when in truth they are perfect Strangers to him, such as Christ will not own for his Disciples, as the Apostle adds in ver. 6, 7. *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light as God is in the light, then have we fellowship one with another, &c.* That is, we abuse our selves, if we hope that God will own himself our Father, and bestow the Inheritance of Children on us, while we live in sin; but when we joyn the practice of real Righteousness with the visible Profession of Christianity, then God will own us for his Children, and Christ for the true Members of his Body. So

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that this fellowship with God and Christ is such a state and condition, as we are put into by a visible profession and sincere practice of Christianity, and that in short is, that we are united to God as his Sons and Children, and are united to Christ as his Disciples and Members of his Body, which entitles us to the Inheritance of Children, and all the Blessings of the Gospel.

Thus in 1 Cor. i. 9. *God is faithful, by whom ye are called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord:* where the fellowship of Christ can signifie no more than the fellowship of the Christian Church, whereof Christ is Lord and Head; and therefore the Apostle immediately adds in the next Verse, *Now I beseech you Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ (for the Honour and Reputation of Christ and his Religion) that you all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions nor Schisms among you, but that you be perfectly joyned together in the same Mind and in the same Judgment.* Where he argues from the nature of their Faith in Christ, to the Obligations of Peace and Unity, which plainly evinces that this fellowship with Christ is that relation we stand in to him, as Members of the Christian Church, whereof he is Head.

And that this is the true notion of κοινωνία, which we render sometimes by fellowship, sometimes by communion, is as plain as we can wish, in 2 Cor. vi. 14. where the Apostle dissuades them from having any fellowship with Heathen Idolaters, from eating of their Sacrifices, &c. *Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers,* that is, have no society with those men, whose Religion is so contrary to yours, that you will be as uneasie to each other, as two Heifers in the same yoke, which draw different ways: *For what fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness?*

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τίς μετοχή, what is there common between them, which they both alike partake of, as a foundation of union and concord? *What communion hath light with darkness?* τίς κοινωνία, which signifies the same thing, what is there common to them both? *What concord hath Christ with Belial?* τίς συμφωνία, what consent and harmony of Mind, to unite them into one fellowship? *What part hath he that believeth with an unbeliever?* τίς μερίς, which seems to refer to those portions of Sacrifices which were distributed among them, as a Symbol of their Union to each other, and to the same God. How can a Believer and an Unbeliever, a Christian and an Idolater have right to a part of the same Sacrifice? *What agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* τίς συνάξις & θείσις, what is there to unite them together in the same place, to reconcile the Temple of God with the worship of Idols? All these expressions decypher to us the nature and foundation of Fellowship; the nature of it consists in the union of things, which in Rational Beings consists in mutual Relations and common Interests, and the foundation of it is a likeness of Nature, and consent and harmony of Wills; and therefore the Apostle explains our fellowship with God, by our being the Temple of God, and that God dwells in us, and walks in us, ver. 16, 18.

Now because the Lords Supper is the only Act which the Scripture mentions, whereby our fellowship with God and Christ in this World is exprest, hence it is called the κοινωνία, or the communion and fellowship, 1 Cor. x. 16. *The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* And why he calls it the Communion, appears from the following verses: First, because it signifies the communion and fellowship of

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Christians with each other, that they are all Members of the Body of Christ, that they are all the Children of the same Father, as being entertained by him at the same Table, *ver. 17.*

And Secondly, It is a communion also, as it signifies our fellowship with God: *Verf. 18. Behold Israel after the flesh: Are not they which eat of the Sacrifice partakers of the Altar?* The meaning of which is, that the Sacrifice which was offered upon the Altar, was reckoned as Gods Meat, as the Temple was his House, and therefore those that eat of the Sacrifice, were entertained at Gods Table, which was a signification of their fellowship with him, that he was their God, and they his People. Thus the Lords Supper is a Feast upon a Sacrifice, even that great and stupendous Sacrifice of the Body of Christ, which was offered upon the Cross; and therefore to eat the consecrated Bread, and drink the Wine, which are the figures of his Body and Blood; is to eat of that Sacrifice, that spiritual Food God hath provided for us. Thus God entertains us at his Table, as his own Children, who are of his Household and Family, as the Members of Christ, who have a right to all the blessings of the new Covenant, which was sealed with his Blood. This is the true interpretation of all Feasts upon Sacrifice, (such as the Lords Supper is, in an eminent manner) that it is to eat of Gods Food, and to be entertained at his Table, which is such an argument of our fellowship with God, as eating and drinking together is among men, always allowing for that infinite distance which is between God and us.

This is the only Act of Religion, which in Scripture signifies Communion and Fellowship, because it is the most proper signification of our Fellowship with God, and with each other; but Prayer and Meditation,

Meditation, and such-like Acts of Devotion, are nowhere called Communion with God, though a prevailing custom hath in our days almost wholly appropriated that name to them. Fellowship with God doth not consist in transient Acts, but is a state of Life, that relation we stand in to God and Christ; and there is no Act of Religion, which doth properly signify this fellowship with God, but only eating at his Table: For you will not say, that a poor man enjoys communion and fellowship with his Prince, when he puts up a Petition to him to beg his Charity, or praiseth him for his Clemency and Bounty: To pray to God is an Act of Homage, which we owe him, as he is our Maker and Father; it is a duty which results from our relation to, and fellowship with God, but it is not in its own nature an Act of Fellowship and Communion: Which expression I purposely avoid, not only because it is improper, and hath thrust out the true notion with our fellowship with God, and not only the notion, but the practice of it too (for certainly did men understand what our fellowship with God is, they would not so much neglect the Lords Supper, which is the only Act where our Communion is exprest) but also because men have abused it to great irreverence and familiarity with God in their Addresses to him, while they fancy that they are now acting the part of Gods Fellows, and therefore may talk to him with such freedom as they use in common Conversation.

I have discoursed these things at large, because they are too commonly mistaken: our Union to Christ hath been represented as a Riddle and Mystery which nobody can understand, the perfect knowledge of which must be reserved for the next World, or the coming of *Elias*; and the mistakes about it have had a bad influence upon all Religion, not only to

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confound the notions, but to debauch the practice of it. The sum of what I have already said is this; That those Phrases and Metaphors which represent our Union to Christ, signifie our visible Society with the Christian Church, and our sincere practice of the Christian Religion: When we joyn in Communion with the Church of Christ, and live in a regular Subjection to our spiritual Governours, and a mutual discharge of all Christian Offices, when we profess to believe the Gospel, and to obey the Laws of our common Saviour, then we are visibly united to Christ, as Subjects to their Prince, and Members to their Head; and when this profession is sincere and hearty, when we really are what we pretend to be, then our Union to Christ is real and spiritual too. A visible and real Union to Christ, differ as a visible Professor and sincere Christian, the one is a Christian only in shew, the other is what he pretends to be; And this Union to Christ entitles us to his peculiar Care and Providence, to the influences of his Grace, to the power of his Intercession, transforms us into his Nature and Likeness, and makes us the Temple of God, wherein he delights to dwell. All this may be understood on this side Heaven, and without sending for *Elias* to unriddle it; and this is all the Scripture tells us of our Union to Christ.

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SECT. II.

Of our Union to the Person of Christ.

I Know not whence it comes to pass, that men love to make plain things obscure, and like nothing in Religion but Riddles and Mysteries: God indeed was pleased to institute a great many Ceremonies (and many of them of very obscure signification) in the Jewish Worship, to aw their childish minds into a greater veneration of his divine Majesty. But in these last days God hath sent his own Son into the World to make a plain, and easie, and perfect Revelation of his Will, to publish such a Religion, as may approve it self to our reason, and captivate our Affections by its natural charms and beauties; and there cannot be a greater injury to the Christian Religion than to render it obscure and unintelligible: And yet too many there are, who despise every thing, which they understand, and think nothing a sufficient trial of their Faith, but what contradicts the sense and reason of mankind. I might give you too many instances of this, but our present argument may serve instead of many. There is nothing more easie to be understood than our *Union and Communion with Christ*, and it had certainly continued so, had not some men undertook to explain it, who have now made it *more than mystical*, that is, an *unintelligible Union*; though indeed that is the least fault, that it cannot be understood; for as they have ordered the matter, it is made to serve a great many evil purposes, and to overthrow the main designs of Christianity.

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fianity. And to make this appear, I shall as briefly and plainly, as the matter will bear, represent to you those other opinions concerning our Union to Christ, which are now in great vogue in the World, and do very unjustly challenge to themselves the name of *Gospel-Mysterics*.

As 1. when we inquire what this Union betwixt Christ and Believers is, they answer in general, that it is a *mystical Union through the Spirit and Faith*: This *Mystical* is a hard word, and therefore to explain it, they tell us, *That this mystical Union is an Union of Persons, where yet Persons and Natures are distinct. As there is an Union of three Persons in one Nature in the Trinity, and of two Natures in one Person in Christ, which is the Hypostatical Union, so the mystical Union is an Union of Persons, where both Persons and Natures are distinct: And it is an Union of Persons, but no personal Union. The Person of Christ is united to the person of the Believer, and the Person of the Believer is united to the Person of Christ (as it must needs be where the Person of Christ is united to the person of the Believer) which Union is made by Faith, which receives the Person of Christ, and therefore must unite to the Person of Christ (I doubt that consequence is not good, for men are not united to every thing they receive, but yet what follows may help it out) as it is in the Marriage-Union, which joyns person to person.* This is not very clear yet, and therefore as a fuller explication of it, the same Author describes it thus: *This mystical Union is that supernatural, spiritual, intimous Oneness and Conjunction, which is betwixt the Person of Christ and the persons of Believers, through the bonds of the Spirit and Faith, upon which there follows mutual and reciprocal Communion with each other. This Oneness and Conjunction are hard words still, and therefore to explain them, you must observe, that*
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Rom. 8.
p. 42.

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Pag. 48.

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Christ and Saints are united, how? Why, in respect of that Oneness and Conjunction that is between them. This now is as plain as one could wish, they are one by their Oneness. Union is Union, and Christ is Christ, and Believers are Believers, and Oneness is Oneness; and thus Christ and Believers are united by their Oneness.

But what are the bonds of this Union? (though it had been convenient first to have understood the Union better) Why, they are the Spirit and Faith, the Spirit unites Christ to us, and Faith unites us to Christ: And who can deny this to be a very mystical Union? But besides this mystical Union, there is a legal or Law-Union betwixt Christ and Believers, as he is their surety and a moral Union, the foundation of which is Love (of which more in its proper place) and thus the Person of Christ and the person of Believers are united mystically, legally, morally. The design of all these distinctions is to prove the Union of Persons betwixt Christ and Believers, and because I find this Author hath bewildred himself, I will endeavour to help him out, for it is a very plain case: If Christ and Believers are united, their Persons must be united too; for the Person of Christ is Christ himself, and the Persons of Believers are the Believers themselves, and I cannot understand how they can be united without their Persons, that is, without themselves: But then they are united by mutual relations, as the Persons of a Prince and his Subjects, of a Husband and his Wife are united, or by mutual affections, or common interest, not by a natural adhesion of Persons; but because I find it doth not satisfy these men, that Christ and Believers are united, unless their Persons be united too; it makes me suspect that there is a greater Mystery in this Union of Persons, than every one apprehends; and therefore,
Secondly,

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p. 51.

Ibid. p. 52.

Secondly, Let us enquire, what they mean by the *Person of Christ*, to which Believers must be united. And here they have out-done all the Metaphysical subtilties of *Suarez*, and have found out a *Person* for Christ distinct from his *Godhead* and *Manhood*: For there can be no other fence made of what *Dr. Owen* tells us, *That by the Graces of his Person, he doth not mean the glorious Excellencies of his Deity considered in it self, abstracting from the Office, which for us as God and Man he undertook, nor the outward appearance of his humane nature neither, when he conversed here on Earth, nor yet as now exalted in glory; But the Graces of the Person of Christ, as he is vested with the Office of Mediation; His spiritual eminency, comeliness, beauty, as appointed and anointed by the Father unto that great work of bringing home all his Elect into his bosom.* Now unless the *Person of Christ as Mediator*, be distinct from his *Person, as God Man*, all this is idle talk; for what *personal Graces* are there in Christ as *Mediator*, which do not belong to him either as *God* or *Man*? There are some things indeed which our Saviour did and suffered, which he was not obliged to either as *God* or *Man*, but as *Mediator*; but surely he will not call the peculiar duties and actions of an Office, *personal Graces*. His *personal Graces* fitted him for the discharge of his *Mediatory Office*, but whatever *personal Graces* are in Christ, belong to his *Person* still, are seated either in his *Divine* or *Humane Nature*, and he hath no *personal Graces* as *Mediator*, which he hath not either as *God* or *Man*. And the *Doctor himself*, when he accommodates the Description, the Spouse gives of her Beloved, to Christ, tells us, *That he is white in the glory of his Deity, and ruddy in the preciousness of his Humanity; because white is the complexion of Glory, and ruddy is very applicable to his Humanity; because Man was called Adam from the red Earth*

Earth whereof he was made; which are excellent proofs: but however *white and ruddy* belong to his *Divine* and *Humane Nature*, and that without any regard to his *Mediatory Office*; for *he had been white in the glory of his Deity, and ruddy with the red Earth of his Humanity*, whether he had been considered as *Mediator* or not. And in his first digression concerning the *Excellency of Christ Jesus*, to invite us to communion with him in *Conjugal* relation, he tells us, *that Christ is exceeding excellent and desirable in his Deity, and the Glory thereof, He is desirable and worthy our acceptation, as considered in his Humanity, in his freedom from sin, and fulness of Grace, &c.* Now though this look very like a contradiction to what he said before, that by the *Graces of his Person*, he meant neither the *Excellencies of his Divine nor Humane Nature*, yet he hath a salvo, which will deliver him both from contradiction and from fence; *That he doth not consider these Excellencies of his Deity or Humanity, as abstracted from his Office of Mediator*: Though he might if he pleased, for he considers those Excellencies which are not peculiar to the *Office of Mediation*, but which would have belonged to him, as *God* and *Man*, whether he had been *Mediator* or not: But what becomes of his distinction of the *Graces of Christ's Person as Mediator, from the Graces of his Person as God and Man*: When there are no *personal Graces* in Christ, but what belong to his *Deity* or *Humanity*: And then you can find no other *Person* to be the subject of these *personal Excellencies*, unless his *Office of Mediation* must go for a distinct *Person*, which is a new kind of *Heresie*. But whatever becomes of the fence of the distinction, there is a very deep fetch in it, the observing of which will discover the whole *Mystery of the Person of Christ*, and *our Union to him*: For these men consider,

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sider, that Christ saves us, as he is our *Mediator*, and not merely considered as God or Man, and they imagine, that we receive Grace and Salvation from Christs Person, just as we do water out of a Conduit, or a gift and largess from a Prince; that it flows to us from our Union to his Person; And therefore they dress up the *Person of the Mediator* with all those personal Graces and Excellencies, which may make him a fit Saviour, that those, who are thus united to his Person, (of which more in the next Section) need not fear missing of Salvation: Hence they ransack all the boundless perfections of the Deity, and whatever they can find or fancy, which speaks any comfort to Sinners, this is presently a *personal Grace* of the Mediator: They consider all the glorious effects of his Mediation, and whatever great things are spoken of his Gospel or Religion, or Intercession for us, these serve as *personal Graces* too; that all our hopes may be built, not on the *Gospel Covenant*, but on the *Person of Christ*: So that the dispute now lies between the *Person of Christ* and his *Gospel*; which must be the foundation of our hope, which is the way to life and happiness.

Communion with Jesus Christ,
p. 53.

To make this appear, I shall consider that account which *Dr. Owen* gives us of the *personal Graces and Excellencies of Christ*, which in general consist in three things: *First*, his *Fitness to save from the Grace of Union*, and the proper and necessary effects thereof: *Secondly*, his *Fulness to save from the Grace of Communion*, or the free consequences of the *Grace of Union*: *And Thirdly*, his *Excellency to endear from his compleat suitableness to all the wants of the Souls of men*.

First, That he is fit to be a *Saviour from the Grace of Union*; and if you would understand what this strange *Grace of Union* is, it is the uniting the Nature

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of *God and Man in one Person*, which makes him fit to be a *Saviour to the uttermost*: He lays his hands upon God by partaking of his Nature, *Zech. xiii. 7.* And he lays his hands on us by partaking of our Nature; *Heb. ii. 14, 16.* And so becomes a *Days-man or Umpire between both*: Now though this be a great truth, that the Union of the Divine and Humane Nature in Christ did excellently qualifie him for the Office of Mediator, yet this is the unhappiest man in expressing and proving it, that I have met with: For what an untoward representation is this of Christs Mediation, that he came to make peace by laying his hands on God and Men, as if he came to part a Fray or a Scuffle: And he might as well have named *Gen. i. 1.* or *Mat. i. 1.* or any other place of Scripture for the proof of it, as those he mentions: But to let that pass, in his *Chap. 3.* he discourses this more at large, and thither I shall follow him. Where he tells us, *how glorious Christ is in his Deity, and how desirable in his Humanity, and what are the glorious effects of the Union of the Divine and Humane Nature.*

As for the first, *how excellent and desirable Christ is in his Deity.* From the Deity of Christ he observes, the endless, bottomless, boundless grace and compassion that is in him. It is not the Grace of a Creature, no not of the Humane Nature it self, that can serve our turn; if it could be conceived as separate from the Deity, surely so many thirsty guilty Souls, as every day drink deep and large draughts of Grace and Mercy from him, would (if I may so speak) sink him to the very bottom, nay, it could afford no supply at all, but only in a moral way (and that is a very pitiful way indeed.) But when the Conduit of his Humanity is inseparably united to the infinite inexhaustible Fountain of the Deity, who can look into the depths thereof: If now there be Grace enough for sinners in an all-sufficient God, it is in Christ

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On this ground it is, *That if all the World should (if I may so say) set themselves to drink free Grace, and Mercy, and Pardon, drawing Waters continually from the Wells of Salvation; if they should set themselves to draw from one single Promise, an Angel standing by, and crying, Drink, O my Friends, yea, drink abundantly, take as much Grace and Pardon as shall be abundantly sufficient for the World of Sin, which is in every one of you, they would not be able to sink the Grace of the Promise (of the Person of Christ you mean) one hairs breadth — The infiniteness of Grace, with respect to its Spring or Fountain, (the Deity of Christ) will answer all objections — What is our finite guilt before it; (a World of Sin is something, though it bear no proportion indeed to infinite Grace) shew me the Sinner that can spread his iniquity to the dimensions (if I may so say) (no man ever had more need, nor made better use of so says) of this Grace: Here is Mercy enough for the greatest, the oldest, the stubbornest transgressor, &c. enough in all reason this, what a comfort is it to Sinners to have such a God for their Saviour, whose Grace is boundless and bottomless, and exceeds the largest dimensions of their sins, though there be a World of Sin in them? But what now if the Divine Nature it self have not such an endless, boundless, bottomless Grace and Compassion, as the Doctor now talks of? For at other times, when it serves his turn better, we can hear nothing from him but the naturalness of Gods vindictive Justice. Though God be rich in mercy, he never told us yet, that his mercy was so boundless and bottomless: He hath given a great many demonstrations of the severity of his anger against sinners, who could not be much worse than the greatest, the oldest, and stubbornest transgressors. But supposing the Divine Nature were such a bottomless Fountain of Grace, how comes this to be a Personal*
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Grace of the Mediator? For a Mediator, as Mediator, ought not to be considered as the Fountain, but as the Minister of Grace: God the Father certainly ought to come in for a share at least in being the Fountain of Grace, though the Doctor is pleased to take no notice of him. But how excellent is the Grace of Christs Person above the Grace of the Gospel? For that is a bounded and limited thing, it is a strait gate and narrow way that leadeth unto life, there is no such boundless Mercy, as all the Sins in the world cannot equal its dimensions, as will save the greatest, the oldest, and the stubbornest transgressors.

Thus the Love of Christ is an eternal Love, because his Divine Nature is eternal; and it is an unchangeable Love, because his Divine Nature is unchangeable; and his Love is fruitful, for it being the Love of God, it must be effectual and fruitful in producing all the things which he willeth unto his Beloved: He loves Life, Grace, Holiness into us; He loves us into Covenant, he loves us into Heaven. This is an excellent Love indeed, which doth all for us, and leaves nothing for us to do: We owe this discovery you see to an Acquaintance with Christs Person (or rather with his Divine Nature) for the Gospel is very silent in this matter. All that the Gospel tells us is, that Christ loved Sinners so as to die for them, and that he loves good men, who believe and obey his Gospel, so as to save them, and that he continues to love them, while they continue to be good; but hates them, when they return to their old vices: And therefore I see there is great reason for Sinners to fetch their comforts, not from the Gospel, but from the Person of Christ, which (according to that representation which these men make of it) as far excels the Gospel, as the Gospel excels the Law.

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But methinks this is a very odd way of arguing from the Divine Nature; for if the Love of Christ, as God, be so infinite, eternal, unchangeable, fruitful, I would willingly understand, how sin, and death, and misery came into the World: For if this Love be so eternal and unchangeable, &c. because the Divine Nature is so, then it was always so: For God always was what he is, and that which is eternal, could never be other than it is now; and why could not this eternal and unchangeable, and fruitful Love as well preserve us from falling into sin, and misery, and death, *as love Life and Holiness into us*; for it is a little odd, first to love us into sin and death, that then he may love us into Life and Holiness; which indeed could not be, if this Love of God were always so unchangeable and fruitful, as this Author persuades us it is now: For if this Love had always loved Life and Holiness into us, I cannot conceive, how it should happen, that we should sin and die.

Not that I deny, that the Love of God is eternal, unchangeable, fruitful, that is, that God was always good, and always continues good, and manifesteth his Love and Goodness in such ways as are suitable to his Nature, which is the fruitfulness of it: But then the unchangeableness of Gods Love doth not consist in being always determined to the same object, but in that he always loves for the same reason, that is, that he always loves true vertue and goodness, where ever he sees it, and never ceases to love any person, till he ceases to be good, and then the immutability of his Love is the reason why he loves no longer; for should he love a wicked man, the reason and nature of his Love would change: And the fruitfulness of Gods Love with respect to the Methods of his Grace and Providence doth not consist in producing what he loves by an omnipotent and irresistible

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irresistible power (for then sin and death could never have entered into the World) but he governs, and doth good to his Creatures, in such ways as are most suitable to their natures. He governs reasonable Creatures by Principles of Reason, as he doth the material World by the necessary Laws of Matter, and brute creatures by the Instincts and Propensities of Nature.

From hence he proceeds to shew, *how desirable Christ is in his Humanity, by reason of his freedom from all sin, both original and actual, and his fulness of Grace; that all Grace was in him for the kinds thereof, and all degrees of Grace for its perfection.* This indeed doth represent him as a very excellent Person, a spotless Sacrifice, and a great Example to the World, but these personal perfections cannot pass out of his Person to become ours.

But then thirdly, you must consider, *That all these Perfections of the Divine and Humane Nature are united in one Person, and this made him fit to suffer, and able to bear whatever was due unto us, which no Creature could do; for if the weight of our sins had been laid upon a meer innocent Creature, how would they have overwhelmed him, and buried him for ever out of the presence of God?* No doubt the Sacrifice of Christ, who was God-Man, was of greater value than the Sacrifice of any meer Creature could be, but I know not what this is to his purpose, and do as little admire his Philosophy.

But his being God and Man, made him an endless, bottomless Fountain of Grace to all that believe: This he was as God, as we were told before, and his Grace was never the more bottomless for becoming Man. The design, you see, of all this is to make the Person of Christ the Fountain of all Grace, from whence we must drink Pardon and Mercy as long as we need

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any, and such Mercy too, as his Gospel is unacquainted with; he hath a *fulneſſ* of all Grace in himſelf, and from thence we muſt receive the communications of it.

And this brings me to the ſecond ſort of the *Personal Graces and Excellencies of Chriſt*, his *fulneſſ* to ſave from the Grace of Communion, or the free conſequences of the Grace of Union. As for this Grace of Communion (as he is pleaſed to call it, though it ſounds a little harſh to be a *Personal Grace*, and yet communicated) *whereby Chriſt communicates his fulneſſ to Believers*, I ſhall reſerve it for its proper place, and ſhall at preſent only conſider, what this *personal fulneſſ* in Chriſt is; which he calls, *all the furniture he received from the Father by the Unction of the Spirit for the work of our Salvation*: And near of kin to this is his third *Personal Grace*, his *Excellency* to endear from his compleat ſuitableneſſ to all the wants of the ſouls of men. *There is no man whatever* (this ſounds like *Universal Redemption*) *that hath any want in reference to the things of God, but Chriſt will be unto him that which he wanteth*; Is he dead? *Chriſt is Life*; Is he weak? *Chriſt is the Power of God, and the Wiſdom of God*; Hath he the ſenſe of guilt upon him? *Chriſt is compleat Righteouſneſſ, the Lord our Righteouſneſſ*: Many poor Creatures are ſenſible of their wants, but know not where their remedy lies. Indeed, whether it be *Life, or Light, Power, or Joy, all is wrapt up in him*. Now it muſt be acknowledged, that the Scripture doth attribute a *Fulneſſ* to Chriſt, and he is called *Life and Righteouſneſſ, the Power and Wiſdom of God*: So that there is no diſpute between us, whether Chriſt have *all fulneſſ* in him, whether he be *our Life and Righteouſneſſ, the Wiſdom and Power of God*; but the diſpute is, in what ſenſe the Scripture attributes all this to Chriſt. They ſay, that theſe are

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the *Personal Graces* of Chriſt, as Mediator, which are *inherent in him*; and muſt be derived from his *Person*; we ſay, they ſignifie the *Perfection and Excellency of his Religion, as being the moſt compleat and perfect declaration of the Will of God, and the moſt powerful Method of the Divine Wiſdom for the reforming the World; as it preſcribes the only Righteouſneſſ, which is acceptable to God, and directs us in the only way to Life and Immortality*.

Now to bring this Controverſie to an iſſue, there cannot be a more effectual way, than to examine thoſe places of Scripture, which ſpeak of this matter, and to learn their ſenſe of it: For if men be allowed to take Scripture phraſes, and put what ſenſe they pleaſe on them, we may quickly have as many different Religions, as there are different fancies among men.

To begin then with the *Fulneſſ of Chriſt*; and the firſt place, in which we meet with it, is in *Job. i. 16, And of his Fulneſſ we all received, and Grace for Grace*. Now what is meant by this *Fulneſſ*, we may learn from *ver. 14. The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of Grace and Truth*. So that this *Fulneſſ*, which was in Chriſt, is a *fulneſſ of Grace and Truth*; and if we conſult *ver. 17. we ſhall find that this Grace and Truth is oppoſed to the Law of Moſes: The Law was given by Moſes, but Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*. So that *Grace and Truth* ſignifie the *Gospel*, which is a *Covenant of Grace*, and is expreſſly called the *Grace of God, Tit. ii. 11.* and contains the moſt clear and perſpicuous revelation of the *Divine Will* in oppoſition to the *Types and Shadows of the Law*; is *Truth* in oppoſition to *Types and Figures*: This is the *Fulneſſ* we receive from Chriſt, a perfect revelation of the

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Divine Will concerning the Salvation of Mankind, which contains so many excellent Promises, that it may well be called *Grace*; and prescribes such a plain and simple Religion, so agreeable to the natural notions of good and evil, that it may well be called *Truth*.

