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A
GOOD DAY
Well Improved,
OR
FIVE SERMONS

Upon *Acts* 9.31. Two of which were Preached at *Pauls*, and
Ordered to be Printed.

To which is annexed a Sermon on *2 Tim.* 1.13. Preached at
St. Maries in *Cambridge*, on the Commencement- Sabbath,
June 30. 1650.

By ANTHONY TUCKNEY D.D. and *Master of St Johns*
College in Cambridge.

The land had rest, and he had no war in those years, because the
Lord had given him rest: Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us
build, &c. So they built and prospered. 2 Chron. 14.6,7.

LONDON Printed by *J. F.* for *I. Rothwell*, 1656.

[Transcribed by John Van Voorhis]

*To the Right Honorable Sr CHRISTOPHER PACK Knight,
Lord Mayor, together with the Honourable Court of Aldermen of
the Famous City of LONDON.*

Ever Honored,

The ordinary excuse which many usually make for publishing their Writings; by laying the fault upon the importunity of friends, is grown so threed-bare, that it is now almost past wearing; and yet such is my poverty, that I have nothing else wherewith to cover my nakedness in the putting forth of this poor piece now presented to you. It contains a few Sermons, all first preached in the Universitie, but two of them afterwards at *Pauls*, before You and the rest of that Honorable Audience, which by the Order of your Court, sent to me, I was desired to Print; how unwillingly I best know, who should best know my own weaknesse, and what course I took to avoid it. *My Lord*, you can very wel witness. But seeing by your Honours Command, they must come forth, be pleased to understand that He who hath *Naomies* field must have *Ruth* also. Those two, which you are pleased to call for, had their Fellows, which they cannot part with: And therefore, as when *Gehazi* asked one talent of *Naaman*, he bad him be content, and take two; So when you ask but for two, I am more liberall, and desire you to be content to take *five* or *six*: not to patronize the Truth in them; that is *Gods* , which He will own and maintain; but to expresse the sense of those obligations which your Honour hath by many favours laid upon me, which have forcibly drawn me to this, from which otherwise I had a very great aversation: and if by the blessing of *God* hereby any further service may be done to him or his Church, it will be the rejoicing of

Your servant in the Work of the Gospel
ANTHONY TUCKNEY.

Cambridge Oct. 10.1655.

A GOOD DAY WELL IMPROVED.

1. Sermon
preached in
Pauls, July 16,
1654.

Act. 9.31. *Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost were multiplied.*

It is accounted to be a bad sign, if the sick man grown more sick after sleep: but if better, there are then some hopes of his recovery. So here, The Churches of Christ, as to outward respects, had been brought to a very low, weak, and sick condition by that *Calenture* or fiery tryall, which had dispatch'd *Steven*, Chap. 7. and afterward brake out, and spread further to the persecution and /1/ scattering of the whole Church at *Jerusalem*, Chap. 8.1. And *Saul* still breathing out threatnings and slaughter, did blow the coal to carry the flame as far as *Damascus*, in the beginning of this Chapter, but his Spirit was happily cooled, in the sequele of it, and with it the heat of that persecution, and now /GREEK/, as the like are called Chap. 3.19.) *cooling, refreshing times came from the presence of the Lord*, and so we finde the heat of the fever abated, and the sick spouse fallen to her rest, *Then had the Churches rest*, and then if *He sleep*, the Disciples concluded *he would do well*, especially if upon it all proved better, as here it did; for when they *had rest, they were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost were multiplied.*

And so in the Text we may observe these three particulars.

1. The formerly afflicted and wearied Churches rest; *Then had the Churches rest, &c.*
2. This crowned with two most happy /2/

Concomitants, or consequents; *They were edified, they were multiplied.*

3. Both these set out by two as happy means and causes of them; viz. *Their walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost.* Blessed flocks of Christs sheep! that thus *come up from the washing* in the waters of affliction. *None barren*, whilst they are thus *multiplied*; and all *bearing twins*, in these two lovely pares, *walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost*, and so were both *edified and multiplied.*

And happy we! if we could go *in the footsteps of those flocks*, that seeing *God* in mercy hath begun to give us (as he did them) *rest*, or (as the word is) *Peace*, this peace may not make us proud and petulant, but that with them we may now, more than ever, *walk in Gods fear*, and that fear not *dis-Spirit* us, but may be sweetned and animated with the comforts of the *holy Spirit*, that so in stead of those many *ruines and pullings* /3/

down in our former blusters, now in this fair weather, we may begin to think of *building up and edifying* our selves and others in faith and love; and whereas in our former wars men have been minished, and sins, and factions, and furies have swarmed, the true *Churches of Christ*, and true *Saints* in those *Churches*, and true *Graces* in those *Saints* may be now increased and *multiplied.* This indeed would be even an heaven upon earth, a *new Jerusalem* (the vision of peace) *coming down from heaven.*

A blessed remembrance of what was in those best and primitive Churches, in the beginning of the Gospel, and a more happy first fruits, and pledge of what is now hastning on in the most glorious Churches in the end of it, yea of what shall never be ended, but perfected in glory.

I begin with the first blessing in those first words, *Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria*, which need not much explication.

Then, or therefore /GREEK/.

The *Churches*, which some read *Congregations*, in the plural number, the *Church* in the first verse of this Chap. which was at *Jerusalem*, upon the dispersion there mentioned became *Churches*, one multiplying into many.

Had rest, the *Greek* is /GREEK/, *Peace*, for so they called the *rest* they then had from persecution: as the *Psalmist phraseth* it, *rest from the dayes of adversity*, *Psal.* 94.13.

Throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria. That is, throughout the whole compasse of *Israels* inheritance and possession, these three (as Geographers tell us) making up that whole Countrey.

Hence the Doctrinall observation is,

That after the persecutions and wearisome troubles of the Church, God hath his times for their peace and rest. It is *Chrysostomes* observation upon the Text /GREEK/. *Post nubila Phoebus*, Sunshine after showers, a calme after a storme, and a *Canaans* rest, after a tedious wandring in the *wildernesse*: So we read that after *Moses* his tiresome conduct, *Israel* at last came to their rest, *Deut.* 12.13. and after his successor *Joshuahs* many conflicts, it's added, that the *land had rest from war*, *Josh.* 14.15.

But this with some difference, both of the *foregoing trouble*, and following rest.

1. For the foregoing trouble.

1. Sometimes it's but short before rest cometh, but a short cold blast, and then a long fair summers day, *Anger but for a moment* (nay sometimes but *for a very little moment*, *Isa.* 54.7) and *weeping but for a night* (and that no long winter night neither) *and joy cometh in the morning*, *Ps.* 30.5 like *Julian*, a black pitchy cloud, but soon blown over: Or like a Summers shower, great and violent for the present, but fair weather again presently.

2 But sometimes it's a long Winter storme, and yet at last a calme in the close. *Health* after an *Hectick*. *Israel*

cometh at last out of *Egypt*, but it was not till they had continued two hundred and fifteen years in that *iron furnace*; and *Judah* afterward returneth home from *Babylon*, but after seventy years captivity, when those long since dead, and now *dry bones* lived again, of which some expound that in *Cant.* 2.11, 12, 13. *The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come.* And after the tedious winter of our former too long war, such a Spring, both in a naturall and politick sense, God hath pleased to send us this year, for which we are to be humbly and heartily thankfull.

For the following Rest:

1. After longer or shorter foregoing troubles, sometimes it is more firm and lasting, as a settled consistency of health, after a former sickness: after the 215. years bondage in *Egypt* were above 900 years before *Jerusalem* was destroyed, and for after times, when God in a *little wrath had hid his face from them* for a moment, he promiseth with everlasting loving kindness to have mercy on them, *Isa.* 54.8. And after 300. years of the Primitive Churches hottest persecutions, at last the *man child Constantine* was born, who settled the Church upon firm foundations of peace, which might have continued unshaken much longer than they did, if their sins had not undermined them.

2. But sometimes this restored peace & rest of the Church looketh liker a *Truce* then a *Peace*: Some short *lucida intervalla*, as the Sun in a rainy day, looking out now and then a little, but then presently again overclouded, as *Solomon* saith, *clouds returning after rain*; or like an aguish mans well-dry, after a former ill-day, which an after (and it may be worse) fit treadeth on the heel of: Thus up and down in the dayes of *Israels Judges, and Judahs Kings*; so that these short abatements or recoveries are but short breathing times onely to recruit in, against another bout; but refreshing bates by the way, presently after which we are (it may be) to set upon

the worst part of our journey both for weather and way yet behinde. Such was this rest or peace of the Church here in the Text, as *Calvin* observeth; for although *Tiberius* his better thoughts of *Christ* for that time might a little cool the rage of enemies against Christians, to which *Corn. a lapide* (I cannot say how fitly) referreth this rest and quiet of the Church, yet it was not long before this fire brake out more fiercely in *Nero's* first generall persecution; and before that, *Paul* who had with the first blown up this fire, being now converted, is himself, together with the rest of the Church sufficiently scorched with it in *Judea*, before he was sent bound to *Rome*. So that these *Halcyon* dayes lasted not long before a storme came.