This *Fulness* dwelt only in Christ, and from him alone we receive it; for none of the Prophets who were before him, did so perfectly understand the Will of God as he did: *No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, vers. 18.* That is, no man ever before had so perfect a knowledge of the Will of God, (which is here called seeing God; because sight gives us the clearest evidence, and the most perfect and particular knowledge) but the Son of God, who perfectly understood all his most secret Counsels, hath perfectly declared the Will of his Father to us. And hence that *Fulness*, which we receive from Christ, is explained by *Grace for Grace*: *And of his Fulness we have received, &c, viz. Grace for Grace, χαρις ὑπὲρ χάριτος*, where the repetition of the word *χαρις* with a Preposition signifies only that *abundance* of *Grace*, which is now manifested by the *Gospel of Christ*. There is indeed some difference about the sense of the Preposition *ὑπὲρ*; some of the ancient Fathers expound it by *vice*, as *St. Austin, Pro Legis gratiâ, quæ præterit, gratiam Evangelii accepimus permanentem, & pro umbris & imaginibus veteris Instrumenti, gratia & veritas, per Christum facta est. That instead of the Grace of the Law, which is now past, we receive the Grace of the Gospel, which is constant and permanent, and instead of the shadows and figures of the Old Testament, we have Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ*; and thus *Nonnus* in his Paraphrase renders it; ἀντιθέτου ὑπετέρας χάριτος χαρις, —

χαρις, — though this seems to be a forced sense; for the *Law* is no where called *Grace*; but *Grace* is expressly opposed to the *Law* in the next *Versè*; but however, this you see they agree in, that by the *Fulness of Grace and Truth*, they understand the *Gospel*, that perfect Declaration which Christ hath made of Gods Will to the World.

Now though every man in his wits must confess that this *Fulness* was first in the *Person of Christ* (as these men love to speak) before he would communicate it to us; that is, that he first perfectly understood the Will of God himself, before he could declare it to others; yet it is not this *Personal fulness* we are to attend to, but the *fulness and perfection of his Gospel*, from whence we must fetch the knowledge of the Divine Will; for whatever *fulness* be in him, the Revelations of the *Gospel* only communicate this *fulness* to us.

To the same purpose the Apostle discourses in *Col. ii. 9, 10.* *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are compleat (πενήρπλημένοι filled) in him who is the Head of all Principalities and Powers.* For the understanding of which we must consider what is meant by that Phrase, *That in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead (Θεότης, of the Deity) bodily*; which must be acknowledged to be an allusive and metaphorical expression; for God, who is a Spirit, cannot in a proper sense dwell *bodily* in any thing. And therefore we must observe, that the design of the Apostle in this Chapter is to persuade the *Colossians* to adhere to the *Gospel of Christ*; not to be seduced either by Jews or *Gnosticks*, (who talked very much in their canting phrase of the *pleromata*) to corrupt the Religion of Christ with Jewish Ceremonies, or Pagan Superstitions, *Vers. 16, 17, 18, 19.* and the principal argument he urges

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to this Purpose, is the perfection of the Gospel-Revelation, *that in Christ* (that is, the Gospel of Christ) *are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge,* *Verf. 3. εν ος ειναι παντες θησαυροι της σοφιας η της γνωσης αποκρυφοι* that is, not in whom are hid (as our Translation renders it, contrary to the sense of the place) but in whom are all the hidden Treasures (θησαυροι αποκρυφοι) of Wisdom and Knowledge: that is, who hath now revealed to us all those Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, which in former Ages were hidden from the World; upon this he exhorts them to be firm and steadfast in the belief of the Gospel of Christ, and Obedience to it, *Verf. 6, 7. To beware lest any man spoil them through Philosophy and vain deceit, after the Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ:* that is, lest their Minds be corrupted through Philosophical Speculations, or Traditionary Superstitions, (in worshipping Demons and Angels, &c.) which are inconsistent with the Gospel of Christ, and owe their original only to the folly and superstition of Mankind. And then he adds, *For in him* (that is, in Christ) *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:* So that this must refer to that compleat and perfect Revelation of the Gospel, which needs not be supplied by the Philosophy or Traditions of men. And to understand the Reason of this Phrase; and the force of the Apostles Argument, we must consider that this is an allusion to Gods dwelling in the Temple at Jerusalem by Types and Figures, which were the Symbols of his Presence: For the Tabernacle or Temple was Gods House wherein he dwelt, and the Mercy-Seat and Cherubims, &c. were the Emblems of Gods Presence there, and this Symbolical Presence of God in the Temple, was very agreeable to that Symbolical and Ceremonial Worship, which he then

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then instituted and commanded: He dwelt among them by Types and Figures, and therefore instituted a Typical and Figurative Religion; and this was an imperfect and obscure Declaration of himself to the World: But now God hath sent his Son to Tabernacle among us, *Job. i. 14. the Deity it self* now dwells in the *Temple of Christs Body*, not by Types and Figures, as formerly he dwelt in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, but by a real and immediate Presence and Union; and therefore those Revelations which are made by Christ, are answerable to the *Inhabitation of the Godhead in him*, contain a true and perfect declaration of Gods Will, in opposition to the imperfect Rudiments and obscure Types and Figures of the Law. So that σαματιως. or *bodily*, is opposed to *figurative* and *typical*: And this is a plain demonstration of the perfection of the Gospel-Revelation, that the fulness of the Deity dwelt *substantially* in Christ, we need not doubt, but that so excellent a Prophet as he was, in whom the Deity it self inhabited, hath perfectly revealed Gods Will to us. All the figures of the Temple were accomplished in *Christs Person*, he was that in truth and reality, which the Temple was a figure of, *God dwelling among us*, and his Religion answers the greatness of his Person: *The Godhead dwelt in him bodily*, not by Types and Figures, and his Religion is *σωμα* too, all truth and substance, *The Law was but a shadow of things to come, but the Body is of Christ*, *Verf. 17. his Religion is Body, Truth, and Substance.* So that this place is exactly parallel with *Job. i. 14. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, ενηνωσεν εν ημιν*, Tabernacled among us: Herein the figure of the Tabernacle was fulfilled, that *God dwelt in our flesh*: And the Revelations he made of Gods Will, did agree with the manner of his appearance; were full of
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Grace and Truth, not a typical and Figurative, but a plain and perfect Declaration of God's Will. And as the Evangelist tells us, *That of his fulness we have all received*; that we are perfectly instructed by him in the Will of God, so our Apostle adds here, *And ye are compleat in him, περιπληρωμένοι*, filled in him; you need no other Instructor but Christ, who hath revealed as much of God's Will as is necessary for us to know. So that *this fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Christ*, does ultimately resolve it self into the perfection of the Gospel-Revelation; for since the *fulness of the Deity* did inhabit in *Christ's Person*, we need not question but he was able to acquaint us with the whole mind and will of God, and that he would do so. The force of which Reason our Saviour himself takes notice of, *Job. iii. 34, 35. For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God*, that is, declareth his whole Will to us, *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*. It is not with him, as it was with meaner Prophets, who had only some particular Revelations of the Divine Will; but the *fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily*. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands*.

Thus the *fulness of Christ*, you see, signifies the Excellency and Perfection of the Gospel; and in other places this fulness signifies the Church of Christ; *Eph. i. 22, 23. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all*: Where the Church is called the *fulness of Christ*, which makes him (as it were) compleat and perfect; for he cannot be a perfect Head without a Body; hence the Church is called *Christ*, *1 Cor. xii. 12. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also*

is

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is Christ: that is, the *Christian Church*, as it immediately follows; *for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free*; And Beza tells us, that this is the Reason of that Phrase which so frequently occurs in the New Testament, of *being in Christ*, that is, being Members of the *Christian Church*.

Now the *Church* is called the *fulness of Christ*, with respect to its extent and universality, that it is not confined to any particular Nation, as the Jewish Church was, but takes in *Jews and Gentiles, bond and free*: For this I take to be the meaning of *Col. i. 19. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*, which words are commonly expounded to the same sense with *Col. ii. 9. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*; but if we consult the Context, we shall see reason for a different sense; and Beza observes, that some Expositors by *his fulness* in this place understand the *Church*: For *ver. 18. the Apostle* tells us, that *He is the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the prebeminence: for it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*: Where *fulness* must be expounded of the *Church*, that it pleased God to unite his *Church* into *Christ*; for the Apostle assigns this as the reason of *Christ's* being the *Head of the Church*. And if you would know why the *Church* is called *Fulness*, and *all Fulness* said to dwell in *Christ*: The reason follows in *20, 21. And having made peace through the blood of his Cross to reconcile all things by him, I say, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven. And you, who were sometime alienated, and Enemies in your Minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. This is that fulness that dwells in Christ, that he is made the Head of the Universal Church both in Heaven and Earth*

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Earth, that Jews and Gentiles are now united in *one Body*; that whereas in former Ages the *Church of God* seemed to be confined to the *Jewish Nation*, now it pleased the Father, that Christ should be the *Universal Shepherd and Bishop of Souls*, by him to reconcile all things to himself: And this too is the meaning of that Phrase, *The fulness of him, who filleth all in all*: Therefore the Church is called his *Fulness*, because *he filleth all in all*: That is, doth not confine his Care and Providence, and the Influences of his Grace, to *any one Nation or People*, but extends it to the *whole World*.

Thus the *fulness of Christ* signifies in *Eph. iv. 13. Till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*: εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας καὶ πληρωμάτων καὶ Χρῆστος. which is the explication of εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον. *to a perfect man*. That is, to that perfection of Faith and Knowledge which becomes the *Christian Church*, for ἡλικία signifying the age, and growth, and stature of a man, the fulness of Christ cannot so properly be understood of any thing, as of the Christian Church.

This is all that I can find in Scripture concerning the *fulness of Christ*, which either signifies the Perfection of his Gospel, or the Universality of his Church: Which is a plain demonstration of those mens Skill in expounding Scripture, who make this Fulness a *Personal Grace* in Christ, and apply it to every thing they can find or fancy in him: *All the furniture that he received from the Father by the Union of the Spirit, for the Work of our Salvation: The fulness of his Divine and Humane Nature, the fulness of Love in Christ, the fulness of habitual Grace, fulness of Satisfaction, fulness of Merit, fulness of Power and Vertue, a fulness of Justification, and a fulness of Sanctification*:

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Justification: Which fulness; I am sure, hath confounded mens notions of Religion, and made them look upon Christ only as a *Fountain*, from whence they must drink Grace, and Mercy, and Pardon, Justification, and eternal Life.

Let us now consider in what sence Christ is called *our Life*: And he is so called with respect to his Doctrine, his Sacrifice, and that Power he is invested with, to raise us from the dead. He is called *Life* with respect to his *Doctrine*, because he preached the *Word of Life*, and hath brought *Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel*: Hence in *Job i. 4.* the Evangelist tells us, *In him was life, and the life was the light of men*: That is, he preached the *Word of Life*, which enlightned the dark minds of Men: For it is not imaginable how *Life* should be light in any other sence, than as this *Word of Life*, which Christ preached, enlightned their Minds, and dispelled all the Mists of Error and Ignorance: Hence Christ tels his Disciples, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man cometh to the Father but by me*, *John xiv. 6.* that is, I declare the true and only way to Life and Happiness, and no man can throughly understand the Will of God, nor consequently be a true Worshipper of him, without learning of me: Thus he calls himself the *Bread of Life*, *John vi.* with respect to the Doctrine he preached, *Vers. 33.* and with respect to that Sacrifice he offered for the Life of the World, *Vers. 51. I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; and the Bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World.*

Thus Christ is called *our Life*, because he hath power and authority to bestow *immortal Life* upon all his sincere Followers, *Job. xi. 26, 27. I am the Resurrection*

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Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die: That is, he hath power to raise the dead, and will actually raise all those who believe in him, and reward them with Eternal Life. To the same purpose our Saviour speaks, in *John v. 25, 26. The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself:* That is, he first raises those who are dead in sin, to a new spiritual life by the power of his Doctrine, and then hath Authority to raise them to an immortal life. This is the meaning too of that expression in *Col. iii. 3, 4. You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory:* That is, you profess your selves to be dead to this World in conformity to the death of Christ; and though that immortal Life which you expect to enjoy with Christ, who is now risen again from the dead, be at present concealed from your view, yet when Christ, who is the Author of eternal life, and hath power to raise us from the dead, shall appear the second time to judge the World, then shall ye appear with him in glory.

So that when Christ is called *our Life*, the meaning is, that he hath published the Word of Life to us, which contains the most express Promises of a blessed Immortality, and the most plain and easie Directions how to attain it: And that by his Death he hath expiated our sins, and confirmed all these Promises to us; and being risen from the dead himself, hath now power to raise us. We must not dream of fetching Life from the *Person* of Christ, as we draw Water out of a Fountain; but if we would live

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live for ever with Christ, we must stedfastly believe and obey his Gospel, which is a Principle of a Divine Life in us, and then we may joyfully expect, that when our Lord and Saviour comes again to judge the World, he will raise us from the dead, and reward our Faith, and Patience, and Obedience, with *Immortal Life*.

Thus to proceed, *Christ is the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God*, which these men call *Personal Graces* too. But I have already shewed you at large, that Christ is the Wisdom of God, with respect to those Revelations he made of God's Will. The Gospel of Christ is the Wisdom and Power of God: *1 Cor. i. 24. Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God:* That is, the Doctrine of a crucified Christ, as will appear from the verses before: *The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.* The Jews were all for Signs and Miracles, the Greeks were for curious Philosophical Speculations, which might gratifie their inquisitive minds, and therefore neither of them could relish that plain simple Doctrine of a crucified Christ: But whatever these men thought of it, the Apostle tells us, that this Doctrine of a crucified Saviour is *the Power of God, and Wisdom of God:* That is, the most powerful Method which was ever used by God for the reforming the World, and the contrivance and effect of excellent Wisdom; and thus the Gospel of Christ is called *the Power of God to Salvation to them that believe:* *Rom. i. 16. and by this Foolishness of Preaching,* that is, by preaching this foolish Doctrine (as it was accounted by the Wise-men of the World) of a crucified Christ, *it pleased God to save them that believe.*

believe. Christ indeed being now exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, may in a proper sense be called the Power of God, because all power is given to him both in Heaven and Earth, and he hath the supreme Government of all the Affairs of this spiritual Kingdom; and this is a *Personal* Power inherent in him, which all good men shall find the blessed effects of: But then the exercise of this Power is confined to the Rules of the Gospel, he hath Power to save those who believe and obey him, and he hath Power to destroy his Enemies, to accomplish all the Promises, and to execute all the Threatnings of his Gospel: So that this Personal Power in Christ can give us no greater encouragement than the Gospel doth; It cannot save any man whom the Gospel condemns, we have no reason to trust to his Personal Power, unless we first obey his Gospel; For how omnipotent soever he be, his Gospel is the measure of his Actings, if that condemns us, his omnipotent Power will not save us.

But the chief *Personal Grace*, which these men most vehemently contend for, is still behind, *viz. the Righteousness of Christ*: Now no Christian will deny, that Christ was very righteous, a great Example of Universal Holiness and Purity; and it must be confessed, that his Righteousness was not an *Imaginary, Imputed Righteousness*, but *Inherent and Personal*; but what comfort is this to us, that Christ was Righteous, if we continue wilful and incorrigible Sinners? Yes, says the Doctor, *Hast thou the sense of guilt upon thee? Christ is compleat Righteousness, the Lord our Righteousness*: This makes Christ suitable to the Wants of a Sinner indeed, that he hath a righteousness for him, which God infinitely prefers before any *home-spun Righteousness of his own*. This is a very comfortable notion for bad men, and such as I would not part with

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p. 53.

with for all the World, did I resolve to live wickedly, and yet intend to get to Heaven: But it is good to be sure in a matter of such importance, and therefore let us consider, in what sense Christ is called *our Righteousness*, and what the Scripture intends by these Phrases of *the Righteousness of God*, or the *Righteousness of Faith*, or the *Righteousness of God by Faith*.

To begin then with that famous place in the Old Testament, *Jer. xxiii. 6.* where Christ is expressly called the *Lord our Righteousness*: *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness*: A very express place to prove, that *Christ is our Righteousness*: That is, as these men expound it, *That the only righteousness, wherewith we must appear before God, is the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us*: But is there no other possible sense to be made of this Phrase? *Righteousness* in Scripture is a word of a very large use, and sometimes signifies no more than *Mercy, Kindness, and Beneficence*, and so the *Lord our Righteousness* is the Lord who does good to us, who is our Saviour and Deliverer: Which is very agreeable to the Reason of this name, *That in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely*: And *Righteousness* signifies that part of Justice which consists in the relieving the injured and oppressed: Thus *David* speaks in *Psal. iv. 1.* *Hear me, when I call, O God of my Righteousness, i.e. Thou, O God, who maintainest my right and my cause, Psal. ix. 4.* Thus in *Isa. liv. 17.* *No Weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise up against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn; this is the heritage of the Servants of the Lord, and their Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.* Which is a parallel expression to the *Lord our Righteousness*, and signifies no more than
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that God will avenge their cause, and deliver them from all their Enemies. The like we have in *Isa. xlv. 24.* Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength; even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed; in the Lord shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory: That is, the Lord is that just and righteous Judge, who will justify good men, *i. e.* deliver them from the violence and injuries of their Enemies: He is their Righteousness and Strength, their righteous, strong, and powerful Deliverer: Which agrees with that Promise in *Verf. 14.* In righteousness thou shalt be established, thou shalt be far from oppression, thou shalt not fear; and from terrour, for it shall not come near thee. And to name but one place more: *Isa. lxi. 10, 11.* I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with Jewels: For as the Earth bringeth forth her bud, as the Garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord will cause Righteousness and Praise to spring forth before all Nations, This sounds very like an Imputed Righteousness: For what can be meant by the Robe of Righteousness, but that pure and spotless Robe of Christ's Righteousness, which covers all our sins and deformities, and makes us appear as beautiful and lovely in the eyes of God, as a Bride does, who adorneth her self with Jewels? This is the effect of our espousal with Christ, that we are covered and adorned with his Righteousness: But if we will attend to the circumstance of the place, and not to the bare sound of words, we need seek no farther for the confutation of this fancy; for the Garment of Salvation, and the Robe of Righteousness, signify

signifie those great deliverances God promised to Israel in the former Verses, which should make them as glorious in the eyes of men, as a splendid Garment would: That Righteousness and Praise which God would cause to spring forth before all Nations: Even as the Earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the Garden causeth those things which are sown in it to spring forth: That is, that God would work such great deliverances for them by such improbable means, and such plenty and abundance, as if they sprang out of the Earth, which should make it appear to all Nations, That they are the seed whom the Lord hath blessed, *verf. 9.* And what hath this to do with the Imputation of Christ's Personal Righteousness to us?

But it is time now to proceed to the New Testament; for indeed we cannot reasonably expect that so great a Gospel-Mystery as this of the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness is, should be so clearly discovered in the Old Testament, where the Gospel was wrapt up in Types and Figures. Now it is very observable that in all the Histories of the Gospel, which give us an account of our Saviours Sermons and Parables, whereby he instructed the People in all necessary Truths, he makes no mention at all of the Imputation of his Righteousness to them, but exacts from them a Righteousness of their own, if they would find mercy with God: Now it is very strange (if the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness for our Justification be the great Gospel-Mystery, and the only way to find favour with God) that our Saviour in all his Sermons should not once mention this; that he should not once warn his Hearers, (as the Gospel-Preachers of our days do) to beware of trusting to their own Righteousness, or of expecting Salvation by their own Works; but that instead of this,

he should so severely enjoyn them the practice of an *Universal Righteousness*, as the only thing that pleases God; and so severely threaten those who continue in any sin, *who break the least of his Commandments*, that they shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but shall be banished from the presence of God into outer darkness. This, I confess, to me (who am apt in the first place to admire our *Saviours Sermons*, *who was the first Author of our Religion*, before the Writings of the Apostles themselves, though inspired men) is a very great prejudice against such notions as are set up for the *Fundamentals of Christianity*, without the belief of which we cannot be saved, when there is not the least foot-steps of them to be seen in the Gospel of our Saviour: For did not our Saviour instruct his Hearers in all things necessary to Salvation? Or have the Evangelists given us an imperfect account of our Saviours Doctrine, and omitted so essential a part of it as the *Imputation of his Righteousness*? Chuse which side you please, and the consequence is very bad: If the first, then Christ was not faithful in the discharge of his Prophetical Office, did not instruct his Hearers in all things necessary to Salvation: If the latter, you overthrow the *Credit* of the Gospel, and by both destroy the Foundation of our Faith.

There were some things indeed which the *Apostles themselves*, by reason of their Jewish prejudices, could not understand, while Christ was with them; and therefore he reserved the more perfect Revelation of those Truths till the *descent of the Holy Ghost*, as he tells his Disciples in *John xvi. 12, 13*. Such was that Doctrine of the Nature of his *spiritual Kingdom*, which should commence with sufferings and death, whereas they expected a *Temporal Messiah*, as the rest of the Jews did; and the receiving the

the *Gentiles into his Church*, which *St. Peter himself* did not understand, till he was instructed by a Vision, is *Acts x.* which is so frequently in the Epistles called, that *Mystery which was hid from Ages*: But now the knowledge of these things was not absolutely necessary to eternal Life, and therefore the perfect revelation of them might be deferred till the most convenient season.

It was necessary indeed, that the Apostles should understand the full extent of their Commission to preach the Gospel to all Nations, Gentiles as well as Jews; but it was not necessary to know this, till they were sent to preach: But we cannot imagine, that our Saviour would neglect to acquaint them with the necessary terms and conditions of Salvation: For *his Sermons* were to be the Rule of *theirs*; and had the Apostles taught any as necessary to Salvation, which our Saviour had not taught, especially any thing that did so plainly contradict the Doctrine of our Saviour, as this *imputed Righteousness* doth, it would very much have weakened their credit with me; for this had been to preach another Gospel than our Saviour did, and we have *St. Paul's* command to reject such Preachers, though they were *Apostles or an Angel from Heaven*, *Gal. i. 8, 9*. I do not speak this to evacuate the Authority of the Apostles, or of their Writings; for they do not make any thing necessary to Salvation, but what Christ did, nor contradict any thing which Christ hath taught: But to awaken those men who take little notice of the Gospel of our Saviour, while they fetch all their *mysterious Divinity* out of some obscure passages of *St. Paul's Epistles*; Though *St. Peter* long since told us, *That there were many things in them hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction,*

destruction, 2 Pet. iii. 16. and yet if they can meet with any obscure Phrases, which will serve their turn, without considering how their sense agrees with the Gospel of our Saviour, they make the Foundation of their Faith, and a *standing Rule* to expound the Doctrine of our Saviour, and to measure the *Orthodoxy* of all Opinions: Whereas on the contrary, this ought to be sufficient reason to reject such Interpretations, that the Gospel of our Saviour is perfectly silent in a matter pretended to be of such absolute necessity to Salvation.

Having premised this, it is time now to consider those Texts of Scripture, whereon they found this notion of the *Imputation of Christs Righteousness*: And it is worth observing, that in all the *New Testament* there is no such expression as the *Righteousness of Christ*, or the *Imputation of Christs Righteousness*: We there only find the *Righteousness of God*, and the *Righteousness of Faith*, and the *Righteousness of God, which is by Faith in Jesus Christ*; which is very strange, did the whole Mytery of the Gospel consist in the *Imputation of Christs Righteousness*, that neither Christ nor his Apostles should once tell us so in express words. But to consider particular places; I shall begin with that Phrase of the *Righteousness of God*, which sometimes signifies his *Justice, Veracity, or Goodness*, Rom. iii. 5. but most commonly in the *New Testament* it signifies *that Righteousness which God approves and commands, and which he will accept for the Justification of a Sinner*; which is contained in the Terms of the Gospel: Rom. i. 17. *For therein is the Righteousness of God revealed from Faith to Faith*: Thus it is called the *Righteousness of God*, Mat. vi. 33. *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, which is the same with the *Righteousness of his Kingdom*: Now the *Kingdom of God* signifies the
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state of the Gospel, and the *Righteousness of God, or of his Kingdom*, that *Righteousness* which the Gospel prescribes, which is contained in the Sermons and Parables of Christ, and consists in a sincere and universal obedience to the Commands of God.

That we may the better understand this, we must observe farther, that *this Righteousness of God* (that which he commands and rewards) is the *Righteousness of Faith, or Righteousness by the Faith of Christ*. Now *Faith, and Faith in Christ* is often used objectively, for the Gospel of Christ, which is the object of our Faith, or contains those matters which are to be believed; and so the *Righteousness of Faith, or by the Faith of Christ, is that Righteousness which the Gospel commands*. Thus in Acts xxiv. 24. *Felix sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the Faith of Christ: That is, concerning Righteousness, Temperance, and the Judgment to come: Vers 25.* which are the principal matters of the Gospel: Thus *obedience to the Faith* is obedience to the *Gospel*, Rom. i. 5. In this sense *Faith and Works* are opposed to each other in S. Pauls Epistles, as hath been abundantly proved by others: The great dispute in the Epistle to the *Romans* is, whether we must be justified by the *Law of Moses*, or by the *Faith of Christ*: that is, whether the observation of all the external Rites and Ceremonies of the Law, and an external conformity of our Actions to the moral Precepts of it will justify a man before God; or that sincere and universal obedience, which the *Gospel of Christ* requires, which transforms our minds into the likeness of God, and makes us new Creatures: And that this *Righteousness of Faith, and this alone*, can recommend us to God, the Apostle proves from the example of *Abraham*, in the fourth Chapter; who was accounted *Righ-*

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teous for the sake of his sincere and stedfast belief of Gods Promises: *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteousness, Vers. 3.* and this, while he was *uncircumcised*; which is a convincing argument against the Jews, that *Circumcision*, and the observance of the Law of *Moses* is not necessary to Justification, because *Abraham*, who was the Father of the Faithful, and is set forth for the Pattern of our Justification, was justified without it.

But that we may understand, what this Justification by Faith is, and how the Apostle argues from *Abrahams* being justified by Faith to prove, that we must now be justified by the Faith of Christ, it is necessary to enquire, what that Faith was, whereby *Abraham* was justified, and what agreement there is between the *Faith of Abraham*, and *Faith in Christ*.

For *Abrahams* Faith was not a *Faith in Christ*, but *Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness*: Christ indeed was the *material object of Abrahams Faith*, that is, he believed that Promise which God made of sending Christ into the World, upon which account our Saviour tells the Jews, *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad, Joh. viii. 5, 6.* But no man could believe in Christ, till he came, that is, could not believe any thing upon his Authority; which is the true notion of believing in him, as you shall hear more presently.

There is not a plainer argument, how apt men are to pervert the Scriptures to reconcile them to their own prejudices and preconceived opinions, than to observe what work they make with *Abrahams Faith*, as if that Faith, which was imputed to him for Righteousness, were a *fiducial reliance* and *recumbency* on Christ for Salvation, upon which the
Righteousness

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Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith was imputed to him: For suppose this *Imputation of Christs Righteousness* were revealed in the most plain and express words in the *New Testament*, yet it is hard to conceive, how *Abraham* should learn this great Mystery from that general and obscure Promise, *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*, which is all that was ever revealed to *Abraham* concerning Christ: This is such a train of thoughts from *in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*, to the *Imputation of Christs Righteousness*, as *Mr. Hobs* himself could never have hit on: For is there no possible way for God to bless the World, but by the imputation of Christs Righteousness? Or is there such a natural and necessary connexion between this blessing and the imputation of Christs righteousness, that we cannot understand the one without the other.