But (this premised) however, whether either the foregoing trouble, or following rest be long or /9/ short (both which God in wisdom and faithfulness so ordereth), as shall be for his own glory, and peoples good) yet it is his mercy and indulgence, that in his own time and way he is pleased to give some respite, and an *issue with the temptation that we may be able to bear it*, that we have not right out, in this respect, an hell upon earth.

That as naturally we are *evil, and onely evill, and that continually*, so we are not answerably miserable, that we are not onely miserable, and that continually. It's best that with the Church it will be best at last, that notwithstanding all the troubles of this life, the last article of the *Christian Creed*, is *life everlasting*: That's best, but this is well that in this life, our Sun doth not set in a cloud, but that *Lamech* at last begets a *Noah*, of whom he can say, *This same shall comfort us concerning the work and toyle of our hands*, as it may do us, that although it be very ill with us for the present, yet it shall not be so for ever in another world, /10/ no, not (it may be) so alwayes in this world: After wearisome troubles and persecutions, God hath his times for his peoples rest and peace. *Then, or therefore, had the Churches rest.*

But you will ask, *When, and wherefore* is it, that God

pleaseth it should so be?

In answer to which *Queree*, I shall onely touch upon such particulars, as the instance in the Text will afford me.

And first for the first question, *When*.

1. Then it was (say some) when *Tiberius* grew more favourable to *Christ*: and so still, when *Princes prove friends, enemies will not prove enemies*, as when *Mordecai* was advanced, *Esth.* 8.17 or their enmity will not prove hurtfull, though they do, as when *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* were in place of government. If they who are called the *Shields of the earth* will protect the Church; the Archers either dare not shoot, or cannot hurt: when *Constantine* that man-childe before mentioned was *born, /11/ and caught up to the throne of God*, although the *Dragon* casts out floods to drown all, the *earth will help the woman*; when kings and Queens prove *nursing Fathers and nursing mothers of the Church*, the happy *Nursling* then takes its *rest*, and sleeps sweetly in such strong arms, and in so warm a bosome.

What great cause therefore have we accordingly to the *Apostles* exhortation to quicken our prayers and praises for such, *that under them we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlinesse and honesty?* otherwise the body will not take its rest, whiles the head akes, and is troubled with hot and fiery vapours: Let Governours be *Zamzummims, i.e. boisterous wicked ones*, (though they call themselvs *Rephaims, ie. Healers* or *Physitians*) little health or ease is to be expected from them. But the *Jewish* writers say that *Israel* was beholden to *Moses* for *Manna*, to *Miriam* for *Water*, to *Aaron* for the *Cloud*; for such blessings of refection and protection we must be beholden to God in his */12/ blessing of good Governours*, which we are therefore to seek to him, and bless him for: And if *Judah* under *Josiahs shadow* might comfortably *live even among the heathen*, how much more may we under such *Solomons*, whilest we sit at home under our own vines and fig-tree? When magistrates are *Abimelecks*, not so much *Kings as Fathers* of the Church,

the house God is in safety: and when *Melchizedeks* are *kings of Salem*, i.e. kings of peace, *Jerusalem* will make good its own name, and prove a *vision of peace*. *Jerusalem will be inhabited in Jerusalem*, as it is, *Zech.* 12.6.

2. *When persecutors prove preachers.* So here in the two foregoing chapters, and in the beginning of this, you had read of *Sauls* persecution, and afterward of his conversion, and in the close of that relation cometh in my Text, and telleth us that *then the Churches had rest*. Rest, when both such a *restless* adversary as he was, for his part, /13/ was taken off and quieted.

As also when others, (though as much intraged, yet) from his strange change were much stounded and discouraged.

It is promised to *Gods Israel*, that they shall dwell *safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods*, (expressions of greatest peace and security) but it is when the *evil beasts cease out of the land*, *Ezek.* 34.25 especially if *Wolves become Lambs, and Leopards Kids*, then *none hurts or destroys in Gods holy mountain*, *Isa.* 11.6, 7, 8, 9. Or later years we have with the *prophet cried out of violence and confusion*: but it was when the Ministers and people of *God* had as sadly complained, that although too many were *Sainted*, yet too too few were *savingly converted*. But how firmly, after all our woeful disturbances, might our begun peace be established, if our great disturbers of it, being indeed turned home to *God*, with *Paul*, did *preach* and maintain *the faith, which* hitherto they /14/ *have destroyed*? Did such in this way make their *peace with God*, we might more certainly expect to have more *peace one with another*? How speedily was *Egypt* freed from the plague of *Locusts*, which an East winde brought, when a contrary West winde took them all away? but as long as they swarm, expect (though as there, with some respites) a continuance and increase of further plagues, which after an *Egyptian* darkness, may at last end in a *Red sea* of blood.

3. But *Calvin*, and before him, *Theophylact* and

Chrysostom refer this peace of the Church in the Text, not to *Pauls* conversion but to his departure from those parts, it being said in the verse before the Text, that when the *Greek Jewes* went about to slay him, the Brethren brought him down to *Cesarea*, and sent him forth to *Tarsus*, and then immediately follow the words of the Text, *Then, or therefore, had the Churches rest throughout all Judea &c.* For, although other of /15/ the *Apostles* continued there still, yet the *Jewes* were less troubled with them, as having had their mad rage something abated towards them by their longer continuance with them, and often appearing before them, and for that the people magnified them. But this new upstart *Paul*, who *laboured more abundantly then them all*, troubled them more then all the rest, so that they could not be quiet for him nor the Churches for them, till they were rid of his company, and then they being quiet, *the Churches had rest.*

Nor was this any imputation to *Paul*, as though he had been a *trumpet of Sedition*, and a *troubler of Israel*, but rather a cleer conviction that they had sore eyes, which would not endure so great a light; and that on the contrary, he was the *sweet savour of life* even in *them that perished*, *quod solo propinquitatis sue odore impios egerit in rabiem*, as *Calvin* well expresseth it. He was not a guilty fugitive *Jonah* who must be cast over-board, /16/ that the boistrous sea may be calmed, but *they* were like a woefully distempered Patient, who raveth at the sight of his Physician, as (we know) the Devil raged and rent the man, when *Christ* came to cast him out of him.

Now the good Lord keep ours, and all the rest of his Churches peace, from ever being founded in such a Solitude, *pacem vocant, solitudinem faciunt*, from being like the *Sybarites* rest, that cannot endure the noise of the Cocks crow, or the Smiths hammer, lest it should awaken them: such a peace would be built upon a very sandy foundation as *Theirs*, amongst us, was, who accounted not themselves quiet and safe till they had driven thousands of the godly from amongst

us into a remote wilderness; which I doubt was one thing amongst others, by which they hastned their own overthrow. However this by the way, teacheth,

1. Even the best, both Ministers and Christians, to prefer the /17/ Churches publick peace before their own private convenience, and when their presence cannot consist with the Churches quiet, even to *sacrifice* (if it be onely) their own interest, that the people of *God* may have a *peace-offering*, with *Jonah* to be content to be cast over-board, that the sea may be quiet, and with *Paul* not to *adventure into the Theater*, who was here willing to be sent away to *Tarsus* when he and the Disciples of Christ, through the malice of his enemies, for his sake could not continue quiet together in *Jerusalem*. In this case *Athanasius* goeth, and *Chrysostom* is sent into exile; and *Clemens Romanus* in his /GREEK/ &c, makes account that every generously minded and compassionate Christian will readily say, /GREEK/ if *Schisme, and contention, and sedition arise for my sake, I'll be gone whither ever you will have me, onely let the /18/ stock of Christ be in peace and safety*. And thus as *Abel* by his *faith even being death speaketh*, so a Minister or a Christian even in his forced absence edifieth, and that (it may be) more then his presence sometimes would. This therefore is his duty.

2. Hence also take notice of *Gods* wisdom, power, faithfulness, and mercy, who knoweth how to provide for his peoples good by very unlikely means, as here for his Churches *peace* by the absence of those that preached the *Gospel of peace*.

It is the absence of *God* onely, which is the certain and necessary cause of his peoples disquiet, who, whilst he is but present, may (as here in the Text) have rest, when best either Men or Ministers are absent. How little need hath God of our best help in his work? and how all-sufficient is he, who can do all for us, when all outward helps are wanting? He could at the first make the earth bring forth, before there was any rain to water it, or man /19/ to till it; and here we find

him laying down his people to their rest after *Pauls* sun-set.