Pray let us consider, how many things *Abraham* must distinctly know (according to these mens own principles) before he could come to the knowledge of the imputation of Christs Righteousness; and he would be a wonderful man indeed, who could learn all this from that general Promise, without some more particular Revelation: As first, he must be well assured, that the *Blessings* here meant are *spiritual Blessings, pardon of sin, and eternal life*, and that Christ should be a *spiritual King and Saviour*, and though this be the least difficulty of all, yet the Promise is not so clear and express in this matter, but that men might mistake it, and so we know, the whole *Jewish Nation* for many Ages did, who had more particular Promises concerning Christ than this was, and yet expected only a *Temporal Prince*, who should sit on the *Throne of David*, and subdue their Enemies under their feet; and this was the great
prejudice,

prejudice, which the *Jews* had against Christ and his Religion, that he so much deceived their expectations by his *mean appearance*.

And secondly, *Abraham* must know too, that Christ was to die for the sins of the World, without which (according to the Doctor) it is impossible God should forgive sin, considering the *naturalness of his vindictive Justice to him*; and this was more than the *Apostles* of Christ themselves understood till after his Resurrection, though Christ had expressly told them of it: And thirdly, He must understand also the perfect Holiness and Innocency of Christs Life, and that he fulfilled all Righteousness, not for himself, but for us: Nay, fourthly, He must understand that great Mystery of the *Incarnation of the Son of God*; for without this it is impossible to understand the virtue and efficacy of his Expiation, and Sacrifice, and Righteousness, since the sufferings of a meer man could never expiate sin, nor his Righteousness serve any more than himself: And fifthly, He must understand also that *intimate Oneness and Conjunction* which is betwixt Christ and his Church, by virtue of which Union Believers may challenge a right to all that Christ did and suffered, which is such a Riddle, as these men explain it, as is not understood to this day: And sixthly, He must understand too the nature of Faith, of *rolling the Soul on Christ* for Salvation, and renouncing all *Righteousness of his own*, and then possibly he might without any more ado understand this great Mystery of the *Imputation of Christs Righteousness*, and he that can believe, that *Abraham* could learn all this from that general Promise, *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*, may believe what he will; and I suppose no man will trouble himself to confute him.

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Now if you would know, what the *Faith of Abraham*, and of all good men in ancient times was, the Apostle to the *Hebrews* gives us a full account of it, in *Heb. xi.* That he discourses there of a *justifying Faith*, that is, such a Faith as renders men approved of God, and which he will account for Righteousness, appears from the whole tenour of this Chapter. In the second verse he tells us, *That by this the Elders obtained a good report, i. e. the Fathers of the Old Testament were approved and rewarded by God for the sake of this Faith*: as he shews particularly that *Abel obtained witness, that he was Righteous, ver. 4.* that *Enoch had the Testimony, that he pleased God, ver. 5.* that *Noah became the Heir of Righteousness which is by Faith, ver. 7, &c.* Now this justifying Faith is the *substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*: *ὑπόστασις*, a firm and confident expectation of those things we hope for, and *ἀεὶ ἔχον* an argument of the being of those things which we do not see; that is, Faith is such a firm and steadfast persuasion of the truth of those things, which are not evident to sense, as makes us confidently hope for them: The object of Faith must be unseen things, as the Being or Providence of God, or a future state, something past or to come; the Creation of the World, or the final dissolution of it, or the accomplishment of any Promises and Predictions; the nature of Faith consists in such a firm assent to these unseen things, as produces some answerable effects in our lives; This is the general notion of Faith, by which the Elders obtained a good report, and the different sorts of Faith result from the different objects and motives of it: The Apostle takes notice of two kinds of Faith in this Chapter and *Faith in Christ* makes a third, which are all the kinds of Faith, the Scripture is acquainted with.

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The first we may call a natural Faith, *i. e.* a belief of the Principles of naturall Religion, which is founded upon Natural Demonstrations or Moral Arguments, *as that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, which was the Faith of *Abel* and *Enoch*, whereby they pleased God: For there being no mention made of the Faith of *Abel* and *Enoch* in the Old Testament, the Apostle proves that they were true Believers, because they had this Testimony, *that they pleased God*; now it is impossible to be sincerely Religious, or to do any acceptable service to God without the belief of his Being, and Providence, and care of good men: These are the first Principles of all Religion, and God required no more of those good men, who had no other particular Revelations of his Will.

Secondly, There is a Faith in God, or a belief of those particular Revelations which God made to the Fathers of the Old Testament: Of this the Apostle gives us many examples in this Chapter: Thus *Noah* believed God, when he fore-warned him of the Universal Deluge, and in obedience to him, provided an Ark for the safety of himself, and his Family, and this was imputed to him for Righteousness: *He became the Heir of the Righteousness, which is by Faith*; Thus *Abraham*, in obedience to the Divine Revelation, left his own Country and Fathers House, and went into a strange Land: Thus *Sarah*, by believing the Promise of God, *received strength to conceive Seed, and was delivered of a Child, when she was past age; because she judged him faithful who had promised.* Thus *Abraham* in obedience to God offered his Son *Isaac*, which was as Heroical an Act of Faith as was ever done by Man: For besides that great and passionate kindness he had for his *only Son*, which made this a very difficult trial, this command of offering his Son seemed

seemed to thwart that former Promise, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called, i. e.* that from *Isaac* should proceed that numerous Off-spring, which God had promised to *Abraham*, which was not very likely, when this very *Isaac* must be offered in Sacrifice, and die without leaving any Child to succeed him; but yet *Abraham* was so well assured both of the faithfulness and power of God, that whatever impossibilities humane reason suggested, he would neither disobey Gods Command, nor distrust his Promise, *but did believe in hope against hope*: The like examples we have of the Faith of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, and *Moses*, &c. who firmly believed all those particular Revelations God made to them, and confidently expected the performance of all his Promises: how unlikely soever they appeared to be: This is that Faith whereby *Abraham* and all the good men in those days were justified, *viz. Such a firm belief of the Being and Providence of God, and all those particular Revelations God made to them, as made them careful in all things to please God, and to obey him.*

From hence we learn thirdly, What Faith in Christ is, which is now imputed to us for Righteousness, as *Abrahams* faith was to him; for to make our Faith in Christ answer to the Faith of *Abraham*, and all good men in former Ages, (without which the Apostles argument from *Abrahams* being justified by Faith to our Justification by Faith, is of no force) our Faith in Christ must signifie such a stedfast belief of all those Revelations, which Christ hath made to the World, as governs our lives and actions: *Abraham* was justified by believing those Revelations, which God made to him, and we are justified by believing those Revelations which Christ hath made of Gods Will to us; for if by the Righteousness of Faith, you understand the Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith,

Faith, and imputed to us, you utterly destroy the Apostles argument for our Justification by Faith: For Abraham and all good men of old were not justified by such a Faith as this; they never heard of the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us: Noah was made Heir of Righteousness, that it was accounted a Righteous Person, because he believed that the World should be drowned, and prepared an Ark at Gods command for himself and his Family: Abrahams Faith was imputed to him for Righteousness, because he left his own Country, and followed God into a strange Land, and believed, that God would give him a Son, and make him the Father of many Nations, when he and his Wife were so old, that according to the course of nature, they could not expect any Child: And when Sarah by Faith had conceived, and brought forth this Son of the Promise, he offers this Son at Gods command without distrusting the performance of the Promise: Now what hath all this to do with an Imputation of Christs Righteousness? How does it follow, that because Abraham was justified by such noble and generous Acts of Faith, therefore we shall be justified by the imputation of Christs Righteousness by *rolling our souls* on Christ for Salvation: These two Faiths are of as different kinds, as can well be imagined, and therefore we cannot reason from one to the other; and St. Paul certainly understood himself better, than to argue at this weak rate.

And therefore to bring this discourse to an head, the difference between the Faith of Abraham and the Faith of Christians is this, that Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteousness, and we believe in Christ, and this is counted unto us for Righteousness; Abraham believed those Revelations of God made to him, either immediately by himself,

himself, or by the Ministry of Angels, we believe all those Revelations God hath made to us by his own Son: for God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, Heb. i. 1. So that the first notion of Faith in Christ is a firm belief of his Divine Authority, which necessarily draws after it a belief of the whole Doctrine of the Gospel: Thus in Job. xx. 31. *The Christian Faith is described by believing that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God: and 1 Job. v. 5. Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God:* That is, that he came from God with full power and authority to declare his Will, and confirm and ratify the new Covenant. So that the difference between the Faith of Abraham and Faith of Christ is, that Abrahams Faith was founded upon the immediate Inspirations of God, or the Revelations of Angels, but a Faith in Christ is founded on the Authority of Christ, which is the first object of the Christian Faith; and the reason and foundation of all other Acts of Faith: Abraham had only some particular Revelations, as the objects of his Faith, but now Christ hath made a perfect Revelation of the whole Will of God, which is the object of our Faith; and thus the Christian Faith excels all other kinds of Faith, as much as the Revelations of the Gospel excel all other Revelations made to Abraham and other good men: But still the end of all Faith is the same to govern our lives, and make us obedient in all things to God, as Abraham was, without which no Faith can justify.

And the same difference there is between the Righteousness of Faith in a general notion, as it is applied to Noah and Abraham, and those Worthies of old, and the righteousness of God by the Faith of Jesus

Jesus Christ: Rom. iii. 22. *and that *righteousness which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by Faith*, Phil. iii. 9. The first signifies that Righteousness which is owing to an hearty belief of the Being and Providence of God, and those particular Revelations, which they received from God; the latter is the effect of a sincere belief and obedience to the Gospel, which is the most perfect Revelation which God ever made of his Will to mankind. This is so plain and easie an account of the rise and use of these Phrases, and of the force of the Apostles reasoning from the *Faith of Abraham* to the *Faith of Christ* (which is unintelligible in any other way) that could men be reconciled to plain sense, it would need no other confirmation but the natural evidence of naked and simple truth. But not to be wanting to a good cause, let us now examine those Texts of Scripture, which are abused by these men to set up the *Personal Righteousness of Christ as the only formal cause of our Justification*, as that alone which can make us righteous before God.

I shall begin and end with that famous place, *Phil. iii. 8. 9.* (for the explication of this Will gives us occasion to consider all the material passages of Scripture, which are applied to this purpose) *yea, doubtless, and I account all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I account them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by Faith*: By my own righteousness these men understand *inherent righteousness*, whatever good St. Paul had done, either while he was a Jew, or after his Conversion to Christianity: This he rejects, and therefore the *righteousness which is through*
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the *faith of Christ* must needs be an *imputed righteousness*, the *personal righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith, and imputed to us*. This is fairly offered, but what proof have they for it? That, I confess, I cannot learn, only it is taken for granted, that my *righteousness* signifies *inherent righteousness*, and the *righteousness of Faith imputed righteousness*, and it is a sufficient answer to this, to say, they need not signify so. My own *righteousness* can signify no more than that in which he placed his Righteousness, whatever it was; and what necessity is there to understand this of *inherent Holiness*? An *external righteousness* serves most mens turn very well, and this is the *Righteousness* by which the *Pharisees* (and amongst the rest St. Paul, while he was a *Pharisee*) expected to be justified; for what his Righteousness was he tells us in *Ver. 6, 7.* *Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the Law a Pharisee*, (who were mighty strict and punctual in observing all external Ceremonies) and he express his zeal for the Law of Moses, by *persecuting the Christian Church*; and *touching the Righteousness which is in the Law, he was blameless*: Which last Phrase, *touching the Righteousness of the Law blameless*, signifies only an *external blamelessness of Conversation*, as Mr. Calvin himself acknowledges: For this was the Pharisees notion even of the *moral Law*, that the obligation of it did reach no farther than the outward man, and Trypho the Jew: in Justin Martyr quarrels with the Gospel of our Saviour for this very reason, that it requires the government of our thoughts and passions, which, he says, is impossible for a man to do: And thus we must understand this *blameless* here, unless we will say, that St. Paul while he was a Pharisee, did perfectly observe the *Moral Law*, was blameless before

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God as well as before men, which I suppose those who talk so much of the impossibility of keeping Gods Laws will be loth to own. So that *my own righteousness, which is of the Law*, is so far from signifying an *inherent righteousness*, an inward and vital principle of Holiness, that it signifies only an *external righteousness*, which consisted in some *external Rites as Circumcision and Sacrifices, &c.* or *external priviledges*, as being *of the Seed of Abraham*, and *stock of Israel*, or an *external civility and blamelesness of Conversation*, and this Righteousness he had reason to reject, because God will reject it.

This was all the Righteousness he had, while he was a Pharisee, and *this he accounts dung and loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord; i. e.* for the sake of the Gospel (which is the knowledge of Christ, as you have heard above) which contains a more excellent and perfect Righteousness, than the Law did: And that *he might win Christ, i. e.* that he might attain to an Evangelical Righteousness, such as Christ was the Preacher, and Example of: and *that he might be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which is of the Law*: that at the last day he might appear to be a sound and sincere Christian, whose Righteousness does not consist only in some external observances, or an external Conformity to Gods Law, *but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by Faith: i. e.* that inward and vital principle of Holiness, that new Nature which the Gospel of Christ requires of us, and which this Christian Faith will work in us; which is a Righteousness of Gods own chusing, which he commands, and which he will reward.

To confirm all this we must observe a double *Antithesis* in the words, *the righteousness of the Law* is opposed

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opposed to the *righteousness which is by the Faith of Christ*, and *my own righteousness* opposed to the *righteousness of God*; now the surest way to understand the meaning of this is to consider, how these Phrases are used in Scripture.

The *righteousness of the Law* (as you have already heard) is an *external righteousness*, which consists in Washings, and Purifications, and Sacrifices, or an external Conformity to the moral Law: the *righteousness which is by the Faith of Christ* is an *internal Righteousness*, which consists in the renovation of our Minds and Spirits, in the government of our Thoughts and Passions, which is therefore called, *being born again*, and becoming *new Creatures*, and *rising again with Christ*, and *putting off the old man*, and being *renewed in the spirit of our minds*, and *putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*. The meaning of all which Phrases is that that Righteousness which God requires of us under the Gospel must be an inward principle of love and obedience, which changes our Natures, and transforms us into the Image of God, as much as if we were born again, and made new Creatures.

Hence St. Paul tells us, that the reason why God sent Christ into the World in our nature, to die as a Sacrifice for our sins, and to confirm and seal the new Covenant with his Blood was, *that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, Rom. viii. 3, 4. *δικαιοσύνην, the righteousness of the Law*, that is, τὸ τέλει, ὁμοίως τὸ κατὰ νόμον, as St. Chrysostom expounds it, that which the Law was designed to work in them, but was found too weak to effect it by reason of the greater power and prevalency of sin, i. e. the inward holiness and purity of mind, which was re-

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presented and signified by those external Ceremonies of Circumcision, Washing, Purifications, and Sacrifices; this was the design of the Gospel to work in us that internal holiness and purity, which is the perfection and accomplishment of the *Typical and Figurative* righteousness of the Law.

I know very well, that this place is expounded of the *imputation* of Christs Righteousness, that we fulfil the Righteousness of the Law, not *personally*, but *imputatively*: But what reason can there be assigned for this, besides that they will expound Scripture so, which no man can help: For is there any mention here of the Righteousness of Christ? That he fulfilled all Righteousness for us, and that his Righteousness is imputed to us, and so we fulfil the Righteousness of the Law in him? And we ought to consider, how consistent such an interpretation is with the Apostles design, which is to shew the great virtue and efficacy of the Gospel in delivering us from the power of sin, which the Law could not effect: *The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (that divine and spiritual Law which Christ hath given us, which governs our minds and spirits, and is the principle of a new spiritual life) *makes us free from the Law of sin and death* (from the power and dominion of sin, which is called a Law, and the Law in our members warring against the Law of our minds, Rom. vii. 21, 23.) *for what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, (what the Law could not do, i. e. govern our minds and passions, deliver us from the Law of sin and death, (from the power and dominion of our lusts) this God effected by sending Christ into the World to publish the Gospel to us, and to confirm all those great Promises and Threatnings contained in it with his own Blood, That the righteousness of the Law might be*
fulfilled

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fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: How can *Imputation* come in here? What pretty fence would this make of the Apostles Argument? The Law was too weak to make men thoroughly good, to conquer their love to sin, and to reform their hearts and lives; and therefore God sent his Son into the World; What for? To give them better Laws, and more excellent Promises, and more powerful Assurances to do good? No, by no means, but to fulfil all Righteousness for them, that they may fulfil the Righteousness of the Law, not by doing any thing themselves, but by having all done for them, by having this perfect Righteousness of Christ imputed to them: There was no reason surely to abrogate the *Law of Moses* for this end; it might have continued in full force still, and have been as available to Salvation as the Gospel is, *with the supplemental righteousness of Christ*: But the *weakness of the Law*, which the Apostle complains of, was, not the want of an *imputed righteousness* (which might have been had as well under the Law, as under the Gospel, if God had pleased) but a want of strength and power to subdue the sinful appetites of men, *it was weak through the flesh*, by reason of the greater prevalency of sensual lusts, which the Law could not conquer; and therefore the Gospel of our Saviour must supply this defect, not by an *imputed righteousness*, but by an addition of greater power to enable men to do that which is good, to fulfil the external righteousness of the Law by a sincere and spiritual obedience.

Much to the same purpose the Apostle discourses in *Rom. vii. 4, 5, 6. Wherefore my Brethren, you also are become dead to the Law by the Body of Christ* (who put an end to that imperfect dispensation by his
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death) that you should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God: For when we were in the flesh (under that carnal and fleshly dispensation of the Law of Moses) the motions of sin, which were by the Law (which grew more boisterous and unruly by the prohibitions of the Law, ver. 8.) did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, i. e. did betray us to those wicked actions, which end in death; but now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead in which we were held, that we should serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the Letter. So that the reason why the Law of Moses was abrogated, was, because it could not make men good; It nursed them up in a ritual and external Religion, taught them to serve God in the Letter, by Circumcision and Sacrifices, or any external conformity to the Letter of the Law: But the Gospel of Christ alone teacheth us to worship God with the Spirit, to offer a reasonable Sacrifice to him, to fulfil the *δικαιοσύνη νόμου*, all that internal Righteousness, of which those legal Ceremonies were the Signs and Sacraments.

This is the plain meaning of the Apostle, which can never be reconciled with an imputed Righteousness, which would make his Argument foolish and absurd: and therefore in other places he tells us, what little reason we have to be so zealous for the Law of Moses, since we have the perfection of it in the Gospel: What need is there of the Circumcision of the flesh, which the Law required? When in the Gospel we have that Circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the Circumcision of Christ; which is the *δικαιοσύνη*, the perfection of that fleshly Circumcision. What need is there of legal washings

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washings and purifications; When they are all eminently fulfilled in the washing of Regeneration, in the Gospel Baptism? Thus we are compleat in Christ, who hath perfectly instructed us in the Will of God, and instituted such a Religion as is the perfection of all external Ceremonies, Col. ii. 10, 11, 12. We must now offer a nobler Sacrifice than the Law of Moses commanded, not the Sacrifices of dead Beasts, but of a living and active soul, Rom. xii. 1.

Hence Christ is called *τέλος νόμου*, the end of the Law, i. e. the perfection and accomplishment of the Law (as *τέλος* signifies) for righteousness to them that believe; Rom. x. 4. That is, the Gospel of Christ requires that Righteousness of us, which the Law did only typify and represent, that holiness and purity of mind, which is the perfection of all legal Righteousness: For that Christ should be made the end of the Law for righteousness by the imputation of his Righteousness to us, hath no foundation in the Text. The Apostle explains what he means by this in the following Verses, where he gives a description of the righteousness of the Law, and the righteousness of Faith: The righteousness of the Law is an external Conformity to the Letter of the Law, *The man that doth them shall live in them*, i. e. shall enjoy all those temporal blessings of the Land of Canaan, which were promised to the observance of the Law: But the Righteousness of Faith is a firm and stedfast belief of the Divine Authority of Christ, that he is the Lord; and more particularly a belief of his Resurrection from the dead, as the last and great confirmation which God gave to the Divinity of Christs Person and Doctrine: This is that Faith that overcomes the World, and purifies the heart, and transforms us into the likeness of God which is the

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perfection of all the ritual Righteousness of the Law.

Upon this account Christ is said to be made unto us righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 20. *But of him are you in Christ, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness and Sanctification, and Redemption: i. e.* he is the Author of all this to us; He is our *Wisdom*, as he is our great Prophet and Teacher, who instructs us in true Wisdom. *Our Righteousness*, as we are justified by Faith in him, by a sincere belief of his Gospel, which is the only Righteousness acceptable to God; *Our Sanctification*, because the *Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, makes us free from the Law of sin and death*: That divine and spiritual *Law of Faith* conquers the power and dominion of sin, which the *Law of Moses* could not do: and *our Redemption*, as by these means he hath delivered us from the bondage and pedagogy of the Jewish Law, from the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, and the tyranny of wicked Spirits, and from the wrath of God, which is the just merit and desert of sin.

Thus you see how the Apostle opposes the *righteousness of the Law* to the *righteousness of Faith*, not as an *inherent* and *personal* to an *imputed* Righteousness, but as an *external* and *ritual* to an *inherent, real, and substantial* Righteousness, this is the *πρωτον* *ἰερωδω*, the foundation of all other mistakes in this matter, that by the *righteousness of the Law*, and the *righteousness of Works*, most men understand an internal holiness, the Conformity of our hearts and lives to all moral Precepts and Rules of a good life, and then conclude, that if this Righteousness will not please God, nothing but an *imputed Righteousness* can, though I should rather have concluded, that nothing can; but the truth is, the righteousness of the Law and of Works in the New Testament,

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Testament, signifies only an *external* Righteousness, which cannot please God, and that internal holiness, which they call the righteousness of the Law, is that very righteousness of Faith, which the Gospel commands, and which God approves and rewards; and this *imputed Righteousness* is no where to be found, that I know of, but in their own fancies.

Let us now consider in what sense the Apostle opposes his own Righteousness to the Righteousness of God: *Not having mine own Righteousness, but the Righteousness which is of God by Faith*; and there is no great difficulty in this, for the Apostle himself tells us, that by his *own Righteousness*, he means the *Righteousness of the Law*, and by the *Righteousness of God, the Righteousness of Faith*: *And be found in him, not having mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith*: and what that is, you have already heard: Thus in *Rom. x. 3.* *For they being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God*: Where their *own righteousness*, which the Jews so obstinately adhered to, was the *righteousness of the Law*, and the *righteousness of God*, which they were ignorant of, and would not submit to, was the *righteousness of Faith*: For this was the great Controversie between the Jews and Apostles (which is the subject of this Epistle) whether men were to be justified by the *Law of Moses*, or by the *Gospel of Christ*, by a legal or Evangelical Righteousness, as appears from *Rom. ix. 30.* *Israel which followed after righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of righteousness; Wherefore? Because they sought it not by Faith, but as it were by the works of the Law*: That is, the Israelites, who pursued

pursued so earnestly after Righteousness, are excluded from Righteousness, or forgiveness of sins, and are under a Curse, because they did not look for Righteousness and Justification in the way which God prescribed, which is *by Faith in Christ*, or *by Christianity*, but by the observance of the *Law of Moses*.

Now the most obvious reason, why this *righteousness of the Law* is called their *own righteousness*, and the *righteousness of Faith Gods righteousness*, is, because this *legal righteousness* was a way of Justification, not of Gods appointment, but their own chusing; God never designed that any man should be justified to eternal life by observing the *Law of Moses*, but yet they confidently expected Justification by that Law, and for that reason rejected the Gospel of Christ: But the *righteousness of Faith* is a righteousness of Gods chusing; this he approves and accepts of for the Justification of a Sinner; *by this the Elders obtained a good report*, by this *Enoch*, and *Noah*, and *Abraham* were justified before God: And therefore this may well be called the *righteousness of God*, because this he appointed, and this he will own and reward. Thus, you see, that there is no foundation in Scripture for all this talk of a *Personal righteousness of Christ*, *inherent in him*, and *imputed to us*: But the righteousness of which the Scripture speaks, is not the righteousness of Christs Person, but of his Gospel, that is, that way of Righteousness and Justification, which Christ hath revealed in his Gospel.

I have now considered all the *Personal Graces* of Christ, (as these men call them) and upon inquiry it appears, that what they appropriate to his Person, belongs to his Gospel, and is intended to describe the

the Perfection and Excellency of his Religion, as being the most perfect Revelation of the Will of God, the most powerful Method of his Wisdom for the reforming the World, the only way to Life and Immortality, and which prescribes the only Righteousness, which is acceptable to God.

There is indeed one Metaphorical expression still behind, which exercises mens wits and fancies, *viz. the riches of Christ*, Eph. iii. 8. Which must needs be a *Personal Grace* too, or *Personal Estate*, or what you will call it: *Unto me, who am the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*: Where by the *unsearchable riches* of Christ is meant the Gospel, which *St. Paul* preached to the Gentiles, as being ordained by Christ to be the Apostle of the Gentiles: And he calls it, *unsearchable riches*, because the Grace of the Gospel is not a narrow and stinted thing, is not confined to a particular Nation, as the Law was, but is offered to all Mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, Bond or Free: the Gospel of Christ contains those glorious discoveries of Gods goodness to all Mankind, as may well be called the riches of his Grace, Eph. i. 7. for riches signifie only an abundance.

And is it not a great violation of the Majesty of Scripture, to sport and toy with words and Metaphors, as some men do with this riches of Christs. *That he is rich because he hath a rich Dowry, having all ^{Books} the World given to him as his proper Inheritance; that he ^{Riches of} keeps open House, and maintains all the Creation at his ^{Christ.} own charge, and that he hath done this above six thousand years, which would have broke him long since, had he not been very rich; and that he doth not only enrich all the Saints, but all of the Saints; their Understandings ^{with}*

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with glorious Light, their Consciences with quickness, pureness, &c. and that after all this vast expence he is never the poorer, that he is not a penny the poorer for all that he hath laid out for the relief of those that have their dependance on him; And that Jesus Christ is generally rich, rich in Houses and Lands, (though he had not a place whereon to lay his head) in Gold, in Silver, in Cattle, in all Temporals, as well as Spirituals; and that he hath a great Tribute and Rent due to him, that he is the great Landlord and Owner of all that Angels and Men possess, above and below; These are fine things to perswade young Women to accept of Christ for their Husband, since they can never expect so rich and advantageous a Match any where else: But I have something else to do, than to pursue such follies and extravagancies, as are so palpable, that there is no need to expose them.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Concerning the nature of our Union to Christ, whereby we are intitled to all his Fulness, Righteousness, &c.

HAVING shewed you what kind of Person these men make of Christ, how they have fitted him to all the wants and necessities of a Sinner, let us now consider wherein this Union they talk of between the Person of Christ, and the Persons of Believers does consist.