4. I adde a 4th time, (which the Text also affordeth) when *God* after trouble giveth his Churches rest, and that is when the *persecution and trouble is grown up to the height, and the burden of it now proveth insupportable*. Such was that of this Church, which ushered in this peace here mentioned, for besides the other *Jewes* rage, little *Saul made great havock of the Church*, and being (as he himself confesseth) /GREEK/ *more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers, /GREEK/ hyperbolically or beyond measure he persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it, /GREEK/ the word is, and that is quasi grassator & prædo*, as *Hierom* interpreteth it, an unmercifull spoiler, and cruel enemy he layd all waste. Very many, and as sad are the expressions which we meet with in this book of the *Acts*, to this purpose, which set out his rage /20/ against Christ and his Churches.

At the *Protomartyr Stevens* death we read, *Acts* 7.58. that the witnesses who *stoned him laid down their clothes* (that they might be more ready and nimble at that devilish exploit) *at his feet*, who though he was (as is conceived by some of the Ancients) both *coetaneus & cognatus*, both of the same age, and also of the same kindred with *Steven*, his *Cousen*, yet withall,

Being naturally *acris & servidi ingenii* (as one faith) of a quick spirit;

And also in the heat of his young blood;

And this yet more heated with zeal for his *Jewish* traditions, yea and (as some think) with emulation of *Stevens* eminency, which amongst young men of the same rank and age, (whilst they live together especially) is too frequent and ordinary:

He grew so hot, that (as he himself confesseth, *Act.* 22.20.) he was /GREEK/ , two very sad words, the later /21/ of which signifieth that from his soul he was very well pleased with it, and approved it, and the other, in the proper sense of

it, telleth you, that he was not onely a by-stander, looking on and taking content in it, but that he was *Dux & choragus*, a principal *Actor* and *Superintendent* in that bloody action: so as that although he did not cast one stone at him, yet in true Interpretation (as *Austin* observeth) he stoned him by their hands.

Nor was this heat of his, or the other Jewes rage quenched with *Stephens* blood, but it flamed out to a /GREEK/, to a very great persecution of the whole Church, *Act.* 8.1. so as (if *Dorotheus* say true) no fewer then two thousand *disciples* more were put to death about the time of *Stephens* Martyrdome; that the Scripture saith not, but this it doth, *that all the rest were scattered abroad*, v. 1 whilst *Saul* made *havock of the Church* v. 3 the word here is /GREEK/, answering to his /GREEK/ before, *Gal.* 1.13. and /22/ a both express such a vastation as a wild bore maketh in a vineyard, when he rooteth up all, or as a cruel enemy, when he hath new broken into a besieged town or city, who with fire and sword layeth all waste.

Nor his onely to them that are found in armies, or abroad in the streets, as is usuall in warre, but those whom the savage Souldier spareth, this then persecutor Butchereth, for he entreth into the houses, nay into every house (/GREEK/ the words are) and there without pity of age or sex *haleth and draggeth men and women into prison*, vers. 3.

Nor is this rage yet quieted, for *chap.* 9. you read /GREEK/. He still, and yet further *breathes out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord*, like some roaring Lion, or fiery-breathed Dragon, he belcheth and spits out fire, v. 1. and gets a blood inquisition Commission of the high Priest to reach as far as *Damascus*, which they compute to be no /23/ less then five days journey from *Jerusalem*, (How fast and how far do they go whom the devil and their own malice drive?) that he might finde *any* (he meant none should escape him) of that way, *whether men or women*, (none, it

seemeth, must be pitied by him) *he might bring them bound to Jerusalem:* and why to *Jerusalem?* not onely because there was the chief Iudicature of such matters, but withall because there the Judges were more enraged, and there he had more power, and where he had been binding before, and delivering them into prison, yea and did *persecute them even unto the death,* chap. 22.4, 5.

And when they were put to death /GREEK/ he gave *his voice against them,* not (it may be) as a Judge, he had not got up to the Bench, but as an Informer or by-stander at the barre, he earnestly manifested his approbation; answerable to his /GREEK/ before mentioned, or as a busie Pursivant or officer who /24/ carried the sentence of the Court (that /GREEK/ may signifie) and looked to it to see it put in execution. *Acts 26.10.* To which add onely what there followeth, *v. 11. And I punished them oft, in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.* Every word almost hath a very heavy Accent and Emphasis.

/GREEK/ *I punished them,* and you may be sure it was not lightly, he laid on load.

But you might think, to prevent his own wearinesse it was but seldom; nay /GREEK/ it was very *often:* we that are so soon weary in Gods service, even when weary are yet unwearable in the Devils drudgery, *Isa. 41.12.* But although it was oft in one place, yet that little body could not be every where, yet the more nimble to skip up and down, and therefore it's added, that it was /GREEK/ in *every Synagogue,* yea so as to persecute them /25/ /GREEK/ to strange or remote cities; *Damascus* (by what you heard before) was at a pretty distance.