Now the Union betwixt Christ and Christians is represented in Scripture by various Metaphors, which I have already explained at large: But these men instead of explaining these Metaphors, turn all Religion into an Allegory: As for example, Christ is called an *Husband*, and the Church his *Spouse*; and now all the invitations of the Gospel are Christs *wooing* and *making love* to his Spouse, and what other men call *believing the Gospel of Christ*, whereby we devote our selves to his Service, these men call that *consent and contract, which make up the Marriage between Christ and Believers*: Christ takes us for his Spouse, and we take Christ for our *Husband*, and that with all the Solemnities of Marriage (except the Ring, which is left out as an Antichristian Ceremony) Christ saying thus, *This is that we will consent unto, that I will be for thee, and thou shalt be for me, and not for another. Christ gives himself to the Soul with all his excellencies, righteousness, preciousness, graces,*

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and

The Conjugal Relation

and eminencies, to be its Saviour, Head, and Husband, to dwell with it in this holy relation, and the Soul likes Christ for his excellencies, graces, suitableness, far above all other Beloveds whatever, and accepts of Christ by the Will for its Husband, Lord, and Saviour; and thus the Marriage is compleated, and this is the day of Christs Espousals, of the gladness of his heart; and now follow all mutual Conjugal Affections, which on Christs part consist in delight, valuation, pity, or compassion, and bounty: on the Saints part in delight, valuation, chastity, duty; which is much like Mr. Hobbs his Description of his Artificial Man the Commonwealth: But I have already corrected this fooling with Scripture-Metaphors and Phrases, and my business at present is to consider wherein they place the nature of this Union betwixt Christ and Believers; namely in this, that it is such an Union as makes all Christ ours, and us Christs: When a man is united to Christ, he hath a Propriety and Interest in all his Personal Graces and Eminencies: He is lovely with Christs loveliness, righteous with Christs righteousness; the wisdom, and power, and fulness of Christ are his; whatever Christ hath done or suffered, is all his, as much as if he had done and suffered the same things himself.

Now this Union of Persons betwixt Christ and Believers, which gives them such a propriety in all the Personal Graces of Christ, is commonly explained by a Conjugal Relation and Legal Union, that mutual Relation which is betwixt Husband and Wife, and that Union which is betwixt Surety and Debtor.

First they explain this Union by a Conjugal Relation, Christ is a Spiritual Husband, and every Believer is his Spouse; now this Marriage Union consists in

betwixt Christ and Believers.

a mutual resignation, or making over their Persons one to another; Christ gives himself to the Soul with all his Excellencies, Righteousness, Graces and Eminencies to be its Saviour, Head, and Husband, for ever to dwell with it in this holy Relation: Now as you know, the Wife by virtue of her Marriage-Union is entitled to her Husbands Estate, thus are Saints by their Marriage to Christ entitled to all his Personal fulness, beauty, righteousness: And as a Wife under covert is not liable to an Arrest or Action at Law, but all must fall upon her Husband, so you being married to Christ, this supersedes the process of the Law against you; if it be not fully satisfied, it must seek its reparation at the hand of your spiritual Husband Christ himself; as for any condemnatory charge, it cannot fall upon you. This is the sum of all the Reason they alledge to prove that we have a right and title to whatever Christ hath done or suffered, by virtue of our marriage to him; because a Wife hath an Interest in her Husbands Estate, and is secured from all Arrests at Law; and if these be not weighty Reasons, let any man that can give better.

To consider this briefly, they say, That a Wife hath an Interest in her Husbands Estate, and is secured from all Arrests at Law; and therefore, Christ being our Husband, all his Personal Excellencies, Righteousness, &c. are ours; and the Law cannot take hold of us, but our Husband must be responsible for our faults: A very hard Law truly, and I think a Husband is in a very ill case when he has a bad Wife: Now suppose this were the case in some earthly Marriages, it were worth while to consider whether this be essential to Marriage, or whether it depends upon private Contracts, or Publick Laws and Customs, which are arbitrary and mutable; for if this be not essential to Marriage, how

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Communi-
on, p. 60.

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comb on
Rom. 8.
p. 85.

how can we be secure that this is the Law of our *spiritual Marriage*, unless our *spiritual Husband* had told us so: Especially considering, that this *spiritual Marriage* betwixt Christ and his Church is of a different nature from *earthly Marriages*; and if they differ in any thing, we cannot be sure, but that they differ in this, unless we have some better proof of it, than this Analogy and resemblance between *earthly and spiritual Marriages*; nay, and better proof too, than Dr. Owen gives us of it: *Cant. i. 15. Behold thou art fair, my Companion, behold thou art fair; thou hast Doves Eyes: and Cant. iii. 14. O my Dove, that art in the clefts of the Rocks, and in the secret places of the Stairs, let me hear thy voice, let me see thy countenance; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely; or Cant. iv. 8. Come with me from Lebanon, my Spouse; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the Lions Dens, and the Mountain of the Leopards; or Isa. iv. 2. The Branch of the Lord is beautiful and glorious, and the Fruit of the Earth is excellent and comely to them that are escaped of Israel: Which are all the proofs he can find (for if he had any better he did ill to conceal them) for Christs giving himself to the Soul with all his Excellencies, Righteousness, Preciousness, Graces, Eminencies, &c. Now how any such consequence as this can be drawn either from Doves Eyes, or from the Clefts of the Rocks, or from Lebanon, or from the top of Amana, Shenir, or Hermon, or from the Lions Dens, or Mountain of Leopards, is past my understanding to make out. But let the Laws of Kingdoms and Nations be as they will, there can be no Law made to alter the nature of things; there never was any Law, that the Personal Vertues and Qualities and Perfections of the Husband should be settled upon his Wife for a Joyn-
ture:*

ture: Though the Husband be never so fair and comely, wife and virtuous, his Wife may be ugly and deformed, a Fool or a Harlot; for *Personal and Inherent* perfections cannot pass out of the *Person*, nor be made over to any other, as Money and Lands are: and therefore whatever other Privileges we may enjoy by our Marriage to Christ, his *Personal Excellencies* cannot be ours, though his *Person* were.

And we know, that in Marriage, there are private Contracts too, and the Wives Interest in her Husbands Estate may be limited to such conditions as they agree upon: And the truth is, Christ hath not made such an absolute Settlement of himself upon us, as these men dream he has; for the Gospel contains the Articles of this Marriage (to speak in these mens Dialect) and there we must learn to what purposes, and upon what conditions, Christ gives himself to us, and must challenge no more from Christ, by virtue of our Marriage to him, than what the Gospel (the Marriage-Covenant) promises, and we find nothing there of his *Personal Righteousness* to be made ours. As for what they tell us, That a *Woman under covert is not liable to an Arrest or Action at the Law, but all must fall upon her Husband*; it is true as to matter of Debt, but does not extend to Crimes: If a Woman kill her Child, or rob upon the High-way, I doubt her being under covert will not secure her from the Gallows: Was it never known that a Woman was hang'd either with or without her Husband? The Keeper of Newgate could have better informed them in this nice point of Divinity: And how secure soever any man may fancy himself of his Marriage to Christ, I would not advise him to venture too much upon it;
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for if he be guilty of any gross wilful sin, there is some danger that the Law or Gospel may condemn him, unless he timely repent, and reform his Vices.

So that this *Conjugal Relation* to Christ does not make him so absolutely ours, as these men pretend, who by their loose Discourses and inconsequent Reasonings, seem neither to understand *Divine* nor *Humane Laws*: When the Scripture calls Christ our *Husband*, and the *Church* his *Spouse*, it means no more, but that Christ is our Head and Governour, who rules his Church with as great kindness, tenderness, and compassion as a Husband exerciseth towards his Wife; and that we are to pay the same love, duty, and obedience to Christ, that Wives owe to their Husbands; and here we must have done with the Metaphor, unless we will turn Religion into a Romance.

Secondly, Christ and Believers are *legally* united: now there are two different ways of explaining this, some insist most upon the notion of a *Surety*, others of a *Mediator*, which come much to one, but yet have some peculiar absurdities belonging to each of them: As for the notion of a *Surety*, which is the first way, Dr. *Jacomb* gives us this account of it, *That Christ, as the Saints* ἐξουσίᾳ , or *Surety*, struck hands with God, (as the word imports) put himself into their stead, took their Debt upon himself, and bound himself upon their account to make satisfaction to God: Now in Law the Debtor and the Surety are but one Person, the Law looks upon them as one, and makes no difference between them, and therefore both are equally liable to the Debt, and if the one pay it, it is as much in the eye of the Law, as if the other had paid it: Thus it is with Christ and us, he is our Surety, for he took our Debt

Ibidem.

Debt upon himself, engaged to pay whatever we owed, for us; upon this, Christ and we are but one Person before God, and accordingly he deals with us; for he makes over our sins to Christ, and also Christ's righteousness and satisfaction to us, he now in a legal notion looking upon both but as one Person.

This is the account of Christ's being our *Surety*; now I have two things to say to this: First, I wonder why this should be called the *Union of Saints to Christ*? Or why Christ should be called *only* the *Saints Surety*? The Apostle tells us, that he is ἐξουσίᾳ διαθῆκῆς , *Heb. vii. 22.* *The Surety of a Testament or Covenant*: Now as I take it, there is a vast difference between *Christ's being the Saints Surety*, and the *Surety of the Covenant*, for the *Covenant* respects both *Saints* and *Sinners*, and therefore is antecedent to our *Union to Christ as Saints*: And to be a *Surety of the Covenant* signifies no more than to confirm and ratify this *Covenant*, and to undertake for the performance of it, that all the Promises of the *Covenant* shall be made good upon such terms and conditions, as are annexed to them; but to be a *Surety for Saints* (as the Doctor explains it) is to strike hands with God, (as men do at making a bargain) and to put himself into their stead, to do and to suffer, what they ought to have done and suffered, upon which God makes over our sins to Christ, and Christ's righteousness and satisfaction to us; Now this notion is so different from the notion of a *Surety of a Covenant*, that methinks it wants some better proof than barely Christ's being called a *Surety*, or the *Surety of a Covenant*.

But secondly, Suppose Christ had been called the *Saints Surety*, I doubt they are as much out in the *Law of Suretiship*, as they were before in the *Laws of Marriage*;

Christ the Saints Surety.

Marriage; though the Doctor tells us, *That this doth so exactly fall in with the common notion and case of Suretiship among men, that he needs not any further insist on the illustration of it.* I confess I am of another mind, and think it wants a great deal more illustration than he hath bestowed on it. For first, the prime end and design of Suretiship among men, is not that the Surety shall without more ado pay the Debt, but to give security to the Creditor that the Debt shall be paid: that is, the *Surety* doth not make himself the *immediate* Debtor; but the Debtor is Debtor still, and bound to pay the Debt, and the Surety is liable only in case of his default. It is the strangest definition of Suretiship that was ever heard of, that it is *an absolute taking the debt upon our selves,* and an actual discharge of the Debtor. For I dare say, never any man was Surety upon these Terms; that is, no man in his wits ever became Surety for another, when he knew before-hand, that if he did he must pay the Debt; but men become Sureties upon some reasonable assurance, that they shall suffer no injury by it; and therefore when Christ died for us, he did not die as our *Surety*, but as our *Sacrifice*, substituted in our room, which is the Scripture-notion of it, and differs as much from the notion of a Surety, as paying the Debt doth from being bound with another that it shall be paid.

Secondly, Suppose that *Christ died for us as our Surety*, (though I think, however the Doctor triumphs in this, the *Socinians* have no reason to be afraid of such Adversaries, who have no better way to defend the Satisfaction of Christ than by the notion of Suretiship) yet did *Christ fulfil all righteousness for us as our Surety too*? Doth this also *so exactly answer the case of Suretiship among men, that there is*

Christ the Saints Surety.

no need to insist upon the illustration of it? The Doctor indeed was so wise, that he would not assert this in the premises, but very craftily thrusts it into the Conclusion, that *therefore God makes over our sins to Christ, and Christ's righteousness and satisfaction to us*: But was there ever such a Suretiship heard of among men, that one man should discharge all the Offices of Piety and Vertue, Justice and Temperance, instead of another? If such a thing had ever been, such a man ought not to have been called a *Surety*, but a *Proxy*; but humane Laws, as many defects as there are in them, never admitted of such Proxies, for these are personal Duties, which no other can perform for us; and you may as well say, that a man may live, and be a man by Proxy, as discharge those Duties which are necessarily entailed on his *Person* by a *Proxy*: Proxies are allowable only in such cases, where the consideration of the Person that doth it, is not essential to the Action; where the material Inquiry is, whether the thing be done, not who doth it; but where the consideration of the Person that doth it, is essential to the Action, there is no place for a Surety or Proxy (call him what you will) because in this case it doth not satisfy the Law, that the thing is done, unless it be done by such a Person: Thus it is in all the Duties of Piety and Religion, every individual Person is bound to do them; and though there were never so many righteous men in the World, their Righteousness can avail none but themselves; nay, the *Righteousness of God*, which is more than the Righteousness of all the men in the World, cannot make an unrighteous man righteous; no *external Relation* can make the Righteousness of another our Righteousness, because it is a Personal Righteousness that is required

of us, and the Righteousness of another can never be our *Personal Righteousness*, unless we become One Person with him: And therefore though the Doctor be so careful to tell us, that *our Union to Christ is an Union of Persons, but no Personal Union, that we are not transformed into the Essence and being of Christ, so as to be Christed with Christ*; yet indeed there is no other way to make the *Personal Righteousness of Christ* our *Personal Righteousness* (which is the Righteousness required of us) but by a *Personal Union* to Christ, *by being Christed with Christ*, as some speak, how boldly soever, yet very agreeably to these Principles.

But thirdly, Let us consider what Truth there is in what he asserts, *That in the Law the Debtor and the Surety are but one Person, the Law looks upon them but as one, and therefore both are equally liable to the Debt, and if the one pay it, it is as much in the Eye of the Law as if the other had paid it*, which he makes the Foundation of the *Imputation of Christ's Righteousness and Satisfaction to us*, because *he being our Surety, we are but one Person with him*; that is, *legally, not personally one Person*, as he warily distinguishes.

Now there needs no great skill in the Law to discover the weakness and Sophistry of this Discourse: For no considering man can think it indifferent who pays the Debt, the Surety or the Debtor, or that they are both equally obliged to it; the Debtor is the immediate Debtor still, and the Surety only is obliged, in case the other refuse, or be unable to pay the Debt, and that is, some little difference: But then, though the Creditor be satisfied, whether the Debt be paid by the Debtor or his Surety, and the Law will allow him no farther Action against either of them, yet the Law doth not account it indifferent

indifferent which of them pay it; for though it permit the payment to be exacted from the Surety, in case the Debtor refuse; yet it will look back again, and allow the Surety an Action against the Debtor, for such a Refusal; which is an Argument that the Law doth not judge them *one Person*, nor think it indifferent which of them pays the Debt.

Thus it is in other Cases, if a man be Surety for the appearance of another, which is called giving Bail, and is sometimes admitted in Criminal Causes; the Law doth not judge them *one Person*; for if the Prisoner escape, the Bail or Surety shall be punished according to the nature of the Fact, and yet the Prisoner is not quitted by this means, but liable either to the Arrest of the Surety, or in Criminal Causes to the Sentence of the Law, if ever he be retaken.

Thus in Sureties for good Behaviour (which sounds as if it were nearest of kin to the imputation of Christ's Righteousness, as our Surety) though the Surety be never so innocent and vertuous a Person himself, this will not serve him for whom he is Surety; but if he prove a Villain, they shall be both punished: So that humane Laws are strangers to this mystery of imputing the righteousness of a Surety to a bad man. Suretiship doth not so unite their Persons, that whatever one doth is always and to all purposes imputed to the other; and if this will not hold good among men, it is a very sorry foundation for this bargain and exchange betwixt Christ and Believers, *That he should take their sins upon himself, and impute his Righteousness to them*.

Let us now try, whether the notion of a *Mediator* can do any better service than the notion of a *Surety*; which is the *second way* of explaining this *legal*

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6. p. 182.

Union betwixt Christ and Believers, which entitles them to all that Christ hath done or suffered: And this means we may learn from Dr. Owen, who gives us this account of it: *That Christ fulfilled all Righteousness, as he was Mediator, and that whatever he did as Mediator, he did it for them whose Mediator he was, or in whose stead and for whose good he executed the Office of a Mediator before God; and hence it is, that his compleat and perfect Obedience to the Law, is reckoned to us.* This is well said, if it were as well proved, and because this is a matter of great consequence, I shall first examine those reasons the Doctor alledges, to prove, *That Christ fulfilled all Righteousness, as he was Mediator, in their stead whose Mediator he was:* Secondly, to avoid calumnies and objections, I shall shew you briefly *what influence the Righteousness of Christ's Life, and the Sacrifice of his Death have upon our acceptance with God.*

As for the first, we have some reason to require good proof of this, since the notion of a Mediator includes no such thing: A Mediator is one who interposes between two differing Parties, to accommodate the difference: But it was never heard of yet, that it was the Office of a Mediator to perform the terms and conditions himself. Moses was the Mediator of the first Covenant, Gal. iii. 9. and his Office was to receive the Law from God, and to deliver it to the people, and to command them to observe those Rites, and Sacrifices, and Expiations, which God had ordained; but it was not to fulfil the Righteousness of the Law for the whole Congregation: Thus Christ is now the Mediator of a better covenant, and his Office required that he should preach the Gospel, which contains the terms of Peace and Reconciliation between God and men, and since God would

as Mediator considered.

would not enter into Covenant with sinners without the intervention of a Sacrifice, he dies too as a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the sins of the World, and confirms and seals this New Covenant with his own Blood; and being risen again from the dead, he executes this Office of Mediator with power and glory; that is, he intercedes for us, according to the terms and conditions of this New Covenant, to obtain the pardon of our sins, and the assistance of the Divine Grace to do the Will of God; and all those other blessings, which are promised: But the Office of Mediator doth not oblige him to fulfil the Righteousness of the Covenant for us; this I am sure doth not so exactly fall in with the case and notion of Mediatorship among men.

But before we examine their proofs, it is necessary to consider, what it is they would prove, that is, *what that Righteousness is, which they say, Christ as our Mediator fulfilled for us.* And Dr. Owen is very exact and curious in stating this matter, and distinguishes between the several sorts of Righteousness in Christ, that we may know what belongs to us, and what is peculiar to himself.

First, He tells us of an habitual Righteousness of Christ as Mediator in his humane Nature, which was the absolute, compleat, exact conformity of the Soul of Christ to the mind, Will, or Law of God, or his perfect, habitual, inherent Righteousness: Now he tells us, that this Righteousness was the necessary effect of the Grace of Union (that is, of the Union of the Divine and Humane Nature in Christ) and that the relation which this Righteousness of Christ hath to the Grace we receive from him, is this, that thereby he was enabled, fit to do all that he had to do for us; for without this he could not have actually fulfilled that Righteousness which was required

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Son, p. 178.

required at his hand, nor have been a compleat and perfect Sacrifice, &c. So that this habitual, inherent Righteousness, of Christ is not imputed to us, but was his own proper righteousness.

But secondly, There is the actual obedience of Christ, which was his willing, chearful, obediential performance of every thing, duty, and command, that God by vertue of any Law, whereto we were subject and obnoxious, did require, and moreover to the peculiar Law of the Mediator: Let us then first consider the peculiar Law of the Mediator: which he tells us respected himself meerly (so that we have nothing to do with this neither) and contains all those acts and duties of his, which were not for our imitation, he instances in his obedience which he shewed in dying (though St. John the Divine, (and I think the greater of the two) tells us, that we must imitate him in this also, must lay down our lives for the Brethren, as Christ died for us, Job. i. 3, 16. and St. Paul tells us, that we must be conformed to the death and resurrection of Christ, Rom. vi. which sounds very like an imitation) though in the next page he excepts the Case of dying, of his passive obedience, and tells us, that all the rest of his obedience to the Law of Mediation is not imputed to us, as though we had done it. So that by the Law of Mediation he understands whatever Christ was bound to do, as our Mediator, whatever was proper to his Mediatory Office, all this (though sometimes, when he better thinks of it, he excepts dying) is not imputed to us, as though we had done it: I hope we shall find something at last to be imputed to us, and yet there is nothing left now. But thirdly, That which concerns him in a private capacity, as a man subject to the Law, and now whatever was required of us by vertue of any Law, that he did and fulfilled: and this is that actual

actual obedience of Christ, which he performed for us.

This methinks is very strange, that what he did as Mediator, is not imputed to us, but what he did not as our Mediator, but as a man subject to the Law, that is imputed to us, and reckoned, as if we had done it, by reason of his being our Mediator: and it is as strange to the full, that Christ should do whatever was required of us by vertue of any Law, when he was neither Husband nor Wife, nor Father, Merchant or Tradesman, Seaman or Souldier, Captain or Lieutenant, much less a temporal Prince or Monarch; and how he should discharge the duties of these several relations for us, which are required of us by certain Laws, when he never was in any of these relations, and could not possibly be in all, is an argument, which may exercise the subtilty of Schoolmen, and to them I leave it.

Having now discovered what that Righteousness is, which Christ was to fulfil for us, as our Mediator, viz. whatever was required of us by vertue of any Law, whether it concerned us in general as men, or had respect to the various relations, conditions, and circumstances of our lives (for each of these have their proper duties belonging to them) setting aside that difficulty of proving that Christ did what he never did, let us consider how the Doctor proves, that what Christ did, he did for us, and in our stead, and here he makes use of a little Reason, and a great deal of Scripture to as little purpose. And to prepare the way for his reasons, I find the Doctor much puzzled (and I do not wonder at it) to prove, that Christ acted as Mediator in those things which did not concern the Law of his Mediation, which he did as a private man subject to the Law: For he tells

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us, that of this expression, *as Mediator*, there is a double sense. *It may be taken strictly, as relating solely to the Law of the Mediator, and so Christ may be said to do as Mediator, only what he did in obedience to that Law, (that is only what he did as Mediator, which is a pretty observation) but in the sense now insisted on (that is, not strictly as Mediator, but as not Mediator) whatsoever Christ did as a man subject to the Law, he did as a Mediator, because he did it as part of the duty incumbent on him, who undertook so to be: The meaning of which is, that he, who was Mediator, being bound to do such things, though not as Mediator, but as a man subject to the Law, yet he did them as Mediator, because he was a Mediator, who did them: Which is just as good an Argument, as it would be to prove, that every Embassador eats, and drinks, and sleeps as an Embassador, because though this be no part of his Embassie, yet he is an Embassador who does it, which is such an exposition of Quia, as the subtlest Schoolman of them all never yet thought of.*

Pag. 184.

But there is another Objection which troubles the Doctors Head; for since it is the *actual obedience* of Christ, which is imputed to us, he finds it difficult to distinguish the *active* and *passive* obedience of Christ: *For every Act almost of Christs obedience from the blood of his Circumcision to the blood of his Cross, was attended with sufferings, so that his whole Life in that regard might be called a death: This is a very subtil Objection, but observe the answer, that looking upon his willingness and obedience in it, it may be distinguished from his sufferings peculiarly so called, and termed his active obedience: This is a strange solution of it, for now it will be as hard to find out what the passive obedience of Christ was, for as I remember the Scri-*

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as Mediator considered.

pture tells us, that he was as willing and chearful in submitting to Death, as in any other Act of obedience, and I am sure our Saviour himself tells us, *that he laid down his life, and no man took it from him, which argues some good degree of willingness: What he said in the Page before is a much better answer, that doing is one thing, and suffering ano-* Pag. 183.
ther, they are in divers predicaments, and cannot be coincident.

As for this last scruple, the Doctor might very well have spared it, but that a man so well furnished with the knowledge of *Predicaments*, may venture upon any thing; but the former difficulty of *Christs doing those things as Mediator, which did not belong to the Laws of his Mediation*, is a very material one, and requires great skill in Logick to get rid of it; but however it is wisely done to make a shew of saying something to that which cannot be answered: For he was sensible, that what Christ did *purely as Mediator could not be imputed to us, as though we had done it, though the ἀποτέλεσματα or fruits of it are,* be- Pag. 181.
cause we were never designed to be Mediators, and the Righteousness of a Mediator is as improper to be imputed to those who are not Mediators, as it is to impute the Righteousness of a Prince to a Beggar. The Righteousness of every man consists in the discharge of those duties and offices which belong to his state, condition, and relation of life, not in doing those things which he is not concerned to do; and therefore that the Righteousness of Christ might be fit to be imputed to us as our Righteousness he was forced to consider him, not as Mediator, but as a private person made subject to the Law, who did whatever was required of us by vertue of any Law, though this too was impossible, for he could not at the same time

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act so many different and opposite parts, as there are relations and conditions of men in the World; and yet when he thought on't again, he found, that it was not the Righteousness of a *private person* that would avail us, though it were never so perfect (because we have no way to come at it, to make it ours) but only the Righteousness of a Mediator, who did whatever he did, for us and in our stead, and so he wheels about again, and tells us, that though what Christ did as a man subject to the Law, did not belong to the Law of his Mediation, yet he did it as Mediator, because he was a Mediator who did it: And thus he is caught in the Net and Labyrinth of his own making, and the more he turns and winds himself, the faster it holds him, *A Mediator who acts as a Mediator, in a private capacity, as a man subject to the Law.* I shall certainly believe, as they say some Country people do, that *Logick is Conjuring*, if it can reconcile such palpable contradictions.

It is very *ominous* thus to stumble at the threshold, but though *Mediator* and not a *Mediator* be contradictory terms, which learned men say cannot be reconciled, yet let us forgive him that slip, and see how he proves, that *whatever Christ did is reckoned to us, as done in our stead*; and all the reason I can find in his Discourse may be reduced to three Heads; First, *That Christ was under no obligation to do it himself*; Secondly, *That there can be no other reason assigned, why he did it at all, but that he did it for us*; And thirdly, *That this was absolutely necessary it should be so.*

First, *That Christ was under no obligation to obey these Laws himself*, and to make this appear, he discourses particularly both of the *Law of our Creation*, and the *Ceremonial Law given to the Jews.*

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As for the first, *the Law of Creation*, that comprehends those eternal Laws, which result from the essential differences of good and evil, which all Mankind are bound to observe by the very frame and constitution of their natures: Now he dares not deny, that Christ was bound to obey this Law *for himself*, but then *his obedience* (he says) *was voluntary*; And what of that? For so the obedience of every good man is; for by *voluntary*, he tells us, he doth not mean, that it *was merely arbitrary, and at his choice, whether he would yield obedience to it, or not*; but on supposition of his undertaking to be a Mediator, it *was necessary it should be so*; but he *voluntarily and willingly submitted unto it, and so became really subject to the commands of it*; and is it not very plain now, that Christ was not obliged to obey these Laws, because *he willingly submitted to them*? But certainly he means something more by this *voluntary*, than he could tell how to express; and all that I can guess is, that whereas *We* are bound to obey these Laws *antecedentially to our own choice*, it was not so with *Him*, for his obligation was only *consequential* upon his being born, and becoming Man, which was his own choice; and yet even then, as he tells us, *as he was Mediator, God and Man, he was not by the Institution of that Law obliged to it, being as it were exempted, and lifted above that Law by the Hypostatical Union.* Now this is very profound reasoning; for the meaning of it is this, that Christ had not been bound to live like a man, unless he had become man: and yet I can grant something more; that it was *impossible* he should have lived *like a man*, discharged all the duties of a man without *being man*; but when he chose to be a man, there was no need to chuse any more; for then he was bound by the Laws of his Nature

Nature to discharge all the duties of a man for himself: But how could he be *exempted from this Law* (though it be but *as it were*) and raised above it by *being Mediator, God and Man*, when the Doctor himself acknowledges two lines after, that *upon supposition of being Mediator, it was necessary it should be so*, that is, that he should yield obedience to the Law: now *not to be obliged by the Institution of the Law as Mediator*, and that it should *be necessary for him to obey the Law as Mediator*, are at so great a distance, that it may serve for another tryal of skill to reconcile them.