But although in all this sorely tyrannized over their bodies, and outward man, yet (you may hope) he attempted not their souls; our Saviour seemeth to set bounds to these raging waves, Hitherto shall you go, and no further; and therefore saith, that when they have killed the body /

GREEK/, *they have nothing more that they can do, Luk. 12.4.* And blessed be God, that they have not in that sense which our Saviour there intendeth, and yet the devilish *Assasinate* after he hath made his wretched enemy blaspheme Christ, can then stab him, that he may undo body and soul both together; our *Saul* arose not to that height of hellish malice, but he went very far when he *compelled them to blaspheme.*

And might he not then well add /GREEK/, that he was raving mad, nay, /GREEK/ exceeding mad, when he added a /26/ /GREEK/ where our Saviour said there was not a /GREEK/? Now truly this was a /GREEK/ an abundant superfluity of malicious madnesse, so that where sin did thus abound, unless /GREEK/ , *grace had not much more abounded,* (as he humbly and thankfully afterwards acknowledged it did to him in his /GREEK/ that it was *exceeding abundant,* 1 *Tim. 1.14.*) he had been past hope of receiving any mercy from God, who had shewed so little, but the quite contrary to his people.

But it may be thought I have stepped too far out of the way, and insisted too long on the view of this sad spectacle, you will more easily pardon me, while ye think that such dolefull objects sometimes make us stand still, and fix our eyes on them, 2 *Sam. 20.12.* as much as those that are more pleasing. But to return to what I intended, all these sad passages of *Pauls* outrage I have the rather mentioned, and so largely insisted upon, to shew /27/

How far some may go in a desperate way, whom yet afterwards *God* in mercy may bring home:

And how far blinde zeal, and seeming good intentions (such were in *Paul* all this while) may carry men in such a way.

And how open, ingenuous, punctuall, and abundant, such (as *Paul* here was) should be in their humble confessions afterward.

But especially, and to my present purpose, to shew

when it is, that after foregoing troubles and exercises, *God* useth to vouchsafe rest to his wearied people and Churches, and that is after the heaviest pressures; a birth after the sharpest throws; day-break, when it had been darkest a little before. So *Christ* tarrieth till the fourth watch of the night, and cometh in the height of a storme, to make a calm of it, when the ship was now sinking, *Mat.* 14.24, 25. as in the same place when *Peter* was also sinking, he then *immediately* stretched forth his hand and caught him, *v.* 30, 31. When their afflictions are so continued, /28/ multiplied, aggravated, that they can bear no more, *God* will then stay no longer, but *he that shall come, will come, and then not tarry*: Then a *still voice* cometh, and *God* in it, after the *winde, earthquakes and fire*; after an *Ezek* and *Sitnah*, then a *Rehoboth*. Then (as it is in the Text) or *Therefore, the Churches had rest.*

And if you ask *why so?* or wherefore *Then?*

I answer with the *Psalmist*, *God remembreth us in our low estate, because his mercy endureth for ever.* Because his mercies endure for ever, therefore it is that our miseries do not last alwayes. The Churches affliction *is not*, because *Gods* faithfulness and compassion *is* everlasting. And hence it is, that although (as the *Apostle* saith) /GREEK/ *if need be* the people of *God be in heaviness through manifold temptations*, yet when that *Need* is over, *because he doth not willingly* (or *from the heart*) afflict or *grieve the children of men* (much less /29/ his own children) when the child is humbled, the Father more willingly casts away the rod, then ever he took it into his hand; and therefore although (being constrained) he sometimes, and that for our good *causeth grief*, yet *then he will have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies*, *Lam.* 2.32, 33. And if at any time we think he tarrieth long before he sheweth mercy, it is onely because indeed we stay long before we are fit to receive it: Make we but haste, and he will not stay long, he then tarrieth not, and so reconcileth that seeming contradiction, *Luke* 18.7. with 8. that *although*

he bear long with them, viz. Till they be ready, yet when once they are, he *will then avenge them* speedily; so that although /HEBREW/ *He reserveth wrath for his enemies, Nahum 1.2.* yet it is expressly said, and that in the same word, on the contrary, /HEBREW/ *he will not keep anger for ever,* towards his children, *Psal. 103.9.* they are his own words, *I will for this afflict /30/ the seed of David, but not for ever, 1 King. 11.39.*