But secondly, Though we suppose, that Christ as Man was bound to yield obedience to the *Laws of the Creation*, yet the Doctor observes, that *this is the only Law he could be liable to, as a Man: For an innocent man in a Covenant of Works, as he was, needed no other Law, nor did God ever give any other Law to such persons: The Law of Creation is the only Law, that an innocent Creature is liable to, with what Symbols of the Law God is pleased to add: — But now Jesus Christ yielded perfect obedience to all those Laws which came upon us by the occasion of sin, as the Ceremonial Law, yea, those very Institutions that signified the washing away of sin, and repentance from sin, as the Baptism of John, which he had no need of himself, this therefore must needs be for us.* This now looks something like, though I fear, it will prove like all the rest, that is, to no purpose: For though the Doctor takes it for granted, yet I would willingly have had some proof of it, that an *innocent man can be bound by no other Law, than the Law of Creation*; especially since he acknowledges (which is a great favour) that God might add what *Symbols* he pleased to that Law; (for, I suppose, he remembered the *Tree of Life*, and the

the *Tree of knowledge of good and evil*) now I know not what these *Symbols* are but *positive Laws*, and such the *Ceremonial Laws* were; and if God may require the obedience of an *innocent man*, to one positive Law, I see no reason, why he may not, if he please, enjoyn *twenty such Laws* by the same Authority. But *they are such Laws as came upon us by occasion of sin*, and therefore an *innocent man* cannot be obliged by them: But why not? Though they were at first commanded upon *occasion of sin*, an *innocent man* may observe them to good and wise purposes, as publick and solemn Acts of Worship, as external and visible expressions of devotion, as a publick profession of *Righteousness* and a virtuous life, to which purposes among others the *Sacrifices and Ceremonies* of the Law, and the *Baptism of John* served: And if there were no other reason, this were sufficient, that it becomes an *innocent man* to set an example of reverence to all *Divine Institutions*, that every conceited Religionist, (who may be far enough from being *innocent*) may not presently conceit himself above all *Forms and external Worship*, as the Doctor knows, who are too apt to do.

But this is not worth contending about; for the *Righteousness of the Ceremonial Law* could never justify any man, and therefore if Christ had fulfilled this Law for us, it could have availed us nothing. Nor can I understand why the Doctor should suppose, that Christ fulfilled the *Ceremonial Law* for all *Believers*, when the greatest part of them (the *Gentiles*) were never under the obligation of it.

His second Argument to prove, that what Christ did as *Mediator*, (that is, the actual obedience of his life) he did for us, and in our stead, is this, that

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The Righteousness of Christ

there can be no other reason assigned of Christ's obedience to the Law of God, but only this, that he did it in our stead. Now this Argument would be good, were it true, and were there not a great many things done, which we cannot assign the reason of, and yet done for great and weighty reasons; but it appears from what I have already discoursed, that there was sufficient reason, why Christ should obey the Laws of God, viz. because he was as much bound to it, as any other man is: But to waive this, let us consider how he manages this Argument: He takes it for granted (as he is very apt to do things which he cannot prove) that if Christ were not bound to obey these Laws upon his own account, it must be either for us, or to fit him for his death and oblation, but it was not to fit him for his death and oblation, therefore it was for us: For he tells us, *That he answered all Types, and was every way $\mu\alpha\chi\theta\epsilon$, fit to be made an offering for sin by his Union and habitual Grace; so that if the obedience Christ performed be not reckoned to us, and done upon our account, there is no just cause to be assigned, why he should live here in the World so long as he did, in perfect obedience to all the Laws of God: Had he died before, there had been perfect innocence, and perfect holiness by his habitual Grace, and infinite vertue and worth from the dignity of his Person, and surely he yielded not that long course of all manner of obedience but for some great and special purposes in reference to our Salvation: Yes truly, it was for some great and special purpose in reference to our Salvation, that Christ lived so long in the World, and consequently yielded such a long course of all manner of obedience to God; but must this needs be his actual fulfilling all Righteousness for us? What do you think of his preaching the Gospel throughout all *Judea*, which required, that he should be a man*

before

Communi-
on, p. 182.

as Mediator considered.

before he did it, and would take up some time in doing it? What do you think of those many Miracles which he wrought for the confirmation of his Doctrine? What do you think of training up his Apostles to succeed him in his Ministry as Eye and Ear-Witnesses of his Miracles and Doctrine? Nay, what do you think of the holy example of his Life, which was no less necessary than his Laws? These were all great and special purposes in reference to our Salvation, though we should suppose him fit to have been a Sacrifice (as Herod designed he should have been) as soon as he was born. Though, by the way, I think he could not have answered the Types and Predictions of him, had he died so soon, notwithstanding his perfect innocence and perfect holiness.

His third reason to prove that Christ performed all Righteousness for us, is from the absolute necessity of it; for this is the term of the Covenant, do this and live; life is not to be obtained, unless all be done that the Law requires; that is still true, if thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandments, they must be kept by us, or by our Surety: So that we being unable to yield that complete and perfect obedience, which the Law requires, as the condition of life and happiness, it is necessary that Christ our Mediator and Surety should fulfil the Law for us. Now the best that can be made of this Argument is, that it proves it ought to be so, but it does not prove that it is so; just like the Papists alledging the necessity of an infallible Judge to prove that the Pope or Church of Rome is infallible; but such Arguments prove nothing but the arrogance and presumption of the Disputant, who will undertake to prescribe Methods to God, and to prove, that he ought to have done so, when it does not appear that he has done so: The sum of this Argument is, that there

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never was, nor ever can be a *Covenant of Grace*, that God still exacts the rigorous perfection of the Law from us, and that we must not appear before him without a *complete and perfect Righteousness of our own, or of another*: Now this is the thing in question, whether we must be made righteous with the perfect Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, or whether God will for the sake of Christ dispense with the rigour of the Law, and accept of a sincere and Evangelical obedience, instead of a perfect and un-finning Righteousness; so that he only confidently affirms what was in dispute, and this goes for an Argument.

Thus you see how weak their reason is, let us now examine their Scripture evidence; and the Doctor makes a great flourish with some Scripture Phrases, *that there is almost nothing that Christ hath done, but we, are said to do it with him: We are crucified with him, we are dead with him, and buried with him, and quickened together with him, &c. In the Actings of Christ, there is by virtue of the Compact between him as Mediator, and the Father, such an assured foundation laid of the Communication of the fruit of these actings unto those in whose stead he performed them, that they are said in the participation of these fruits to have done the same things with him*: But he is quite out in the reason of these expressions, which is, not that we are accounted to do the same things which Christ did, (for the things here mentioned belong to the peculiar Office of his Mediation, which he told us before were not reckoned as done by us) but because we do some things like them: Our dying to sin is a Conformity to the Death of Christ, and our walking in newness of life is our Conformity to his Resurrection, and the consideration of the Death and Resurrection

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of Christ is very powerful to engage us to die to sin, and to rise into a new life; and this is the true reason of these Phrases, not that Christ did all in our stead, and therefore we are said to do it too, but for a quite different reason, because we must do something like it, express the power and image of his Death and Resurrection in our lives.

To this purpose also he cites that Text in *Gal. iv. Commun. 4.5. God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made p. 184. under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law*, and here he stops, but I shall take confidence to add, *that we might receive the adoption of Sons*: Now by being made under the Law, he tells us, is meant, *being disposed of in such a condition, that he must yield subjection and obedience to the Law*, well, suppose this: *and this was all to redeem us, and therefore our Redemption is by the obedience of Christ imputed to us*: Fairly argued; but can his obedience to the Law contribute no other ways to our Redemption, but by being reckoned as done by us? But the truth is, this *us* is not in the Text, it is not *to redeem us*, but *to redeem them that were under the Law*, that is, *the Jews*, who were in *bondage under the Mosaical Law*, from which Christ redeemed them by abrogating that Law, and introducing a better Covenant, *the adoption of Sons*: For in this Epistle, nay, in this Chapter the *Law* is called a state of *Servants*, and of an *Heir under Age*, but the Gospel is the *adoption of Sons*, puts us into such a free and manly state, as that of an *Heir at Age*, and therefore is called the *Spirit of Adoption*, *Rom. viii. 15*. So that the meaning of this Text is this, *that God hath now put an end to the dispensation of the Law, which is called redeeming them that were under the Law, in a state of servitude and bondage, and hath established a better Covenant in the room*

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of it, which as much excels the Law, as the *adoption of Sons* does the state of Servants, and this God brought to pass by sending his Son into the World, made of a Woman, made under the Law: For the understanding of which words we must consider, what influence Christs appearing in the World had on the abrogation of the Law, and that was, that he accomplished all the Types and Figures of the Law in his own Person, and when all these Types were fulfilled, they grew out of date: So that his *being made under the Law* most probably signifies, his being made such a Person, as should exactly answer all the Types and Figures of the Law, and so put an end to it, as of no further use: Thus the Temple was Gods House, wherein he dwelt, but now the *Shekina* or Divine Glory rested on Christ, and the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, so that now there was no longer any need of a material Temple, as a pledge of Gods peculiar presence among them; the Priests and Sacrifices of the Law were Types of Christ, and when that great High Priest came and offered that perfect Sacrifice of himself, all legal Priests and Sacrifices were of no use: Thus by his being made under the Law, and accomplishing all the Types and Figures of it, he put an end to all those beggarly Rudiments, and delivered the Jews from the bondage of the Law; for though the Gentiles too are redeemed by Christ, yet they are not redeemed from the Law of Moses, under which they never were.

Several other places he alleges to the same purpose, but I have either already considered them, or shall do in what follows; but what I have now discoursed, is enough to satisfy any impartial Inquirer, how vain and precarious this Principle is, which too many

many make the very Foundation of their Faith, that *Christ as Mediator fulfilled all Righteousness in their stead, whose Mediator he was.*

And now had I no other design than to expose the mistakes of other men, I should need add no more, till I saw this answered; but I have a greater and better design, *viz.* to explain and confirm the true notions of Religion in opposition to such mistakes, and therefore having shewed you that there is no foundation in Reason or Scripture to fancy such an Union between Christ and Believers (whether we consider it as a *Conjugal Relation*, or *Legal Union*, as he is our Surety or Mediator) as should entitle Believers to the *Personal Righteousness* of Christ, lest any man should suspect, that the design of all this is to lessen the Grace of God, or to disparage the Merits and Righteousness of Christ (which God forbid any Christian should be guilty of) I shall secondly examine what influence the *Sacrifice of Christs Death*, and the *Righteousness of his Life* have upon our acceptance with God: And all that I can find in Scripture about this, is, that to this we owe the *Covenant of Grace*: That God being well pleased with the *obedience of Christs life*, and the *Sacrifice of his death*, for his sake entered into a *new Covenant* with Mankind, wherein he promises pardon of sin and eternal life to those who believe and obey the Gospel.

This is very plain with reference to the *death of Christ*: Hence the *Bloud of Christ* is called the *Bloud of the Covenant*, Heb. x. 29. and Christ is called the *great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls through the bloud of the everlasting Covenant*, Heb. xiii. 20. and the *bloud of Christ* is called the *bloud of sprinkling, which speaks better things than the bloud of Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. which is an allusion to Moses his sprinkling the

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bloud of the Sacrifice, whereby he confirmed and ratified the Covenant between God and the Children of Israel, Heb. ix. 19, 20, 21. For when Moses had spoken every Precept to all the people according to the Law, (when he had declared the terms of this Covenant to them) he took the bloud of Calves and Goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the Book, and all the People, saying, *This is the bloud of the Testament, which God hath ordained to you.* Thus the Bloud of Christ is called *the bloud of Sprinkling*, because by his Bloud God did seal and confirm the Covenant of Grace, as the sprinkling the bloud of beasts did confirm the Mosaical Covenant. Hence we are said to be *justified by the Bloud of Christ*, Rom. v. 9. that is, by the Gospel Covenant, which was confirmed and ratified with his Bloud; and Christ is called a *Propitiation through faith in his Bloud*, that is, by a belief of his Gospel, Rom. iii. 25. Hence it is also that the Scripture uses these Phrases promiscuously, to be *justified by faith*, and to be *justified by the faith of Christ*, and to be *justified by Christ*, and to be *justified through faith in his Bloud*, and to be *justified and saved by Grace*, nay, by *believing that Christ is the Son of God*, Joh. xx. 31. and *that God raised him from the dead*, Rom. x. 3. All which signifie the same thing, that we are justified by believing and obeying the Gospel of Christ: For faith, or faith in Christ, signifies such a firm and stedfast belief of the Gospel, as brings forth all the fruits of obedience; and the *Grace of God* is the Gospel of Christ, expressly so called in Tit. ii. 11. as being the effect of the free Grace and Goodness of God to Mankind; and Faith in the Bloud of Christ is a belief of the Gospel, which was confirmed by his Death, and believing that *Christ is the Son of God*, that is, that

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Messias and Prophet, whom God sent into the World to reveal his Will to us, includes a general belief of the Gospel which he preached; and believing that God raised him from the Dead, doth the same, because his Resurrection from the dead was the last and great confirmation, which God gave to the truth of his Gospel and Religion. And hence it is also, that the Apostles attribute such things to the Bloud of Christ, as are the proper, and immediate effects of the *Gospel-Covenant*, because they consider the Bloud of Christ as the *Bloud of the Covenant*, and therefore all the blessings of the Gospel are owing to the Bloud of Christ, because the *Gospel-Covenant* it self was procured and confirmed by the Bloud of Christ. Thus the *Gentiles, who were sometimes afar off*, are said to be *made nigh by the Bloud of Christ*, and the *Gentiles and Jews were reconciled unto God in one body by the Cross*, Eph. ii. 14, 15, 16. That is, the *Gentiles* were received into the fellowship of Gods Church, and the *Jews and Gentiles* united in *one body* or Society; now this *Union of Jews and Gentiles* is owing to the Gospel, which takes away all marks of distinction and separation, and gives them both an equal right to the blessings of the new Covenant. The *Mosaical Covenant* did belong only to the Children of Israel; but this new Covenant belongs to all Mankind, to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, there is now no distinction of persons, *neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond, nor Free, but Christ is all and in all*: That is, there is no respect of Persons or Nations under the Gospel, no man is ever the more or less acceptable to God, because he is a Jew or a Greek, but the only thing of any value now is Faith in Christ, or a belief of the Gospel, which is indifferently offered to all. Now this is attributed

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attributed to the *Bloud of Christ*, and to his Death upon the Cross, because thereby Christ hath put an end to the *Mosaical Covenant*, and sealed this new Covenant of Grace with Mankind, as the Apostle explains himself in the following Verses, 17, 18, &c. that Christ *having abolished the Law of Commandments by his death, he came and preached peace* (that is, the Gospel of Peace) *to them who were afar off,* (to the Gentile World) *and to them who were nigh,* (to the Jews, who were Gods peculiar people) that is, he abrogated the *Mosaical Law, the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances*, which was peculiar to the Jews, and separated them from the rest of the World; and he broke down the *middle Wall of Partition*, which kept the *uncircumcised Gentiles, though Profelytes*, at a distance from God, as confining their Worship to the outward Court of the Temple, which the Apostle seems to refer to in that Phrase, *them that were afar off*; and now by the Gospel he admits the Gentiles to as near an approach to God as the Jews; as he adds, *For through him we both have an access by one Spirit to the Father*, Vers. 18.

Thus the Jews are said to be redeemed from the curse of the Law, by the accursed Death of Christ upon the Cross, Gal. iii. 13. Because the Death of Christ put an end to that legal Dispensation, and sealed a new and better Covenant between God and man, and the Gentiles were redeemed from their vain conversation received by tradition from their Fathers; that is, from those idolatrous and impure practices they were guilty of; *not with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Bloud of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Now the Gentiles were delivered from Idolatry by the preaching of the Gospel, which
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is called their being redeemed by the bloud of Christ because we owe this unspeakable Blessing to his Death, *who having abolished in his flesh* (by his Death) *the enmity, even the Law of Commandments, &c. came and preached peace to you, which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

Now as the Death of Christ upon the Cross, and his Ascension into Heaven, and presenting his Bloud to God in that *true holy place*, did answer to the first sprinkling of the Bloud under the Law, which confirmed the *Mosaical Covenant*, as the Apostle discourses in Heb. ix. So his continual Intercession for us in vertue of his Bloud once shed, and once offered to God, answers to those frequent expiations by Sacrifice under the Law, especially to that general Sacrifice on the great day of expiation, when the High Priest entred into the Holy of Holies, with the Bloud of Beasts.

The reason why the legal Sacrifices were so often repeated, was, because they were imperfect and typical, *but a shadow of good things to come, and so could not take away sin*; but Christ by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, Heb. x. 14. He hath made a perfect expiation for our sins by dying once, and hath sealed the Promises of pardon and forgiveness to them who are sanctified, and where remission is, *there is no more offering for sin*, Vers. 18. Such a Sacrifice as once for all seals the Covenant of Pardon and Forgiveness, makes all other Offerings and Sacrifices needless; and then the High Priest, who entred into the Holy of Holies with the Bloud of the Sacrifice, did not continue there to intercede for the People, but came out of that holy place, and could not return thither again without a new Sacrifice; *but this man after he had offered one Sacrifice, for ever*

ever sat down at the right hand of God, Heb. x. 12. and because he continueth for ever, he hath an unchangeable Priesthood, wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them, Heb. vii. 24, 25. So that Christ by his Death expiated our sins, and confirmed an everlasting Covenant, and being ascended up into Heaven, he there appears in the presence of God for us, and perpetually intercedes in the virtue of his Blood once offered, which is of infinite more value than the repeated Sacrifices of the Law: He procures the pardon of our sins by his Death, and dispences this pardon to us by his Intercession; He sealed that Covenant of Grace by his Blood, and intercedes for us in virtue of his Blood, but still according to the terms and conditions of that Covenant; and this is all we must expect from him as our Mediator.

From what I have now discoursed, it appears how injurious those men are to the Blood of Christ, (how much soever they pretend to magnifie it) who attribute no more to it than a non-imputation of sin, that by his Death Christ bearing and undergoing the punishment that was due to us, paying the Ransom that was due for us, delivered us from this condition, (the wrath, and curse, and whole displeasure of God) and thus by the Death of Christ all cause of quarrel and rejection is taken away, but then this will not compleat our acceptation, the old quarrel may be laid aside, and yet no new friendship begun, we may be not sinners, and yet not so far righteous, as to have a right to the Kingdom of Heaven: So that the Blood of Christ only makes us innocent, delivers us from guilt and punishment, but (if we will take the Doctors word for it) it can give us no title to glory, this is owing to the imputation of
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p. 193.

Christ's Righteousness to us, to the obedience of his Life: But you see the Scripture gives a quite different account of it, we are said to be justified and redeemed by the Blood of Christ; nay, we have boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, Heb. x. 19. which is an allusion to the High Priests entering into the Holy of Holies (which was a Type of Heaven) with the Blood of the Sacrifice; thus by the Blood of Christ we have admission into Heaven it self, though the Doctor says, that the Blood of Christ makes us innocent, but cannot give us a right to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Scripture takes no notice of their artificial method, that the guilt of sin is taken away by the Death of Christ, and that we are made righteous by his Righteousness; but the Blood of Christ is said to justifie us, and to give us admission into the Holiest of all, into Heaven it self, nay, we are made righteous by the Death of Christ too, 2 Cor. x. 21. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God by him: That is, though Christ was a very holy Person, yet he died as a Sacrifice for our sins, the Just for the Unjust, that we might be reconciled to God: So that our Righteousness as well as Innocence, is owing to the Death of Christ, to that Sacrifice he offered for our sins: His Blood had a great vertue and efficacy in it to make us righteous, to purge our Consciences from dead works, that we might serve the living God; and our Righteousness and acceptance with God, is wholly owing to that Covenant, which he purchased and sealed with his Blood.

But though the pardon of our sins, and our Justification be attributed to the Blood of Christ, yet I could never persuade my self that this wholly
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excludes the perfect Obedience and Righteousness of his Life: For the Apostle tells us, that we are accepted in the Beloved, Eph. i. 6. So that whatever rendered Christ beloved of God, did contribute something to our acceptance; for because he was beloved, we are accepted for his sake, and I think no man will deny, that God was very highly pleased with the perfect Obedience of our Saviours Life.

We know how many blessings God bestowed upon the Children of Israel for the sake of their Fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were great Examples of Faith and Obedience, which made them very dear to God; and there is no doubt, but God was more pleased with the Obedience of Christ, than with the Faith of Abraham, and therefore we ought not to think that we receive no benefit by the Righteousness of Christ, when Abraham's Posterity was so blessed for his sake: But then the Righteousness of Christs Life, and the Sacrifice of his Death, do not serve two such different ends as these men fancy, (that the Death of Christ removes the guilt of sin, and his Righteousness is imputed to us, to make us righteous) but they both serve the same end, to establish and confirm the Gospel-Covenant: God was so well pleased with what Christ did and suffered, with the Obedience of his Life and Death, that for his sake he entered into a Covenant of Grace with Mankind; as Abraham's Faith was not imputed to his Posterity, as their Act, but for Abrahams sake, God entered into Covenant with them, and chose them for his peculiar People. The Obedience and Righteousness of Christs Life was one thing which made his Sacrifice so meritorious, which was the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.

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and Righteousness.

And this is the most that can be made of Rom. v. 18, 19. Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the Righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life: For as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous: There is no necessity indeed of expounding this *ὑπακοή* obedience, of the Righteousness of Christs Life, or his Active Obedience, for it may very well signifie no more than the obedience of his Death, notwithstanding the Doctors distinction, that doing is one thing, and suffering is another, for the Apostle tells us, that he became obedient unto death, *ὑπήκοος*, Phil. ii. 8. and his offering himself in Sacrifice is called doing the Will of God, Heb. x. 9, 10. and whether this be properly said or not, I will leave the Doctor to dispute it with the Apostle; it is plain that in this Chapter there is no express mention made of any other Act of Obedience and Righteousness, whereby we are reconciled to God, but only his dying for us, in vers. 8. the Apostle tells us, that Christ died for us while we were sinners; in vers. 9. that we are justified by his Blood; in ver. 10. that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, which makes it more than probable, that by his Righteousness and Obedience here, the Apostle understands his Death and Sufferings, because this was the Subject of his Discourse: But yet these expressions, his Righteousness and Obedience, seem to take in the whole compass of his Obedience in doing and suffering the Will of God: And the meaning of the words is this, that as God was so highly displeased with Adams sin, that he entailed a great many evils and miseries, and Death it self, upon his Posterity for his sake, so God was so well pleased with the Righteousness and Obedience

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of Christs Life and Death, that he bestows the Rewards of Righteousness on those who according to the strictness and rigour of the Law are not Righteous, that for Christs sake he hath made a new Covenant of Grace, which pardons our past sins and follies, and rewards a sincere though imperfect obedience; for *δικαιοι κατασθεσονται*, shall be made righteous, is the same with *δικαιωθσονται*, shall be justified, that is, treated like righteous persons: So that the Righteousness of Christ is not the *formal cause* of our Justification, that very Righteousness whereby we are righteous, but the Righteousness of his Life and Death is the meritorious cause of that Covenant, whereby we are declared righteous, and rewarded as righteous persons; for the Apostle tells us in *Ver. 17.* who those are who are thus justified by Christ, and shall Reign with him in Life, not those who are righteous by the imputation of Christs Righteousness to them, but those *who have received the abundance of Grace, and the Gift of Righteousness*, that is, who by the Gospel of Christ, which is the *grace*, and the *abundant grace* of God, are made holy and righteous, as God is; which *Righteousness* is called a *Gift*, because it is not owing solely to humane endeavours, but is wrought in us by supernatural means, by those powerful arguments and motives, and divine assistances, which God in infinite love and goodness has afforded the World by Jesus Christ.

This gives a fair account how we may be said to be made righteous by the Righteousness of Christ, not that his actual Obedience is reckoned as done by us, (which is impossible) but because we are made righteous both in a proper and forensick sense by the *Gospel-Covenant*, which is wholly owing to the Grace
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of God, and to the Merits and Righteousness of Christ: The great arguments and motives, and powerful assistances of the Gospel, form our minds to the love and practice of Holiness, and so make us inherently righteous, and the *Grace of the Gospel* accepts and rewards that sincere and Evangelical Obedience, which according to the rigour and severity of the Law could deserve no reward: So that our *righteousness* is wholly owing to the *Righteousness of Christ*, which may in this sense be said to be *imputed to us*, (though that Phrase never occurs in Scripture) because without this Covenant of Grace, which is founded on the *Righteousness of Christ*, the best man living could lay no claim to Righteousness or future Glory.

So that the *Righteousness of Christ* is our Righteousness, when we speak of the foundation of the Covenant, by which we are accepted, but if we speak of the terms of the Covenant, then we must have a Righteousness of our own, for the Righteousness of Christ will not serve the turn: Christs Righteousness and our own are both necessary to our Salvation; the first as the foundation of the Covenant, the other as the condition of it.

The sum of this Section is this, that there is no foundation in reason or Scripture, to imagine any such Union betwixt Christ and Believers, as should entitle them to *all the personal Righteousness of Christ*, as much as if it had been performed by themselves; but the vertue of Christs Obedience and Sufferings, so far as it concerns our Justification, is contained in the Gospel-Covenant: He is the *Mediator* of the Covenant, and his Bloud is the *Bloud of the Covenant*, and we must expect no other advantage from what Christ hath done and suffered, but to be saved
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according to the gracious terms and conditions of the Gospel.

SECT. IV.

That these men place our Union to Christ before Holiness of Life.

I Have now explained to you the nature of our Union to the Person of Christ, as these men represent it, whereby (they say) we are intituled to all his Excellencies, Graces, Righteousness, Preciousness, &c. and made it appear that there is no foundation for such a notion either in Scripture or reason; but before I dismiss this, it will be convenient to take notice of the great evil and mischief of this opinion, which may satisfy any considering man (though there were no other evidence of it) how false it is; and I shall observe two things to this purpose: First, That according to this notion men may, nay must be united to Christ, while they continue in their sins, which according to my understanding overthrows all Religion, and destroys the necessary obligations to an holy life. Secondly, That according to these mens discourses no man can certainly tell how to get into Christ, or know whether he be in Christ or not.

As for the first, That men may, nay, must be united to Christ, while they continue in their sins, it is easie to produce abundant evidence for the proof of it. Mr. Shephard tells us expressly, *That Obedience does not make us God's people, or God our God; but he is first our God, (which is only by the Covenant*

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P. 321.

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of Grace) and hence it is, that he being ours, and we his, we of all others are most bound to obey: As for the obligation to obedience, we will consider that anon, at present it suffices, that we are Gods people, and that by vertue of the Covenant of Grace, before we obey him: The same Author tells us, *that we are not united to Christ our life by obedience, as Adam was to God by it, but by Faith* (that is, by such a Faith of which Obedience is no part, otherwise he opposes a part to the whole, and so the same thing to it self) and therefore as all action in living things comes from the Spirit on Christs part, and from Faith on our part, which make the Union: The meaning of which is this, that we must first be united to Christ by this Faith (of which more anon) before we can do any thing that is good; before this Union the best actions we can do are sins, which is a plain demonstration of the truth of this charge, because according to this principle we can do nothing but sin, before we are united to Christ: Hence these men constantly place our Justification before our Sanctification, that we are first accounted holy by God, before we are made holy; now our Justification follows our Union to Christ, and our Sanctification follows our Justification, and therefore we must first be united to Christ, so as to have a title to all the Promises of the Gospel, to Justification and Eternal Life, before we are sanctified, that is, before we are made holy: Hence we are told, *that Holiness is a remote end of vocation, but the next end is to come to Christ*: And the same Author makes a speech for Christ to a Sinner (so gracious a speech, that among all the invitations of Christ in the Gospel, we find nothing like it) *though thou hast resisted my Spirit, refused my Grace, wearied*

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Whether an holy Life

me with thy iniquities, yet come unto me, and this will make me amends, I require nothing of thee else but to come; for Gods call is out of free Grace: and therefore he calls for no more than only to come up and possess the Lords fulness.

But not to insist upon some particular sayings, let us consider the whole progress of the Soul (as they represent it) to a clozure with Christ, the several steps and degrees whereby men are brought at last to an *Union with the Lord Jesus*, and they are *Conviction, Compunction, Humiliation* and *Faith*, which is the *uniting Grace*; now if there be nothing of forsaking sin included in all this, then men must be united to Christ before they forsake their sins: It were easie to produce the concurrent judgments of many Authors, for what I shall now say, but that would be too tedious, and therefore I shall confine my self to *Mr. Shepherds Sound Believer*, as *Orthodox* a Book as ever was writ, and which to this day is in too many peoples hands.

Now *Conviction of sin*, (according to this Author) is a great sense of the evil of sin, and the evil after sin, of its abominable and accursed nature, and those just judgments which follow sin, that the Sinner must die, and that eternally for sin, if it remain in this state it is now in: And no man can deny, but that this is as it ought to be; men must be awakened into a serious consideration of the evil which they have done, and of the punishment which they have deserved, before they will reform their lives; Reform? nay, now you are out, this is not the end of *Conviction to reform sin*, (that is a legal way) but *Compunction is the end of Conviction*: Well then, *What is this Compunction?* Why, *Compunction is first a great fear of being damned, when a man is thus convinced of sin, he sees*
Death,

Should be
Heur,
p.68.

be necessary to our Union with Christ.

Death, Wrath, Eternity, near unto him, and hence hath no hope to escape it, as now he is, and therefore does fear; next to this succeeds a great sorrow and mourning for sin, the Lord having smitten the Soul, or shot the arrows of fear into the Soul, it therefore grows exceeding sad and heavy; and that which perfects this Compunction, is a separation from sin; this is something like, if they mean as they speak; but if you would not mistake them, by a separation from sin, you must not understand a leaving and forsaking sin, but such a separation from sin as is consistent with living in it: for it is nothing else, but a being willing, or rather not unwilling, that the Lord should take it away: The Lord doth not wound the heart to this end, that the Soul should first heal it self, before it come to the Physitian, but that it might seek out, or feeling its need be willing and desirous of a Physician, the Lord Jesus, to come and heal it; it is the great fault of many Christians, that either their wounds and sorrows are so little they desire not to be healed, or if they do, they labour to heal themselves first, before they come to the Physitian for it, they will first make themselves holy, and put on their Jewels, and then believe in Christ: So that all he means by a separation from sin, is to be content, that Christ by an irresistible power should take away our sins; by this separation the Soul is cut off from the will to sin, not from all (no nor from any) sin in the will, for that must be mortified by a spirit of Holiness, after the Soul is implanted into Christ. Now this is down-right non-sense, for he must be a very subtil man who can distinguish between a will to sin, and sin in the will, and all that can be made of it is this, that this separation from sin is a willingness, or rather a not unwillingness, that Christ should take away our sins against our wills; and therefore he does well to tell us, that this separation
P 3 from

Pag. 86.

Pag. 87.

from sin is no part of our sanctification, as any man would easily have gueſt by his deſcription of it; the whole deſign of this *Compunction*, of this *fear*, and *sorrow*, and *ſeparation from ſin*, is not that we might forſake ſin, but to work *humiliation* in us, which is a third ſtep towards an *Union with Chriſt*: Now this *Humiliation* is the work of the Spirit, whereby the Soul being broken off from *ſelf-conceit*, and *ſelf-confidence* in any good it hath, or doth, ſubmitteth unto, and lieth under God to be diſpoſed of, as he pleaſes; this *ſelf-confidence*, from which the Soul muſt be broke off, is any hope of pleaſing God by *Repentance* or *Reformation*, or any thing he can do; for when men feel this *Compunction of Spirit for their ſins*, the great danger is, leſt they ſhould ſeek eaſe by repenting of their ſins, and reforming their lives; that as their ſins have provoked God to anger againſt them, ſo now if they can reform, and leave thoſe ſins, or if they repent, and be ſorry for them, if now they pray, and hear, and do as others do, they have ſome hopes (as well they may, if they do all this) that this will heal their wounds, and pacifie the Lord towards them, when they ſee there is no peace in a ſinful courſe, they will try if there be any to be found in a good courſe; This indeed every man naturally would have thought to have been a very good way, but it is a dangerous miſtake, for while it is thus with the Soul, he is uncapable of Chriſt, for he that truſts to other things to ſave him, or makes himſelf his own Saviour, or reſts in his Duties without a Saviour (that is, according to this Author, all thoſe who repent and reform upon the Convictions of their Conſciences) he can never have Chriſt to ſave him: So that true *humiliation* is this, when the Lord Chriſt hath made the Soul feel, not only its inability to help it ſelf, but alſo its own unworthineſs, that the Lord ſhould help it, that ſo it may

may lie down under God to be diſpoſed of as he pleaſes, that is to be contented to be ſaved or damned, as ſhall beſt pleaſe God; and when the ſoul is brought to this paſs, then it is vas capax, a veſſel capable (though unworthy) of Grace, and now they are made thus hollow and empty by *Compunction* and *Humiliation*, they are capable of receiving and holding Chriſt, as a hollow and empty veſſel is of receiving and holding any thing that is put into it: This is a new notion of our *Union to Chriſt*, that it is a receiving Chriſt into us, as a hollow veſſel receives any Liquor that is poured into it; however this is a very Philoſophical account of the nature of *Humiliation*, that it is to bring a man to ſuch a thorough ſence of his inability to pleaſe God, that he ſhall never dare to be ſo prophane as to attempt it, but muſt leave repentance and reformation of life to carnal and Chriſtleſs men; and then to make him ſo ſenſible of his own unworthineſs, and how juſt it is with God to damn him, that he ſhall contentedly ſubmit himſelf to God to be damned or ſaved, as he pleaſes; and now the Soul being thus empty and hollow is fit to receive Chriſt into it, and being grown careleſs of its Salvation, and indifferent whether it be ſaved or damned (for it is impoſſible thus to ſubmit to God, without being indifferent in ſome meaſure which God ſhall chuſe) it is a fit object for Mercy: Certainly it is a very hard thing to bring any man in his wits to this, and I find by this Author, that God is very hard put to it thus to humble the Soul; for he is forced to irritate and ſtir up original corruption, to ſtir the dungbil, (a very unfit office for a holy Being) that ſo men finding themſelves ſenſibly grow worſe and worſe every day, may deſpair of growing better, and leave off ſuch vain attempts, and ſit down humble under God: nay, the Lord loads

and tires, and wearies the Soul by its own endeavours, till it can stir no more; that is, when the Soul labours with all its might to repent and reform, the Spirit of God, which should encourage and assist all such pious endeavours, withdraws it self, because it knows the Soul would rest therein without Christ: Now I confess, I know not who suffers most by this, the Sinner, who is thus humbled and broken, or God who thus humbles him; for it must needs be as contrary to the holy and merciful Nature of God to use such methods of Humiliation, as it is to the proud heart of man to be thus humbled: Thus you see that Humiliation hath nothing to do with Repentance and Reformation of our Lives; for one great end of Humiliation is to cure men of such carnal conceits, as to think to please God by repenting and reforming our sins, and this is the next immediate disposition towards our receiving Christ and closing with him.

For now when the Soul is thus humbled, it is time it should go to Christ, though the truth is, such Souls are so wounded and humbled now, that they lie dead at Gods feet, and are as unable to believe as they were to humble themselves: And therefore now the Lord takes them up in his Arms, that they may lean and rest upon the bosom of their Beloved by Faith. Now the Form and Essence of Faith, this uniting Grace, consists in this, that it is the coming of the whole Soul out of it self to Christ: Faith doth nothing for Life, for that is the Law of Works, it only receives him who hath done all for it, it comes out of all it hath or doth unto Christ for Life. The Soul by sin is averted from God, and turns his back upon God, the turning and coming of the Soul (not unto duties of Holiness, for that is obedience properly, but) unto God in Christ again is properly and formally

formally Faith: So to come to Christ, as to drink in of Christs fulness, is believing in Christ.

But then Faith is the coming of the whole Soul to Christ, and that is, when the eye of the Soul so sees Christ, and the heart so embraceth and relieth upon Christ, as that it resteth in Christ, as in its portion and all-sufficient good. This is the Faith which unites us to Christ, and Faith you see hath nothing at all to do with obedience in uniting us to Christ; but it perfects this Union between Christ and Believers, while they are as ugly, and deformed, and vicious as may be; very unfit persons methinks to become the Members of so holy an Head.

This is enough to convince any considering man, how false this notion is of our Union to Christ, according to which wicked men, who live in sin, may be united to Christ: For the Scripture places the formal nature of our Union to Christ in a subjection to his Authority and obedience to his Laws, as I have already made it appear; and therefore an holy Life must not only follow our Union to Christ, as an effect of it, but must at least in order of Nature go before it, because by this we are united to Christ. A visible profession of an holy Life is necessary to our admission into the Christian Church, which is the Body of Christ; but though this makes us visible Members of Christs Body, and gives us a right to an external Communion, yet we are not real and living Members of Christ, till we sincerely obey him, till our minds are transformed into his Image: our Union to Christ is more or less perfect according to our attainments in true piety and vertue. The first and lowest degree of our Union with Christ is a belief of his Gospel, which in order of Nature must go before obedience to it; but yet it includes a purpose and resolution

resolution of obeying it; and in this sense we must be united to Christ, before we can be holy; because this belief of his Gospel is the great Principle of Obedience; as our Saviour tells his Disciples, *Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bring forth fruit of it self, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except you abide in me, Joh.xv.4.* But then our Union is not perfected without actual obedience; this makes us the true Disciples of Christ, when we are fruitful in good works, as he adds in *Verse 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that you bring forth much fruit, so shall you be my Disciples.* A belief of the Gospel of Christ, and a purpose to live in obedience to it, is all that can be expected from beginners, but this doth not give us an actual title to all the Promises of the Gospel, unless we actually obey it: But when in the strength of this Faith we conquer all the temptations of the World and the Flesh, and improve all the opportunities of doing good, this makes us the Disciples of Christ indeed, and Heirs of Glory: Christ receives bad men as soon as they believe his Gospel, and resolve to be good, but their reward is suspended upon the performance of these Vows, and this is no reproach to his Holiness; but nothing can be a greater dishonour to our Saviour, nor a greater contradiction to his Gospel, than to affirm, that wicked men, while they continue such, are actually united to Christ, and thereby have an actual right to pardon, and righteousness, and eternal life. St. *John*, I am sure understood not this Doctrine, when he told us, *That God is light, and in him is no darkness at all: if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, (live in any sin) we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as God is in the light,*
then

then have we fellowship one with another, 1 Joh. 1.5,6,7.

This Doctrine doth not only take away the necessity of holiness in order to our Union with Christ, but destroys the necessary obligations to holiness and obedience for the future, and so thrusts Holiness quite out of the Christian Religion. Our Union to Christ is perfected while we are unholy, and when we are united to Christ, there is less need of Holiness than before; for now the Merits and Satisfaction of Christs Death is imputed to us to remove the guilt of sin, and to deliver us from the punishment of it; and his actual obedience is imputed to us to make us righteous, and to give us an actual right to glory: So that if men will obey Christ out of a principle of good nature, and thankfulness to him, they may; but according to this notion there can be no necessity of it, because they are delivered from the wrath of God, and have a right to eternal life without it: And this is a plain demonstration, that these notions are so far from being an essential part of the Christian Religion, that they overthrow all Religion, by leaving it at every mans liberty, whether he * *Chap.3.* will worship and obey God or not: But I have * *dis-* discoursed this at large already in the examination of *Dr. Owens* Reasons for the necessity of Holiness and Obedience.

SECT. V.

That according to these Principles, there is no certain way of getting into Christ, or of knowing whether we are in Christ or not.

THUS I have made good the first charge, that according to this notion of our Union to Christ men may, nay, must be united to Christ (if ever they be united) while they continue in sin, and this is a great reproach to the Person and Gospel of our Saviour; the other thing which I charged upon this notion, is a more immediate injury to men, as exposing them to perpetual doubts and jealousies about their Salvation, *viz.* that according to these principles no man can certainly tell how to get into Christ, or know whether he be in Christ or not: And if I can make this appear, it will be a sufficient reason for every man to reject it, who hath any care of his Salvation, or any regard to the peace and quiet of his own mind.

First then according to these Principles there is no certain way to get into Christ: Suppose a sinner, who hears of those great Priviledges, which are consequent upon our Union to Christ, should inquire what course he should take to be united to Christ, and to have a right and interest in all the Excellencies, Preciousness, Graces, and Righteousness of the Lord Jesus; the method prescribed in order to this is Conviction, Compunction, Humiliation, and Faith, which is the uniting Grace; now I observe first, that a man

is passive in all this, and can contribute nothing to it himself any otherwise than as he is acted by an irresistible power, and it is a vain thing to give such rules and directions as no man can follow; this only tells us by what methods God unites us to Christ; not what we must do, but what we must suffer in order to this Union. A Sinner may stir up in himself some natural conviction of sin, some natural fear and sorrow, &c. and in a sence of this may set upon the work of reformation, of leaving his sins, and performing duties, but all this they tell us is to no purpose; for unless this conviction, and compunction, and humiliation be wrought in us by the irresistible power of the Spirit of God (which no man can possibly tell, whether it be or not) it is not of the right stamp, and will avail us nothing: So that the sinner hath nothing to do but to sit still, and patiently expect till God will do all for him.

But secondly, Suppose a man have this Conviction, Compunction, and Humiliation, is this a sufficient reason to lay hold on Christ by the hand of Faith? By no means; the end of Conviction is Compunction, and the end of Compunction is Humiliation, and all this carries us no nearer to Christ, than ^{* Sound Believer,} quietly to lie down before God, that he may do what he will with us, ^{p. 126.} † turning the other cheek unto the Lord even smiting of us, acknowledging that if the Lord shew mercy it will be wonderful, if not, yet the Lord is righteous, and therefore we have no reason to quarrel against him for denying special mercy to those to whom he does not owe a bit of bread: And now the Soul is indeed humbled, because it submits to be disposed of as God pleases; that is, to be saved or damned: So that this Conviction, Compunction, and Humiliation contribute nothing to our Union with Christ, but their whole vertue consists in bringing

us to such a temper of mind, as to be content either to have Christ, or to go without him, as God shall please :

*Pag. 137. * *Humiliation makes the Soul in the sense of its own infinite vileness and unworthiness not to quarrel at the Lord, and Devil-like grow fierce and impatient be fore and against the Lord, in case he should never help it, never pity it, never succour it.* * *And now you shall see, if the Lord intend good, he will by this do thee good, and this is all men get by Humiliation, that if the Lord intend to do them good, this is the way, in which he will do it, but though they be humbled, they cannot be sure, whether God intend to do them good or not : And therefore we*

†Pag. 141. *are told, that † we are as much bound to submit to God, whether he will save or damn us, as we are to submit to the disposal of God, as to any common mercy : Though you must pray for mercy, it must be with submission to the good will of the Lord, saying, the Lords will is good (whether it be to save or damn) but mine evil, though it be to be saved, and to have Jesus Christ : Nay, we are much more bound to submit our selves to God, whether he will save or damn us, than we are to submit to him in the lesser*

*Pag. 145. *concernments of this life : * For if it be pride to murmur in case the Lord deny you smaller matters, the offals of this life, dost thou not see, that it is far greater pride for thee to sink, and quarrel with him, if he denies thee greater, the things of another life ? Is he bound to give thee greater, who doth not owe thee the least ? The Lord gives you life, blessed be his name, but you ask for treasures of Grace and mercy (now God hath given you life, you would fain live for ever, an unpardonable fault this !) thousands of pounds, Christ himself, and all that he is worth, and the Lord seems to deny you, and now you sink, and grow sullen, may not the Lord now say, was there ever such pride and insolence ? As to be unwilling*

unwilling to be damned for ever ; though I dare say this is not the pride which cast the Apostate Angels out of Heaven. So that though Conviction and Compunction, and Humiliation be the only way to come to Christ, yet it is such a way, as brings us never the nearer him ; when all this is done we are where we were : Before we were humbled it was at the Lords good pleasure, whether we should have Christ or not, and so it is still.

What then is to be done further in order to our closing with Christ by Faith ? For hitherto there is no foundation for our Faith : Why, you must not catch at Christ, but stay till God give Christ to you, till God take you up in his arms, that you may lean and rest upon the bosom of your Beloved through Faith ; you must stay till God give you a particular call to come to Christ, and whether that will be ever or never, no man can tell : *Pag. 153. Many a wounded sinner will be scrambling after Christ from some general reports of him (such as his Gospel makes) before the day and hour of Gods glorious and gracious call, now for any man to receive Christ, or to come to Christ before he is called, is presumption (I, unpardonable presumption too to attempt impossibilities, for no body can come till he is called) no man should come unless first called (and therefore no crime to stay away) as it is in calling to an ordinary Office, so it is in our calling much more to special Grace, no man takes this honour to himself but he that is called of God, Heb. v. 4. (it is great presumption to usurp the Office of a Priest, or Prophet, or King, without a lawful designation to such an Office, and therefore it is much greater presumption to attempt to be a good man and a good Christian without such a particular Call) for what hath any man to do with Christ, to make himself a Son of God and Heir of Glory (to take care*

No certain way

to please God, and to make himself happy) but he that is called of God? Well Sinner, wait with patience till thou art called, and so thy work is at an end for this time.

But how shall a poor humbled Sinner know when he is called, that then he may come to Christ? Why, you must have a care, that you do not mistake the general offers of the Gospel for this special Call, for they are not a sufficient foundation for our Faith in coming to Christ, though they are made to the weary and heavy laden too: Men cannot, men will not come at such a Call, and indeed they have no reason to do it. For Christ is not intended for all, and therefore though he be offered to all in the Gospel, yet it would be great presumption for every one to lay hold on him: for Christ doth not immediately offer himself to all men, as a Saviour, whereby they may be encouraged to serve him as a King (that is, he does not promise Salvation and Eternal Life in the Gospel with a design, that every one that will, should take encouragement from these Promises to obey and serve him) but first as a King, commanding them to cast away their Weapons, and stoop under his Scepter, acknowledging that if ever he save me, I will bless him, if he damn me, his name is righteous in so dealing with me: The meaning of which is, that every man is invited in the Gospel to submit himself to the mercy of Christ, but then Christ reserves a liberty to himself to save or damn, as he pleases; and this is all the encouragement the Gospel gives us. These are hard terms, and such as sound more like the arbitrary will of an haughty and imperious Lord, than the conditions of a gracious and merciful Saviour.

What then must we do now? Why, the only remedy is to venture and try, God hath elected but few,
and

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convert,
p. 75.

of getting into Christ.

and Christ hath shed his blood for few, and therefore we must venture, (and a hard venture it is, where there is such great odds against us, and yet our eternal happiness depends upon the success, too great a stake for such a venture!) as many men among us do now, who hearing of one good Living fallen, twenty of them will go and seek for it, although they know only one shall have it, (though did they know, it were irrevocably determined, who should have it, none of them would stir, but wait till the news were brought them; good God! what Merchant-Adventurers are poor Sinners, who after all their seeking for Christ are in such danger of missing him!) or as the Lepers in Samaria, if we stay here we must die, if we go out to the Camp of the Assyrians we may live: Which is the resolution of desperate men, as it seems the Gospel condemns us all to be.

No previous disposition can give us any encouragement to come to Christ; Humiliation cannot do it, after this we must expect a Call still, we are but probationers for Christ still, and are in as great danger of missing him, as any one of the twenty Competitors are of missing that Living, which only one can have; and which is more wonderful, Assurance it self cannot do it, * For if you come to Christ, be- * Sound
cause you have assurance, (that is, if you come to Believer,
Christ, because you are sure you are already come.) p. 246.
or because you feel such and such graces, and Heavenly
impressions of Gods spirit in you, then you may many a day
and year keep at a distance from Christ, and live without
Christ: this is a hard saying, that though we come to
Christ, we may keep at a distance from him, nay, though
we come, because we are sure, we are come already:
It is time now to give over, and despair of ever be-
ing sure, when Assurance it self is no security.

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ibid.
p. 215.

Nothing then but a *particular Call* is a good reason to come to Christ: *When the Spirit of God makes the general Call (which signifies nothing) particular, when the Soul sees, that the Lord in special means me, singles out me in special to believe: for otherwise the Souls of the Elect will not be much moved with the Call of God, so long as they think, that the Lord offers no more mercy to me than to any reprobate (that is no more mercy than what will damn them) and therefore the Spirit of Christ makes the Call particular, I have called thee by Name, Isa. xliiii. 7. He calleth all his Sheep by name, Joh. x. 5. not by their Christian name, (as he well observes, for they cannot be Christians before they come to Christ, and that must be after this Call) but as the Lord from before all Worlds wrote down their names in the Book of Life, and loves them in special, so in Vocation (the first opening of Election) the Lord makes this Call special; and so special, as if it were by name: Look, saith the Lord Jesus, how I have left thousand thousands in the World, and have had greater cause so to have left thee, (this is free Grace indeed) but behold I am come unto thee, O come thou unto me. So that it is impossible for a Sinner to do any thing in order to his Union to Christ; there is no foundation of our Faith in Christ, but this particular Call, and we must wait patiently for it, and be contented too if it never come.*

And when the Soul hath this *particular Call*, suppose it should suspect this *Call* for a Delusion, what course can it take to satisfy it self, that this is the Call of the Spirit of God, and not the cheat and imposture of an Enthusiastick fancy? Truly, none that I know of; if this calling by name will not satisfy it, there is no other way but to call for the Book of Election, and see whether its name be enrolled

rolled there: The best of it is, that all that are called must come, and therefore they need enquire no farther.

But secondly, Though we know not how to get into Christ, it would be some comfort to know that we are in him, but this is as impossible as the other: As the only Foundation of our Faith in coming to Christ, (according to these mens notions) is this special and particular Call of the Spirit, so the only infallible assurance any one can have that he is in Christ, is the testimony of the Spirit, that Spirit of Adoption which teacheth us to cry, *Abba Father*; and yet God does not afford this Testimony of the Spirit to all, but suffers many good Christians to walk in darkness, and hides his face from them, and conceals the evidences of his eternal love, for no other reason, but because they are ^{* desirous of it, and would be quiet if} they should know it: This is somewhat hard measure; ^{* Sound Believer, p. 130.} but suppose you have, or think you have this Testimony of the Spirit, how can you be sure that it is not a cheat and delusion, the imposture of the Devil, or of your own self-flattering imaginations?

To satisfy this Scruple we are directed to marks and evidences, and thus this *infallible assurance* from the Testimony of the Spirit, must in its last resolve be founded upon some *moral evidence*; as it is with the Church of Rome, who after a great noise and cry of *Infallibility*, are at last forced to resolve their Faith into some motives of *Credibility*, or to dance round in an endless Circle.

Well, but let us consider what are the marks and evidences of our being in Christ: and now you must enquire, whether you have the Spirit of Christ, and it is just as easie to know this, as whether you be in Christ: But are you true Believers? Is your Faith of the right stamp?

stamp? Is it wrought by the Almighty Power of God? Or is it such an easie, common, presumptuous, false Faith as that which is in the generality of men? And this is as easie to know as either of the former; for if there be such a false presumptuous Faith, as takes Christ when he does not belong to us, and rests and relies on Christ only for Pardon, Life, and Salvation, and yet shall never have Christ, how shall we know whether our Faith be true and genuine? Such as will make Christ ours? And the answer to this brings us to that great mark of Sanctification; you must consider the Effects of Faith; Doth it purifie your heart? Doth it overcome the World? Doth it work by love? If any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature; are you then new Creatures? Is the state of your Person changed from a Child of Wrath, to an Heir of Grace? (which is the thing to be proved) Or is your nature changed? Do you not think, speak, act as you did before? Do ye walk in newness of life, &c. Have you crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts? Do you bring forth fruit, as every branch in Christ (which is not rejected by him) doth? That is, you must prove your Justification by your Sanctification, your Faith by your Works: It must be acknowledged that these are some of those marks and Characters which the Scripture gives of good Christians, by which we may as certainly know what our state is, as the Tree is known by its Fruit; and since it is no better, I am heartily glad it is no worse, that good Works and a holy Life may at least put in for marks and evidences of a justified state: Though the truth is, this is a meer complement to Holiness, and as they order the matter, a holy Life can no more be the sign of a justified state, than it can justify us.

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Rom. 8.
p. 65.

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For first, since Holiness is not necessary to our Union with Christ, it can be no necessary sign of it; we are united to Christ before we are holy, as appears from what I have already discoursed, and therefore an unholy man may be united to Christ, and how then can Holiness be the only sure mark of our Union to Christ? Indeed they tell us that Holiness does necessarily follow our Union to Christ, but no man knows how long it may be before it follows, and yet all this while such a Person is united to Christ; at best, this gives evidence but to one part of the Question, a holy life may be a good evidence that such a man is in Christ, but the want of it is no certain evidence that a man is not in Christ, and therefore this mark may be rejected by any one who hath no mind to it.

Nay, secondly, According to these mens principles, we cannot tell whether we are holy or not, till we know whether we are in Christ or not; our Union to Christ must be an evidence of our Holiness, not our Holiness an evidence of our Union to Christ: Till we are united to Christ, we can do nothing to please God; the best actions of Christless and unregenerate men are but *splendida peccata, glittering impieties*, which may appear so fair and lovely, that they may deceive both other men and themselves for the true fruits of the Spirit, but yet are odious and abominable to God, because *the person* who does them is *out of Christ*: Our Persons must be first accepted in Christ, and then our services: We cannot judge of Holiness by the external performance of any duty, nor by the inward sense of our own minds, but must first know whether we are in Christ, whether our *Persons* be accepted in him, before we can tell whether any thing we do be good

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and

What Evidences there are

and acceptable to God: and this is a plain demonstration that Holiness cannot be an evidence of our Union to Christ, because we must first know our Union to Christ, before we can know that we are holy.

And thirdly, At other times these men make the work of *Sanctification in this life* so imperfect, and so like an *unsanctified state*, that it is impossible to distinguish a sanctified and un sanctified man; and upon this account Holiness and Sanctification must needs be a very sorry evidence of our Union to Christ, when it is so imperfect, that it cannot be known; for that which is an evidence of another thing, ought to be very evident it self.