Such, and so great is the sweetnesse of his *goodnesse.*

Such is the *wisdom that is from above* in us, and therefore infinitely more transcendent that *above all is in God,* /GREEK/ , *gentle and easie to be intreated, James 3.17.*

And such also his faithfulness and righteousness, not *to forget* his servants *work and labour of love, and patience of hope,* in their former sufferings, but to reward them with proportionable after rest, and comfort; and so we read, *Isa. 40.1. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people: double comfort,* as they had *received of him double for their sins, v. 2.* Nor this onely at *death,* when they shall most certainly *rest from their labours;* nor in *Heaven* onely, where they shall have an everlasting sabbath of rest from all their toilsome travell here; but oftentimes even in this life, *Christ knoweth how to make his flock to rest at noon,* as he took his *Disciples aside, /31/* and bad them rest a while, when by their wearisome employment they had not so much leisure *as to eat, Mat. 6.31.* which we have most elegantly expressed by the *Prophet,* comparing *Gods tenderest care* of his wearied servants, to the wife and merciful Husbandmans care of his wearied beast, *Hose. 11.4. I was to them as they that take off the yoaik on their jawes,* (as the *Plowman* doth from off his oxen, when come home from work) and *I laid meat unto them.* This and much more there is in *God* that can afford it.

And proportionably as much there is in his weak Church, and poor people that stand in need of it, and call for it, so that they had not sometimes more *need* (as we before heard) to be afflicted, then when humbled and reformed, to be again relieved and comforted.

For otherwise,

1. The Church would be wholly wasted and consumed, which /32/ *Christ* in spite of all the malice and rage of man or devils will have continued, *Mat.* 16.18. Such *Skarefires* therefore need be timely quenched, and that in *Job* 38.11, said to those overflowing seas, *Hitherto shall ye come, and no further, and here shall your proud waves be stayed*, which otherwise would consume and overwhelm all. So he provides, *that such days shall be shortened, because else, no flesh should be saved, Mat.* 24.22.

2. Or in case by reason of his promise the Church should not fail; yet the spirits of his servants would be very subject to faint and fail, and sink down into despondency; and therefore to prevent that, he promiseth that *he will not contend for ever, nor be alwayes wroth, Isa.* 57.17.

3. Or in case they *sink not down*, yet too ready they may be to *start out* to some sinfull and unwarrantable meanes for their ease, and safety. For so much, and so long affliction may serve to try /33/ and express their grace, which *God* desireth, and therefore they shall have it; but if more and longer, it would (it may be) occasion them to manifest their weakness and corruption, which *God* would prevent, and therefore *There* and *Then* takes off his hand. So much burden would serve to ballast the ship, but more would sink it. The one is their load, to keep them from running out, and kicking; the other would break their back, and therefore is not laid on, or if it be, is soon taken off again. Scripture expressions to this purpose are very elegant and pregnant, as that of Gods correcting his people /HEBREW/ in *judgement* and not *in anger, Jer.* 10.24. In judgement? you'l say, that's a heavy word, but when it's added, *and not in anger*, that very much lightens it, and telleth you it's put in a more gentle sense; for *modice in modo, in wisdom and moderation*, and not (as too oft it is with us) in *rage and fury*, which knoweth none.

Answerable to which is that /34/ other expression,

Isa. 27.8. In measure thou wilt debate with it, he stayeth his rough wind, in the day of the east winde. The words in the Originall are somewhat difficult, and are diversly expounded by Interpreters: amongst others this may be one way of unfolding them, that although a piercing east winde may sometimes blow very cold upon *Gods* inheritance, yet when it is once grown so rough, as if continued, it would blast and blow away all, God then stayeth and calmeth it; and when in the beginning of the verse he is said in *measure to debate with it*, we have him, as it were, measuring out the afflictions of his people, and although sometimes the measure may be full, yea and double, as the word /HEBREW/ there used, is doubled, yet it is *stil in measure*, and never unmeasurable, *In mensura ista, & non supra*, as He paraphrases it.