An unregenerate man is under the *Law of Sin*, under the reigning power of it, and a regenerate man (as they describe him) is in a state as like this, *as one Egg is like another*: For a regenerate man may be *carнал, sold under sin*; that is, a Slave and Captive to it; *he may do those things which he allows not, nay, those things which he hates*; that is, he may sin against the clearest convictions of Conscience, and sense of duty; he may neglect to do those things which he knows he ought to do; and do those things which he knows he ought not to do; he may find a *Law in his Members*, that when he would do good, evil is present with him; a *Law in his Members warring against the Law of his Mind*, which brings him into captivity to the *Law of sin, that is in his Members*: For so they tell us that St. Paul complains of all this in the Person of a regenerate man, in Rom. vii. Now an unregenerate man does the very same, and indeed cannot do much worse; he sins against his Conscience, is brought into captivity to sin, and is over-powered by indwelling sin; he finds a great many natural fears and terrors, when

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he is tempted to sin, which give some check to him, and make him sin against his own will, with some unwillingness and reluctancy; he approves the Law of God as just and equal, his Conscience assents to it, but there is a strong bias upon his will, which runs counter to all these holy Commands, and makes him a Slave and Captive to his lusts; Now not to dispute at present which of these two the Apostle means in Rom. vii. I think it is hard to assign any difference between them, the regenerate man according to this description is full as bad as the unregenerate man, or if there be any difference, the regenerate man is the worst of the two, because in the regenerate man the Spirit is led into Captivity, but in the unregenerate man only natural Conscience, which is a much weaker Principle, and so is capable of a better excuse, is led into Captivity; but which of these two it is, no man can tell; and therefore a regenerate man hath great reason to fear that he may be unregenerate, and an unregenerate man hath as much reason to hope that he may be regenerate: And what becomes then of this evidence of Sanctification to prove our Union to Christ, when Sanctification it self cannot be distinguished from an un sanctified state?

* Dr. Jacomb in his Discourse of the Law of Sin, at- * Rom. 8. tempts to assign the difference between the Law of sin, p. 182. as it is in the regenerate, and as it is in the unregenerate; and hath given us such a Description of an unregenerate State, that I think there is scarce such an unregenerate man in the World; and yet if we must judge what a regenerate man is by inverting the Character of the unregenerate, he is by odds much the worse man.

As first, When the whole bent and tendency of the heart is towards sin, when the propensities of the Soul thereto, are intire and unmixt, there it is the Law of sin,

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and the Law of sin which is proper to the unregenerate: but is every one a regenerate man then, who hath some good inclinations and propensities in him? Who hath some wouldings and velleities to that which is good? It is to be hoped then, as many bad men as there are, there are few unregenerate men in the World.

Secondly, Which he tells us is the *explication* of the former, (as indeed I think it needs some explanation) *when all the several faculties of the Soul are altogether on sins side, and wholly take its part, then it is the Law of sin, and that which is proper to the unregenerate: Where the understanding gives in its final and positive dictate, that sin is good, represents it as eligible to the Will, upon this closes with it, embraces it, cleaves to it, the affections (desire, joy, delight,) run out upon it, where it is thus, the case is determined: Yea, without controversie, but where shall we find such a man? It is so far from being true, that there are such unregenerate men, that I believe there never was such a man born: There are too many who chuse evil, though they know it to be evil, for the seeming advantages of profit or pleasure it brings with it; but to chuse evil, as believing it to be good, and to rejoyce and delight in it as good and eligible for it self, is such an unregenerate state, as the Devil himself never yet arrived at; for though he be a very wicked Spirit, yet he is no Fool or Sot; as those must be, who mistake evil for good in such plain and palpable instances: The Heathens themselves at this rate were all regenerate men, for their Consciences accused them for doing evil, Rom. ii. they knew good to be good, and evil to be evil, though they did not act agreeably to this knowledge: There never was such a man as he describes, when he tells us,*

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of our being in Christ.

**That sin comes to the sinner, and says, Art thou willing that I should rule? Yes (saith he) with all my heart; I like thy Commandments and Government, I am thine, and submit to thee, to be at thy dispose, I here swear fealty and allegiance to thee, &c. This Oath, &c. might very well have been spared, for there is enough in all Conscience without it: And yet if this be the principal difference between the regenerate and unregenerate man, that the unregenerate man chuses sin, as believing it to be good, and the regenerate man chuses sin, though he knows it to be evil, it is plain that the regenerate man is much the worse, because his sins have the greatest aggravation that any sins are capable of, which the sins of an unregenerate man have not, viz. that they are sins against knowledge, and so according to our Saviours reasoning, this regenerate man will be beaten with more stripes; I doubt not but in this description he wrongs the unregenerate man very much, but he makes the regenerate man ten times more the child of wrath than the other.*

But then thirdly, *The Law of sin hath different workings in the People of God than in others; this working of the Law of sin in the people of God, let it be what working he will, methinks is an ill thing, and makes Sanctification a very sorry Evidence; but let us hear how it is.*

First, *Where sin is committed industriously and designedly, there it is the Law of sin, and which is peculiar to the graceless: So that unless men be very cunning at the trade of sin, and lay projects and designs of sinning, they are not under the Law of sin, as it is peculiar to the graceless; Grace is very consistent with taking all fair opportunities of sinning, so we do not design it before hand,*

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Secondly, *When the temptation easily prevails, and there is little or no opposition made to sin, then it is the Law of sin, as it works in the Unregenerate*: This is an Argument indeed that a man is a willing Slave, but when a man is conquered by a temptation, though he make some resistance, it is an argument that sin is his Master, which rules and governs, especially if this be often; and such a man is surely none of Christs Freemen.

And therefore not to fail, Thirdly, *When sin carries it in spite of all opposition, then it is the Law of sin, and the power of sin: that is, against all external discouragements, all the threatenings of the Law of God, the Scepter of the Gospel, the Love and Mercy of God, or his Wrath and Justice, the Death, Sufferings, Agonies, Wounds, Blood of Jesus Christ, the reproof of the Word, Ministers, Christians; his own Resolutions, Vows, Promises, Purposes, &c.* So that it seems when sin carries it in despite of all external oppositions only, it is the mark of an unregenerate man, but when it carries it both against external and internal oppositions, that is a sign of a regenerate man: For a regenerate man has the same external oppositions to preserve him from sin, that an unregenerate man hath; and besides these, he hath the internal oppositions, the checks of his own Conscience, &c. which he says the unregenerate man has not.

And fourthly, *When it is sinning, and no sense of sin, no after repentance for it, then it is the Law of Sin*: Now what bad man is there, who does not at one time or other repent of his sins, and complain of them, and how many are there that repent of their sins, and make large confessions of them, and yet return to them again: So that, there are no men but do at one time or other express some sorrow for their sins, (which he calls Repentance) and there

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of our being in Christ.

are a great many who pretend thus to be sorry for their sins, who, it is to be feared, are never the better men for it: And yet were there any such, who sin without any sense of it, they would be much better than these regenerate men, who feel the gripings of their Conscience for sin, and yet return to it.

The result is this, That there is no great matter to chuse between the regenerate and the unregenerate man, only (as they order the matter) the regenerate man hath the better name, but is the worse man: That if we come to external evidences, the regenerate man hath all the reason in the world to fear that he is unregenerate; and the unregenerate man hath some little reason to hope that he is regenerate; and is not Sanctification an excellent mark now of our Union to Christ, when a regenerate man may be full as bad or worse than the unregenerate? Indeed it is wonderful to consider how little a matter will serve for an evidence of Grace (after all their talk of Sanctification) when they come to administer comfort to distressed Consciences: *Oh! saith the Soul, I find sin prevail, and how can I be comforted?* (not by the mark of Sanctification sure!) *Answ. I will subdue your iniquities, and cast your sins into the midst of the Sea.* Object. *But the Devil will be busie with me, where-ever I go.* *Answ. God hath said it, I will tread down Satan under your feet.* Object. *But I cannot go to God by prayer to fetch comfort: (Comfort? What hast thou to do with comfort? Get quit of thy sins first, and then it is time enough for comfort.)* *Answ. Though it be so, yet believe, and thou shalt have thy desire: (but I doubt the Soul that cannot pray, cannot believe neither.)* Object. *But I am afraid I shall fall away from God: (Afraid of it? Thou art fallen away from God already, if sin prevail*

*Shepherd's
Saints
Jewel,
p. 192.*

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vail so much, for sin is the great Apostacy from God.)
 Answ. None can pluck thee out of Christs hands, neither sin nor the Devil. (But how if they be not in Christs hands, yet sin I doubt may keep them out, and if God cut off barren Branches from this spiritual Vine, there is some danger that putrid and rotten Branches will not escape.) And God hath said, I have made an everlasting Covenant with thee, that I will not turn away from thee, to do thee good. Object. This is good news, had I a right to the promise, but alas! I cannot believe, and take a naked promise. Answ. Dost thou desire to believe, and to have Christ? And say thus, If it were possible Christ and Heaven should be separated, I would rather desire Christ without Heaven, than Heaven without Christ. Object. But this is a hard matter, and I cannot say I truly desire Christ on such terms as I should. (This saying is the best sign of Grace I have met with yet; for it is an argument he is an honest man, who will not contradict the natural fence of his mind, and say he can do that which is impossible to be done: For it is a very odd proposal in order to comfort a poor Soul, that he must be willing to be damned with Christ, before he must take comfort in hopes of being saved by him.) Answ. But is it the grief of thy heart that thou canst not deny thyself? And desirest thou rather than be separated from Christ, to close with Christ upon any terms? Object. Alas! I am so far from being grieved as I ought, that I rather find a heart that will not grieve and mourn for sin, &c. (Certainly they are at cross purposes, their Objections and Answers do so ill agree; what's matter for mourning for sin, man? Canst thou desire to have Christ upon any terms, though it be to be damned with him?) Answ. Hast thou any will to it? Mark the place, And whosoever will, let him take of the Waters

ters of Life freely: Not that every one that will have Christ shall have him, but art thou willing to part with thy sins? But the poor Soul saith again, I fear I shall never do this: But art thou willing that Christ should make thee willing (against thy will) and pitch thee upon a promise, and hold thee there: (for shame, poor Soul refuse not this) then comfort thy self, thou hast a right to Gods Promises, Thus this evidence of Sanctification is dwindled away into a desire to be willing, nay, into a desire to be made willing; and he is a strange man who cannot go so far.

But then fourthly, I observe further, That when they have a mind to take down the confidence of men, who are apt to presume too soon, that their condition is good, they do so magnifie the attainments of Hypocrites, who shall never go to Heaven, that it is impossible for any sanctified man to do more than an Hypocrite may do; so that notwithstanding any Evidences of Sanctification, which he can discover in himself, for ought he or any body else can tell, he may be a Hypocrite still, which quite spoils the Evidence of Sanctification, because we cannot distinguish a sanctified man from a Hypocrite.

Thus for Example: One may plead, I have left my Shepherd's sins I once lived in, and am now no Drunkard, no Swearer, no Liar: I answer, Thou mayest be washed from the mire (the pollution of the World) and yet be a Swine in Gods account (which he proves from 2 Pet. ii. 20.) where the Apostle tells them, That if they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ, and are again intangled therein, and overcome, (if they return to their old vices) then their latter end is worse than the beginning; which is point-blank contrary to what he affirms, That those who have escaped these pollutions, and are not yet intangled again

again in them, may notwithstanding that be Swine in Gods account, for so he adds, *Thou mayst live a blameless, innocent, honest, smooth life, and yet be a miserable Creature.* But I pray, (saith such a man) *and that often; So thou mayst, and yet never be saved,* Isa. i. 11. *To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices? To great purpose sure, when they are offered by men of blameless, innocent, honest, smooth lives, the want of which made those Sacrifices abominable to God. But I fast sometimes; So did the Scribes and Pharisees twice a week, but it was to devour Widows Houses, which was not the Fast of an honest innocent man: But I hear the Word of God, and like the best Preachers; So did the stony ground, who heard the Word with joy, and for a season believed; And this had been well, and a good sign of grace, if it had continued. I read the Scripture often; so did the Pharisees, who were so perfect in the Bible, that Christ needed but say, It hath been said of old times, for they knew the Text without intimation: Men of prodigious Memories certainly, better than any Concordance; but though Knaves may read the Scripture, and be never the better for it, yet good men may read it to good purpose, and therefore I hope reading the Scripture is no argument that a man is a Hypocrite, because the Pharisees were. But I am grieved, and am sorrowful, and repent of my sins; so did Judas; but he hanged himself, and that surely could be no true repentance. But I love good men, and their company; so did the foolish Virgins; but they slept, and suffered their Lamps to go out, which I hope all that love good men do not. But God hath given me much knowledge; that thou mayst have, and never be saved: Yes, and twenty good things more, but if a blameless honest man have the keeping of this*

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this knowledge, it is never the worse for him. *But I keep the Lords day strictly; so did the Jews, whom yet Christ condemned: Had he been as well acquainted with the Scriptures as the Pharisees were, he would not have said that the Jews kept the Lords day; however this is one good thing, which doth well in the company of more, though it will not justify a man, when it is alone. But I have many good desires and endeavours to get to Heaven; these thou and thousands may have, and miss of Heaven: and yet when he was in a more gentle humour, he told the poor doubting Soul, that desire, nay, that a desire only to desire at two or three removes, was enough.*

But many do duties without life or zeal, I am zealous; so was Jehu, (to destroy the Worship of Baal, and to retain Jeroboams Calves) and so was Paul while a Pharisee (in persecuting the Christian Church and therefore an universal, and religious, and well-governed zeal for God can be no sign of Grace.) But I am constant and persevere in godly courses; so did the young man, all these things have I kept from my youth (only he left Christ for the sake of his riches, and so did not persevere.) But some men are conscious to themselves of their own hypocrisie, but I do all with a good heart for God: So thou mayst think of thy self, and be deceived; (and if this be an objection, let a man have what marks he will, the objection will still be good, and so all evidences signifie nothing; for after all it may be objected, That a man may be deceived in it, and think he hath these marks, when he hath them not.) There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is death, thou mayst live so as to deceive thy self and others, and yet prove an Hypocrite: As if because some men may think themselves good, who are in a bad way, no man could ever be

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be sure, that he is in the right; and thus farewell all Evidences.

But after all this, it would be worth the while to know how to distinguish a regenerate from an unregenerate man; and that he tells us may be done thus, *An unregenerate man, let him go never so far, do never so much, yet he lives in some one sin or other; this now is very strange, What, go never so far? And do never so much? and yet live in some one sin or other? What, live a blameless, innocent, honest, smooth life, and yet live in some one sin or other? And yet suppose he did, a regenerate man may be in captivity to the Law of sin, and pray what's the difference? But then an unregenerate man cannot be poor in spirit, and so carried out of all duties to Christ: That is, if an unregenerate man do good, he is conscious to himself that he doth it, if he have a good heart, he feels a good heart in himself, and in all he doth, and therefore feels not a want of all good, which is true poverty of spirit: So that according to this discourse, the surest mark of a regenerate man is either to have no good in himself, or if he have any: to be mistaken and think he hath none, either of which I think is a very odd sign of Grace.*

But then *an unregenerate man comes unto Christ, but he never gets into Christ, never takes up his eternal rest and lodging in Jesus Christ only: I thought coming had been believing, and that believing would have done the business, and if so, God forbid that any man should be damned for want of that other Metaphor, of taking up his eternal rest and lodging in Christ: Men in distress of Conscience (that is, all unregenerate men under such distress) if they have comfort from Christ they are contented, if they have Salvation from Hell by Christ they are contented (and I think they have some reason then*

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then to be contented) *but Christ himself (that is, without comfort and without Salvation) contents them not. Now to be contented with Christ without comfort, and without salvation, is so far from being the mark of an unregenerate man, that I am not yet satisfied that it is the mark of an unreasonable man.*

Now are not these men, do you think, great friends to Sanctification, who make all the parts of Sanctification, *the reformation of our lives, an innocent and blameless Conversation, Fasting, Prayer, Hearing, Reading, Conversing with good Men, zeal for God, perseverance in well-doing, honest and sincere intentions in all we do, no more than the marks of Hypocrites, and give no better marks of a regenerate man, than to be sensible of no good in himself, (and then he must either have none, or be a Fool, though having none is the surest way not to be sensible of it) and to take up his eternal rest in Christ, and to be contented with Christ without comfort, and without salvation.*

And now I shall conclude this Section with a remarkable passage in the *Sincere Convert*, whereby it will evidently appear what these men think of Sanctification: There we have an account what course some men take to secure their eternal happiness: *That when they find themselves tired and weary of themselves, and hearing that only Christ can save them, they go to Christ to remove those sins which tired and loaded them, that he would enable them to do better than formerly: If they get these sins subdued and removed, and if they find power to do better, then they hope to be saved, (here is the evidence of Sanctification) whereas (as he adds) thou mayst be damned, and go to the Devil at last, though thou dost escape all the pollu-*

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tions of the World, and that not from thy self, and thy own strength, but from the knowledge of Jesus Christ; woe to you for ever, if you die in this state, (with your sins mortified and subdued by Christ) and the reason is, because this is to come to Christ to suck juice from him to maintain his own Berries, (his own stock of Graces) alas! he is but the Ivy, he is no Member nor Branch in this Tree, and hence he never grows to be one with Christ. So that holiness and obedience is no evidence of our Union to Christ, though we fetch strength from Christ to do his will; we may only grasp about Christ all this while, as the Ivy doth about the Oak, but never be united to him, and become one with him: So that now we must return where we began, and stick to the testimony of the Spirit, without any external evidence, that is, to private Enthusiasms, for Sanctification can be no evidence of our Union to Christ.

Good God! Into what Mazes and Labyrinths do these men lead poor distressed Souls! They can direct them to no certain way of getting into Christ, nor how to know whether they are in Christ, or not: And now we may plainly see what friends these men are to a holy life: They all agree, that Holiness is not antecedently necessary to our Union with Christ, but they only pretend to make it a necessary mark and evidence of our Union, and yet they will not allow it this priviledge neither, to be a certain evidence of our Union to Christ; it may prove us united to Christ, as the Ivy is to the Oak, not as a Branch is united to the Vine; and I hope this will justify any mans zeal against such opinions as undermine the very foundation of Christianity.

The Gospel-method of Salvation is very plain and easie: Those great Miracles our Saviour wrought, and

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and his Resurrection from the Dead, are the foundation of our Faith, a sufficient Reason to believe that he came from God, and declared his Will to the World: A publick Profession of this Faith in our Baptism makes us the visible Members of his Body, which is his Church, and a sincere obedience to his Gospel makes a real Union between Christ and us, and entitles us to all the Promises of the Gospel: And every man may as certainly know whether he be thus united to Christ, as he can feel the motions of his own mind, as he can know what he loves, and hates, and chuses, and what the course of his life and actions are, and there is no need of any Revelation, of any private Testimony of the Spirit to assure men of this, no more than there is to assure them of any thing which is evident to their outward or inward senses.

The Testimony of the Spirit concerns the General Adoption of Christians for the Sons of God, not to testify to any particular man, that he is a good Christian, or in a state of Grace: That is, it is not a private, but a publick Testimony given to the whole Christian Church: That holy Spirit which God bestowed upon the Apostles and Primitive Christians, which enabled them to work miracles, and to speak Languages which they had never learnt, and to Prophesie, was a plain argument to all the World, that God now owned the Christians, not the Jews, for his chosen and elect People, for his Sons and Children: For this was the great dispute of those days, whether Jews or Christians were the Sons of God, whether God now owned the Jewish or the Christian Religion, and the Apostles decide this Controversie by the Testimony of the Spirit; for God could not give a greater Testimony to the Christian

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Church, than the gift of the holy Spirit; for it was a plain argument that he owned them for his Sons, when he bestowed the Spirit of his Son on them: As the Apostle argues, *Gal.iii.2. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?* That is, did God bestow his Spirit on you, while ye were Jews, or upon your conversion to Christianity; For if God bestowed his Spirit only on Christians, this is a sufficient Seal to the Christian Religion.

This is very plain and intelligible; the Testimony of the Spirit assures us that all Christians are the Sons of God, and Heirs of his Promises, and every mans own Conscience will tell him, whether he be a Christian, that is, whether he heartily believe, and obey the Gospel of Christ, and herein consists our Union to Christ, and fellowship with him: Let us then leave those other dim notions to men who can believe what no man can understand, who despise every thing that can be understood, as if it were no better than *Carnal Reason*.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the Love of Christ to Believers.

SECT. I.

I Have now finish'd the greatest part of my Design, and shall discourse more briefly of what remains. Next to our *Union* with Christ, follows our *Communion* with him; for though Communion and Fellowship in the Scripture notion of those words signify no more than what we call *Union*, as * I have already proved, yet in these mens Divinity they are very different: Our *Union* to Christ is represented by our *Marriage* to him, our *Communion* with him by *consequential, conjugal affections*: The only thing I shall at present take notice of for a conclusion of all is, that mutual and reciprocal love, which is betwixt Christ and Believers, *Christs love to Believers*, and the *Believers love to Christ*.

First, *Christs love to Believers*; the Scripture doth very justly magnifie the *Love of Christ*, as the greatest example of Goodness that ever was known in the World; and the greatest expression of the Love of Christ was his *dying for us*: *He is that good Shepherd who giveth his life for his Sheep*, Joh. x. 11. and our Saviour himself tells us, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend*: And therefore when the Apostle designed to mention the greatest expression of Christs Love, he instances in

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* Chap. 4.
Sect. 1.
p. 186.

this, Eph. v. 25. *Husbands love your Wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it:* And when the same Apostle represents the constringing power of Christs love to captivate our affections, and to engage us to live to him, he argues from his love in dying for us, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *For the Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again:* And the most surprising circumstance of all, which gives a new lustre to the Love of Christ, is that he died for us while we were Enemies, Rom. v. 6, 7, 8. *For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly, for scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die, but God commendeth his Love towards us, that while we were yet Sinners Christ died for us.*

But though this be the greatest, it is not the only expression of Christs Love; herein indeed was the Love of Christ perfected that he died for us, but he expresses the same good will in all the methods of his Grace and Providence: For Christ being our Lord and Master, the most proper expression of his Love to us is in an easie and gentle Government, and a kind and watchful Providence, not in such a fondness of passion, as is sometimes seen among equals: This * I told you was exprest by those Metaphors of his being a *Shepherd*, a *Husband*, a *Head*, a *Friend*: And our Saviour assures us, *that his yoke is easie, and his burden light*, that he is a mild and gentle Governour, *meeke and lowly in mind*: That he hath declared to us the secrets of Gods Counsell concerning our Salvation with the same freedom and plainness, that a man useth to his Friend; *Henceforth I call you not*

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Servants, for the Servant knoweth not what his Lord doth, but I have called you Friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you, Joh. xv. 15. He pities our weakness and infirmities, and is ready to help and succour us; he is now ascended up into Heaven, where he personally intercedes for us, and with his own hand dispenses all those Blessings to us, which we want, and pray for in his name; *He is a gracious and merciful High-Priest, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, being in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin,* Heb. iv. 15.

And now it is no wonder if he, who died, and who intercedes for us, take pleasure in good men, and dwell with them, as one Friend dwells with another. *Job. xiv. 21. He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him:* And in *Ver. 23. If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him:* That is, Christ will in a more peculiar manner be present with such good men, who are careful in all things to obey him, and will give very sensible demonstrations of his presence with them; Not that he will make any new Revelations to them, for he hath already revealed the whole mind and will of God in such a plain and familiar manner, that every one may understand it, who will but exercise the same reason in it, that he does to understand the *Laws* of his Prince; but yet when a Soul is transformed into the likeness and image of Christ, it many times feels such strong and vigorous motions to that which is good, and such great and ravishing delights in all the acts of Religion, as infinitely excel all the

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pleasures of sense, and are a plain demonstration of a more peculiar presence of God in such a Soul; these divine joys are by the Psalmist compared to the Feasts upon Sacrifices, *Psal. xxxvi. 8. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy pleasures,* that is, they shall relish as great pleasure and satisfaction in the sense of thy goodness, and in paying their just praises and acknowledgments to thee, as those do, who feast upon the Sacrifices which are offered in the Temple: For it is very reasonable to think, that a Soul, which is made one with God by a participation of his nature, should feel such divine impressions from God, as may both quicken its motions, and sweeten its work: There is a secret sympathy between things which are alike, two unisons will move when either of them is toucht, and two Souls which are of the same make, and united by a strong and intimate friendship, do many times feel each others passions at a distance, by a secret and unaccountable power of nature; and can we think then, but that a Soul which heartily loves God, and passionately breaths after a greater likeness to him, and fuller enjoyment of him, must needs sometimes feel such divine touches and impressions as are the effects (if I may so speak) of a mutual love and sympathy of natures: Some such thing our Saviour hath promised, and good men experience, not in equal degrees indeed, nor equally at all times, but in proportion to their attainments in true piety and virtue, and to the present frame and disposition of their own minds.

This is a short and true account of the *Love of Christ*, which deserves for ever to be admired and adored; and it must needs be a very hearty trouble

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Concerning Christs love to Believers.

to all good men to see so great and so generous a love so miserably abused and misrepresented by Childish and Romantick descriptions: Too many there are, who cloath our Saviour with all the passions and follies of mortal men, and think they honour him very much, the more extravagant they make him in his love: It were easie to expatiate in this Argument, and to give such a character of the Love of Christ, as I believe these very men will think prophane, when they find it in any Books, but their own; and possibly it might do good service to Religion, and tend much to the honour of our Lord and Master to put them out of conceit with it, but I fear the Reader would think me prophane in doing it, though in their own words, and therefore I shall chuse rather only to take notice of two things, which these men much insist on in their discourses of the Love of Christ, and so dismiss them.

First then, the Love of Christ is a Love to the *Person* of a Believer, without considering any other *qualifications*, than that he is *such an individual Person*; that is, the excellency of Christs Love consists in this, that he loves for no reason; now I confess this is a *wonderful Love*, but wherein the excellency of it consists, I cannot see; I am sure we account that man a Fool, who loves at this rate; we who are reasonable Creatures, think that we are bound to govern all our actions, and the passions of our mind too, by reason, and we account it a reproach to a man to act either against reason, or without it, to do any thing of which he cannot give a reasonable account; and how that should come to be the perfection of the Love of God, which is a reproach to men, is above my apprehension. Indeed were this true, it would undermine the very foundations of Religion;

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for the great end of Religion is to please God, and to procure his love and favour, but if God and Christ love for no reason, then it is a vain thing for us to think of pleasing God, or procuring his love by any thing we can do: Whether we obey him, or disobey him, it is all one as to this Case; for if he please to love us without any reason, our sins cannot hinder it, and if it does not please him to love us, our Holiness and Obedience cannot alter him: When our acceptation with God depends wholly upon a Sovereign and unaccountable will, nothing we can do can either hinder or promote it, and therefore all Religion is in vain.

The foundation of this mistake is a Philosophical nicety, that God must act wholly from himself, and therefore must not be moved by any external cause, whereas should he love us because we are holy and obedient to him, or hate us, because we are wicked, his love and hatred would depend upon an external cause, *viz.* the holiness or wickedness of Creatures, which unbecomes an *Independent being* to depend upon any thing else: The sum of which reasoning is this, that because God is the first cause of all things, on whom all other things depend, and he on nothing, therefore he must love and hate his Creatures without any reason but his own unaccountable will: For this is all the inconvenience they can object, that when God loves or hates, rewards or punishes his Creatures, the reason of this difference he makes between his Creatures must be fetcht from the persons themselves, whom he thus loves or hates; and so it must of necessity be, if he have any reason at all; for the reason of love or hatred ought to be in the object, not in the person who loves or hates: And yet in propriety of speech God cannot be said to depend
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on his Creatures or any thing without himself for the reason of his love or hatred, but his own nature is the reason of it: He is infinitely holy, and therefore loves holiness and hates sin, and his natural love to holiness is the reason why he loves holy men, and his natural hatred to sin is the reason why he hates wicked men; his own holiness is the reason why he loves holy men, but the holiness of a Creature is the reason why he determines his love to any particular person; and if they will call this a depending on Creatures, we must acknowledge that God does thus depend on his Creatures in the administration of his Providence, in the distributions of Rewards and Punishments, and he should not be wise, and holy, and just, and good, if he did not, that is, if he did not put such a difference between things and persons, as their natures require. It is a strange notion of an *Independent Being*, that he must have no other reason for what he does but his own arbitrary will, which is so far from being a perfection, that it destroys all the other perfections of the Divine Nature.

Secondly, These men tell us too, that *the love of Christ is immutable*, that having once fixt his love upon us though without any reason, he can never alter: That *sin it self cannot separate us from the Love of Christ; as there was nothing in us, that was the ground of his planting his love on us, so there is nothing that shall be able to overturn the thoughts of his love, when once they are fixt on us:* (though this is no certain demonstration, for he who loves for no reason may give over loving for none) *if sin fore-seen were not able to hinder him from planting his heart on us, how then shall it (that is sin committed) be able to overturn the thoughts of his heart, when once they are fixed on us?* This is a strong and fixed love indeed, which sin it self cannot
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alter, but how *wise* and *holy* a love it is, let any man judge: Herein *Dr. Owen tells us, *The depth of Christs love is to be contemplated, that whereas his holy Soul hates every sin, it is a burden, an abomination, a new wound to him, and his poor Spouse, that is, sinful Believers are full of sin, failings, infirmities, he hides all, covers all, bears with all, rather than he will lose them.* He adds indeed, *by his power preserving them from such sins, as a remedy is not provided for in the Covenant of Grace: I suppose he means the sin against the Holy Ghost, for there is a remedy provided for all other sins in the Covenant of Grace: And all other sins a Believer it seems may be guilty of, and Christ will hide all, cover all, rather than lose him:* Now this is as down right *Antinomianism*, as ever Dr. Crisp or Saltmarsh vented. There have been and are to this day a great many wise and learned men, who contend earnestly for the *perseverance of the Saints*, that those who are once in a *state of Grace*, shall always continue so, but then they found not this on such an immutable love, as sin it self cannot alter, for this is not reconcilable with the Holiness of the Divine Nature, nor with those threatnings in the Scripture against such backsliders; *When the righteous man turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that a wicked man doth, shall he live? All the Righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die,* Ezek. xviii. 24. *And if any man turn back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him:* Which is a plain demonstration, the truth of which is acknowledged by all sober Writers, that if such men can be supposed to relapse into a sinful state, God also will cease to love them; and therefore they found the *immutability* of Gods

Gods love to them, on *their perseverance in doing good*: God loves all good men, but if they cease to be good, he also must cease to love: And herein the *immutability* and unchangeableness of Gods love consists, not that he always loves the *same Person*, but that he always loves for the *same Reason*: For it is no perfection to be so fixt in our kindness, that where we love once, we will always love, whatever reason there may be to alter our affections, for by this means we may love undeserving objects, which is the greatest degeneracy of love: But the perfection of love consists in loving deserving objects, and in loving upon honourable reasons, and the immutability of love consists in loving always for the same reason, which is the only foundation of a *vertuous immutability*.

The reason of Christs love to any Person is his Holiness and Obedience: *If any man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,* Joh. xiv. 23. and the unchangeableness of his love is seen in this, that he will continue to love, while we continue to obey him: *If ye shall keep my commandments, that is, continue to do so, ye shall abide in my love, I will continue to love you, as I have kept my Fathers Commandments, and abide in his love,* Joh. xv. 10.

This is the immutability of the Divine Nature, that God always acts upon steady and constant principles, that whatever changes there are in the World, which may occasion very different administrations in his providence, yet he is the same still, and never changes; whereas should God always love the *same Person*, however he changed and altered, God must change and alter too, because though he still loves the *same Person*, yet he must love for different or contrary

contrary reasons, or for none at all; and that is the much greater change of the two, to alter the reason, than the object of love: If God love a good man, because he is good, and continue to love him when he is wicked, his love is a mutable thing, which can love goodness or wickedness, which can love for none, or for contrary reasons: but if God always love true goodness, and good men, and never loves any other, whatever change there be in Creatures, God is the same still, and unchangeable in his love.

Thus you see, while these men pretend to admire and magnifie the love of God and Christ, they make it a despicable and worthless thing, such as a wise man would be ashamed of, and such as a good man cannot be guilty of, to love for no reason, and to continue to love contrary to reason: And as this is a great reproach to God and to our Saviour, so is it a great injury to men, too; for it must of necessity make them careless of pleasing God, and secure in their sins, when they are persuaded that sin cannot hinder God from loving them, nor alter his love towards them: That if ever he love them, it is for no reason but because he will, and when once he is resolved upon it, the immutability of his nature makes it necessary for him to continue to love: That now sin it self cannot separate us from the love of God: If this were true, the worst man living would have as much reason to be secure of Gods love, as the best men have; nay, if the depth, and mystery, and glory of the love of Christ consists in loving for no reason, or contrary to reason, the worse men are, the fitter objects are they of the love of Christ.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Concerning the Believers love to Christ.

HAVING shewing you wherein the *Love of Christ* consists, I shall now consider, what are those returns of love which we owe to our Lord and Saviour: I take it for granted, that all men who believe that Christ came into the world to save sinners, are of the Apostles mind, *if any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha*; the only dispute is, how we are to express our Love to Christ: Now love primarily signifies the inward affection of the mind, but is made visible by outward actions: as for the affection of the mind, we must consider, that Christ is our Superiour, our Lord and Master, and therefore our love to Christ ought not to express it self in a fond and familiar passion, such as we have for our friends and equals, but in a great reverence and devotion: Superiours must be treated with honour and respect, which requires that we keep our distance; and therefore our love to our Parents and Superiours is called *honour* in the fifth Commandment, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, and the same religious affection to God which is sometimes called *love*, is at other times called *fear*, which signifies a *reverential love*, or a love of honour, reverence, and devotion: Which includes a great delight in the thoughts of God, a devout sense of his Greatness and Majesty, a great admiration of his Excellencies and Perfections, a religious awe and reverence for him, and all those affections of the Soul, which are expressive of Love and Honour.

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As for the external expressions of our love, they are as various as the expressions of honour are: And herein we must have a peculiar regard to the nature and condition of the Person, and that relation we stand in to him: Thus Christ being *the only begotten Son of God*, we must have regard to the greatness and excellency of his *Person*, that our returns may bear some proportion to it; Christ having condescended to come into the World in our nature, to suffer and die for us, it becomes us to admire his love and goodness, to extol and praise him; to celebrate the memorials of his Death and Passion in that holy Feast, which he hath on purpose instituted to be a thankful remembrance of our Crucified Lord: Since he is our Mediator and Advocate, the truest expression of our love and honour is to confide and trust in him, to depend on his Intercession for us, to offer up all our Prayers to God in his name, and to expect an answer to our Prayers for his sake: and when we consider him as our Prophet and Law-giver, we must express our love to him in a stedfast belief of his Gospel, and in a sincere and hearty obedience to all his Laws: love to equals, who have no Authority over each other, but what love gives them, makes them very flexible and obsequious to each others desires and requests; but our love to Superiours, to our Prince or Parents includes obedience in its own nature; and therefore this our Saviour makes the principal trial of our love to him; *If you love me keep my Commandments: and he that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: But he that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings; you are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you*, Joh. xiv. 15, 23, 24. and in *Chap. xv. 14.* for there cannot be a more proper expression of our love and honour to a Law-giver, than

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to obey his Laws. And, when we consider our Saviour as *our Guide and Example*, the truest expression of our love and honour is *to imitate him, to live as he lived in the World*: For there is nothing more natural than to imitate what we love and reverence, which is the plainest demonstration of the greatest honour, in that we think it our perfection and happiness to be like our Saviour.

And that which perfects our Love is an undaunted courage and resolution in professing the Faith of Christ, whatever dangers and miseries it may expose us to in this world; as *St. John* tells us, *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear*, 1 Joh. v. 18. when we can *hate Father and Mother, Wife and Children, Brethren and Sisters for the sake of Christ, and sacrifice our lives also for him rather than abjure his Gospel or violate his Laws*. These are the proper expressions of our love to Christ, which are summarily comprehended in believing his Gospel, and obeying it; for to be a true Lover of Christ signifies neither more nor less than to be a good Christian, one who diligently obeys all the Laws of the Gospel.

This is a short account of the Nature of our Love to Christ, which deserves a larger Discourse; But I am now hastening to a conclusion, and what I have already said, is so plain and easie, that it may be understood without a larger explication. Our love to Christ is not such a subtil, airy, and metaphysical notion, as some men represent it to be, but is a vital Principle of Action, which governs our lives, and makes us fruitful in good works: And indeed of all mistakes there is none more fatal and dangerous than to mistake the nature of our love to Christ, because this is a practical Error, which hath an immediate influence upon our lives, and one mistake in the

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Principles

Concerning the Believers love to Christ.

Principles or Rules of Action is of greater consequence than a great many false Opinions which end in speculation: And therefore for a conclusion of all, I shall briefly take notice of those mistakes some men have been guilty of concerning the nature and expressions of our Love to Christ.

And first, as they tell us, that Christ falls in love with *our Persons*, without considering any qualifications in us, which may make us fit objects of his love, so in requital to him, we must love *the Person of Christ*. This I confess is as certain and evident as any demonstration in *Euclide*, that if we love Christ, we must love his *Person*, for the Person of Christ is Christ himself, and if we love Christ, we must love him, and if they would be satisfied with this, the dispute would be at an end; but this will not serve their turn, and therefore we must examine what they mean by loving the *Person of Christ*: Now they oppose our love to the *Person of Christ* to our love to him, *upon account of his benefits, to our love to our selves, and to our duties*.

First, We must love the Person of Christ in opposition to his benefits, that is, we must not consider what advantages we do or may receive from Christ, what he hath done or suffered for us, but we must love his Person purely for himself without any other considerations to endear him to us: This matter is very gravely stated and determined by *W. B.* who tells us, 1. *That it is a good and lawful thing to love Christ in reference to his benefits.* This is a very liberal grant, that gratitude which hath hitherto been accounted a great and excellent vertue, is now owned to be a lawful thing. 2. *It is our duty to love Christs Person, to have our hearts drawn out with love to the very Person of Christ.* This is so certainly true, that even those men,
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who love Christ for his benefits, love his Person. But 3. *The excellency of Christs Person is not the object of my Faith, but Christ crucified.* 4. *Though Christ crucified be the object of my Faith, yet the Personal excellencies of Christ are the object of my Love: Yea, it is a more excellent thing yet to love the Person of Christ, than the benefits of Christ, a more excellent thing to have my heart drawn out in love to the Person of Christ, than to have my heart drawn out in love to him for his benefits.* Now what can be the meaning of all this, but that the excellency and perfection of our love to Christ consists in loving him for no reason; the proper object and reason of love is *Goodness*; to love that which is good for nothing is the folly and degeneracy of love, and it is as foolish and impossible a task to love a Person, who hath been good to us, not because he hath been good, but for no reason: Now this is the case here, for if you separate the Person and Personal Excellencies of Christ from the consideration of his Benefits, his personal Goodness from the expressions of his Love and Goodness to our selves and others, it can be no object nor reason of our Love; for a Goodness which doth no good, or never did any, or which is all one, is considered as doing none, is so far from being the object of our love, that it is not the object of our understanding; for we cannot understand what that goodness means, which never did any good. God challenges our love, not upon account of an imaginary goodness of Nature, which never did any good, but for the real and sensible effects of his goodness in the works of Creation and Providence, and the Redemption of Mankind by our Lord Jesus Christ; and Christ himself challenges our love for the like reasons, because he hath loved us, and died for us, and now intercedes for us, and will at
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the last day bestow a Crown of Glory and Immortality on us, but never, as I can observe, requires such an abstracted and metaphysical love to his Person, without any respect to his benefits.

Indeed these men seem not to understand themselves, when they oppose our love to the Person of Christ to our love to him upon account of his benefits; for when you enquire what this Person of Christ is, which is the object of our Love, then they describe his beauty and perfections, *the comeliness of his Person, the sweetness of his disposition, his great riches, that he is a good sutable to all our wants,* that in him we shall find whatever we need, *if you be poor, he is rich; if you be foolish, he is wise: if you be out of the way, I am the way, saith he; if you want a Director in the way, I am the Truth; if you be in the dark, I am Light; if you be wicked and sinful, he is Righteousness, the Lord our Righteousness.* Now either all this signifies the benefits we receive by Christ, or it signifies nothing, and how then do these personal Excellencies of Christ differ from his benefits? Nay, when they direct us how to attain to this love to the Person of Christ, they bid us *behold how Christ hath loved us and our persons, how many impediments his love hath broken through, how free it is, so free that there was no reason for his love to us, neither likeness, benefit, nor love, &c.* and they teach us *to use Christ much,* if we would love his Person: *in any good thing you have, the more you use it, the more you prize it, and the more you prize it, the more you love it; if you have a good friend, the more you use him, the more you prize him, and the more you prize him, the more you love him; if you have a good Horse, the more you use him, the more you prize him, &c. if you have a good Knife, the more you use it, &c. if you would love Christ, use him much, and then*

W.B. ibid.

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then the more you will prize him, and the more you will love him.

Now to let pass the rudeness of the Comparisons, this using Christ must signifie his benefits, and to prize and love Christ much, because we use him much, is to love him, because we make great advantage of him, and receive many benefits from him: which is neither better nor worse than to love him for his benefits.

The occasion of all this contradiction and confusion in these mens discourses is, that they do not distinguish between loving the benefit, and loving the person upon account of his benefits: It must indeed be acknowledged to be very brutish and barbarous to delight in the Gift, and to take no notice of the Giver, to solace our selves in the effects of the divine bounty and goodness, and to make no returns of love, and thankfulness, and duty to God: This is to love the benefit, but not the person who bestows this benefit: But those blessings and benefits we receive from God and Christ are the true reasons, why we are bound to love them; and could we be supposed to love God and Christ for no reason, or, as these men phrase it, purely for themselves, without respect to those many blessings we have received from them, it would not be accepted, because this is not a reasonable love, but an unaccountable and foolish passion.

All the expressions of our love to God and Christ are originally founded on gratitude, because God loved us first, and our love is only a return of his; now thankfulness and gratitude includes a necessary respect to those blessings and benefits we have received: It is peculiar to God, who wants nothing, and can receive nothing from his Creatures, to love

without any respect to benefits, but the love of indigent and dependent Creatures is a love of thankfulness, is a grateful acknowledgment of those many blessings we receive from God.

Secondly, These men oppose our love to *the Person of Christ*, to our love to our selves: the first destroys the reason and the object of our love, and this destroys the principle of it; it is made the Character of a wicked man, who wants an *inward principle of love to God and Christ*, that though he seeks to honour God never so much, yet all that he doth, is done out of love to himself, and therefore God abhors all that he performs. *All the good things such a wicked man doth, are for himself, either for self-credit, or self-ease, or self-content, or self-safety; he sleeps, prays, hears, speaks, professeth for himself alone: Hence acting always for himself, he committeth the highest degree of Idolatry — makes himself a God, &c.* Hence the same Author exhorts Sinners, *Away then out of your selves to the Lord Jesus — go to him, and take hold on him, not with the hand of presumption and love to thy self, to save thy self, but with the hand of faith and love to him, to honour him: And a little after, describing the easie ways to Heaven, all which lead to Hell, he reckons among the rest, the way of self-love, whereby a man fearing terribly he shall be damned, useth diligently all means, whereby he shall be saved. Here is the strongest difficulty of all, to row against the stream, to hate a mans self (our own Souls and eternal Salvation) and then to follow Christ fully: Now is not this a hard case, that before we can love God and Christ as we ought, we must root out the very principle of all love; that we must learn to hate Salvation and eternal happiness, before we can close with Christ for Salvation! he might well say, that this is the strongest difficulty of all, for indeed it is impossible:*

Shepherd's
Sincere
Convert.
p. 4. ed.
1672.

Fig. 84.

Fig. 109.

impossible: Love to our selves is the foundation of our love to all other things, even to God himself; he that does not love himself, will love nothing else; he that hates himself and his own Soul, and despises eternal Salvation, will not care for Christ, nor Salvation by him: All the motives and arguments of the Gospel to persuade us to love, and fear, and obey God, are founded on self-love; for how is it possible, that we should be affected with a due sense of Gods goodness to us; that we should be excited and quickned by the hopes of such great rewards; that we should be restrained and governed by the fears of punishment; if we did not love our selves, if we did not care what became of us, whether we were happy or miserable for ever?

It is a vain thing to persuade a man not to love himself, for this is as natural and necessary, as it is for the fire to burn, or Sun to shine, it is not matter of our choice, it is not in our power to do otherwise; and all that such discourses as these can do, is either to make men Hypocrites, to pretend to do that which they cannot do; or to make honest men, who cannot thus cheat and delude themselves, despair of their Salvation, because they cannot find themselves contented without Salvation, that Christ without Comfort and without Salvation cannot satisfy them.

It is true, when men set up Self in opposition to God, when self-love tempts them to disobey God, to despise his Counsels, to renounce their Faith and Religion, this is a very vicious and mistaken self-love, such men neither love themselves nor God in a proper sense, because it is our interest as well as duty to obey God: Such men are Idolaters, as our Author speaks, because they set up Self above God, and in

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opposition to him; but when our love to our selves teaches us to love God, and in all things to submit our selves to his will and pleasure, we do as we ought to do; and they who separate our love to God from our love to our selves, from the care of our own happiness and Salvation, do plainly declare, that they neither understand the nature of man, nor the Gospel of Christ.

Thirdly, They oppose our love to Christ to our own duties, that is, they oppose our love to Christ to the most proper and natural expressions of our love to him: Herein Dr. Owen places the *chastity of our affections to Christ*, (which you know is a great marriage duty) in not taking anything (as our own Righteousness) into our affections and esteem for those ends and purposes, for which we have received Christ: and God forbid, that any Christian should; for our own righteousness and duties cannot be our Mediators and Advocates, cannot expiate for our past sins, nor merit Heaven for us, which Christ hath done: What then is the difference? Why, it is only this, that the Doctor places the Righteousness of Christ in the room of our Righteousness, to be not only the foundation, but the condition of the Covenant of Grace, and then makes it an expression of our chaste affections to Christ, quite to thrust out our own righteousness, and to allow it no place in our Religion: he first makes Christ all to us, (more than ever Christ intended to make himself) and leaves no room for any thing else, and then warns us upon our Vow of Chastity not to take any thing into Christs place; whereas, as he has ordered the matter, we must take our own righteousness into Christs place, or else cast it quite away, for there is no other place left for it: What he alledges for this, I have sufficiently considered

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p. 165.

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dered already, and shall not now repeat it; but is it not very strange, that when our Saviour hath made our obedience the great and principal expression of our love to him, these men should make such a competition between our love to Christ, and our obedience? Should put such jealousies into peoples heads, what great danger there is of their own duties and righteousness, lest they should prove like foolish lovers, *Shepherd's* who when they are to wooe for the Lady, fall in love with *Sincere* the Handmaid that is only to lead them to her: So men *Convert,* fall in love with, and dote upon their own duties, and rest *p. 197.* contented with the naked performance of them (that is, with doing good) which are only handmaids to lead the Soul to the Lord Jesus Christ. Is not this the ready way to persuade people, that our love to Christ consists in something more refined and spiritual than obedience? Which will quickly teach them to love Christ without obeying him, and not run the hazzard of doting and resting on duties. No man that understands the Gospel of Christ, can think that his own righteousness and obedience can merit Heaven; when we have done the best we can, we must acknowledge our selves to be unprofitable Servants, who have done but our duty; and must ascribe the praise and glory of all to the Grace of God, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, who pardons our past sins, and our present infirmities, and bestows such great rewards on us, as we could never deserve; and if this will not preserve us from doting and resting on duties, there is no other remedy, but to let them quite alone, since it is so dangerous to meddle with them: And yet if we believe Mr. Shephard, this will *Sincere* not secure us; for it is one thing to trust to be saved by *Convert,* duties, another thing to rest in duties; a man trusts unto *p. 170.* them, when he is of this opinion, that only good duties can

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can save him; a man rests in duties, when he is of this opinion, that only Christ can save him, but in his practice he goes about to save himself: that is, does all the good he can, with as much vigour and earnestness as if we were to merit Heaven by it, and then thinks to make amends for this ungodly resting in duties by acknowledging, when he hath done all, that he is an unprofitable servant. But the Mytery of this will appear more in what follows.

Thus you see what the Object of the Saints love is, the very Person of Christ, in opposition to his benefits, in opposition to self-love, in opposition to duties: Let us now inquire, Secondly, How they express their love to the Person of Christ, and that consists in preferring Christ above all, in admiring his beauty and excellencies and perfections; *The Soul takes a view of all that is in the World, the lusts of the flesh, &c. and sees it all to be vanity. — It views also legal righteousness, blamelesness before men, uprightness of conversation, duties upon conviction, and counts them all to be lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. — Beloved peace, beloved natural relations, beloved wisdom and learning, beloved righteousness, duties, all lost compared with Christ.* They value him above all other things and persons; they value him above their lives; they value him above all spiritual excellencies, and all other righteousness whatever.

¶ 48. 140. He is their joy, their Crown, theirs rejoicing, their life, food, health, strength, desire, righteousness, salvation, blessedness: Now who can desire more than this? And yet if we examine the meaning of it, it will appear to be a mistaken and useles passion, such as our Saviour will not approve, nor accept: I have already shewed you what these men mean by the Person and personal Excellencies of Christ, that whatever is spoken of Christ, whether in respect of his Gospel and

J.O. com.
p. 63.

Ibidem.
p. 154.

Ch. 4.
Self 2.

Concerning the Believers love to Christ.

and Revelations, or his propitiation and Sacrifice, or his mediation and intercession for us, these men convert into personal Graces, his personal fulness, and righteousness, and wisdom, &c. which we must immediately derive from the Person of Christ; and this is the Person of Christ, which these men so much admire, and prize, and value above all other things in the World, a Person in whom there is all fulness, righteousness, life, power, beauty, and every thing that a Sinner wants; this is the person whom they prefer before all legal righteousness, spiritual excellencies, duties, obedience, before the love of God himself, which is by these men accounted no better than a legal righteousness; the meaning of all which is, that they prefer the person of Christ, which hath such a perfect righteousness for them, and will save them without requiring any legal conditions of them infinitely before the Religion and Gospel of Christ, before obedience to his commands, before the love and fear of God: So that the foundation of their love to Christ is a fond imagination, that he will save them by his righteousness without any righteousness and holiness of their own; this makes them so fond of the person of Christ, to call him their joy, and their crown, their life, food, health, strength, righteousness, Because they look upon him as a refuge and sanctuary for the wicked and ungodly, where the greatest, the oldest, the stubbornest transgressor may shelter himself from the wrath of God, and I have some reason to think, that Christ will not much prize and value such devoto's as these, nor their obsequious flatteries or praise.

And yet herein the devotion of these men consists, in admiring, prizing, valuing the person of Christ: this is that * *Evangelical Righteousness, we must gain* *Shephards Sincere Convert,* by p. 173.

by duties, more prizing of acquaintance with, desire after loving and delighting in Union with the Lord Jesus Christ: a moral man who rests in duties (that is, who does what God commands him, and expects to be saved by Christ) may grow in legal righteousness, that is, in true holiness and piety, but this will not avail, unless we grow in this Evangelical Righteousness: This is the great end of duties to carry us to the Lord Jesus Christ the only Saviour: Hear a Sermon to carry thee to Jesus Christ: Fast and pray, and get a full tide of affections in them to carry thee to the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, to get more love of him, more acquaintance with him, more union with him: So sorrow for thy sins, that thou mayst be more fitted for Christ, that thou mayst prize Christ the more: Use thy duties as Noahs Dove did her Wings, to carry thee to the Ark of the Lord Jesus Christ: — Or as it is with a poor man, that is to go over a great water for a treasure on the other side, though he cannot fetch the Boat, he calls for it, and though there be no treasure in the Boat, yet he useth the Boat to carry him over to the Treasure: So Christ is in Heaven, and thou on Earth, he doth not come to thee, and thou canst not go to him, now call for a Boat: Though there is no grace, no good, no salvation, in a pithless duty, yet use it to carry thee over to the Treasure, the Lord Jesus Christ. When thou comest to hear, say, Have over Lord by this Sermon, when thou comest to pray, say, Have over Lord by this Prayer to a Saviour, &c. So that it seems, the whole business of our love to Christ and Evangelical Righteousness consists in some flights of fancy and imagination, in admiring and valuing the person of Jesus Christ, in getting an acquaintance with him, and Union to him; and the business of all Religion is to have over to Christ, that we may love and prize his Person and personal Righteousness above all things

things in the world: It is not so much the business of Sermons to acquaint us with the nature and attributes, works and providences of God, and to instruct us in our duty to him, and to encourage us to the practice of it by all the motives and arguments of the Gospel, as to have over to Christ, to acquaint us with his fulness, and Righteousness, and all-sufficiency to save us without such a legal Righteousness of our own: The design of Prayer is not so much to affect our Souls with a sense of the divine Majesty and Greatness, to worship and adore the great Creator of the World, and to express our trust and assistance in him; as to have over to Christ, to fetch pardon, and life, and health, and righteousness from him: That sorrow for sin is not so much to embitter sin to us, and to confirm and strengthen our Resolutions against it, as to teach us to prize and value the Person of Christ more who is our Righteousness: In a word, the nature and design of Religion is now changed from being the homage and worship of God; the certain means of pleasing him, and transforming us into his nature and likeness, which is the natural end of Religion, into a Cock-Boat, or Skulker, to waft us over to Christ.

Here we see the true reason, why these men do so much despise Morality in comparison with those Gospel duties of hearing Sermons, and Prayer, and Confession, and Humiliation, and Fasting, &c. Because as they handle the matter, the practice of moral virtues cannot have us over to Christ, cannot apply the righteousness and fulness of Christ to us, nor ravish our fancies with glorious images and ideas of his Person; and since all the duties of Religion are such pithless things, which have no grace, no good, no Salvation, in them, but as they have us over

to Christ, poor Morality must needs be a worthless thing.

Thus I have finished my designed task, and upon a review of it, it makes we amazed to think, how strangely these men have transformed the Religion of our Saviour, and disfigured the Gospel of Christ; how they have undermined the fundamental design of the Gospel, which is to make men good and virtuous, and like to God: How they have misrepresented the ends of Christs coming into the World, and abused his Expiation and Sacrifice, and Righteousness, and Intercession to the Patronage of Vice and Wickedness; how they have laid snares to betray some men to a licentious life, and to entangle others in endless troubles and perplexities of mind: How under a pretence of advancing the person of Christ, they have in effect through ignorance, and mistake, and want of consideration (for I am not willing to suspect any worse cause) banisht his Religion out of the World: I have faithfully and impartially stated the case, examined their proofs from Scripture and reason, and the result of all is no more but this, that the only way to please God and to save our Souls, is, to obey the Precepts of the Gospel, trusting in the Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who *having perfected* the work of our Redemption, *is become the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him.*

F I N I S.