A third, and as strong an expression to this purpose, we have in the foregoing Chapter of that Propesie, and as in the former /35/ expression we had God *measuring*, so in this we have him *weighing* his peoples affliction, *Thou most upright dost weigh the path of the just*; which some render by *complanare*, and understand it of Gods making smooth and even those former rough wayes which before they walked, and were so subject to stumble in: and that way it wil also serve to my present purpose; but the word /HEBREW/ there used, most properly signifieth the *weighing* of any thing in a balance; & so our wise and gracious Father dealeth with us in the way of his judgements, like the carefull *Apothecary*, who weigheth every dose prescribed to his sick Patient, to the least *grain*, that he shall not have so much as the least *scruple* more or less then shall be truly medicinal: but what ever they do, we may be sure that our heavenly *Physicians* course of Physick is never so long, or strong, as to undoe his Patient, but most wisely *weigheth*, and *pondereth* both what it's, and our strength is. /36/

And therefore hath promised that *the rod of the wicked shall not rest on the lot of the righteous, lest they put their hands*

unto iniquity, Psal. 125.3. A most sweet and gracious promise! which as on the one hand it hints to us, that not onely *infirmi* the weak, but even *justi*, those that are righteous and more confirmed, yet *fracti tandem malis* (as *Calvin* speaketh) by over heavy and too long continued burdens of themselves may be over-born, & so give out, (as a strong wall may start out when too heavy a weight is laid on it) even so a *Samson* may be overcome by a *Delilahs* continued, instant, and strong solicitation; so that those very hands, which were before bound to their better behaviour, may be stretched out to take of a forbidden fruit.

So on the other hand to prevent this miscarriage, God in much faithfulness and tenderness so /37/ tempereth, lightneth, and shortneth such overgrown pressures, that they may *have an issue with the temptation, an so be able to bear it*, and therefore when it is once come to this, then /GREEK/ *tis time then for God to work*, and then (as it is in the Text) *the Churches have rest*.

Which comfortable Truth should help to wean us from this troublesome world, and make us more earnestly breath after Heaven: seeing what ever short breathing *God* may please to indulge us in the way, yet our full and everlasting rest we shall never attain unto, till arrive at that our most happy journeys end. Sometimes we read that *Israel* had rest forty, and sometimes eighty years: and so still the Church and people of *God* have sometimes shorter, and sometimes longer breathing times; but when best and longest, they are but more full Baites, and refreshments by the way, and therefore to such, even then, the /38/ *Prophet* saith, *Arise, this is not your rest*, as *Moses* before told *Israel*, *ye are not come to your rest*, when yet they were, at that time, almost got through the wilderness; nay in that last year of their travel, they had longest journeys and greatest exercises: and so it may be with the latter days of particular Churches or Christians, for outward matters, the last of their way may prove the foulest and deepest, yea, in

which some of them have met with greatest exercises of the inward man as well as the outward: much variety herein is in Gods severall dispensations with his particular servants, but in the generall we may conclude, That it is in the *grave* where *the weary are* for altogether *at rest*, *Job. 3.17.* and in *Heaven* only (which was typed out by *Canaans* rest; that a perfect and everlasting *Sabbatisme* or *rest remaineth for the people of God*, *Heb. 4.9.* *Ruth* was to find *rest in her husbands house*, and so must the spouse of *Christ* onely in her husbands, and that's /39/ *heaven*, where onely it is that we shall never be troubled more. The *world to come* is the world (say the *Rabbines*) *where all is well.* There, *then* the Churches once *our rest* till we get thither, and meanwhile in this our distance and absence, let this be the frequently reiterated wish and voice of every one of our Souls, *Utinam domi essem*, (as it is in the *proverb*) although, through *Gods* mercy, sometimes here I may not be very ill at ease, yet I would that I were at home though, I am sure that I shall there be perfectly well in mine everlasting rest: here sometimes we may be /GREEK/ *Phil. 2.28.* less sorrowfull then at some other times we are, but never altogether /GREEK/, wholly without all touch of grief and disquiet; and therefore to that man who takes up his rest on earth, me thinks *Drexelius* propounds a very fit question, *an coelum desperasti?* vain man but dost thou /40/ wholly despair of heaven, that thou takest up thy statio here one earth? for shame up and be stirring, look and walk, pant and breath after heaven, & what ever outward rest *God* sendeth thee, let it only refresh and inable thee to unwearied and restless motions towards thy best home, where thou mayest rest in thy dearest Fathers and Husbands warm bosoms, never more to be disturbed or disquieted. Long for heaven; that is the first.

And be looking long after some better days of peace and rest, which God hath promised his Church even in this world, yet expected, but not as yet come. It is true that

after the ceasing of the primitive persecutions the Churches of *Christ*, under *Constantine* and other Christian *Emperors*, enjoyed many joyfull *Sabbaths of rest*, but yet they have not been without their soar *working days*. *Pope and Turk* and other enemies have proved such cruel *Taskmasters*, that the Church hath too sad occasion to take up again the old /41/ *Lamentation*, *Our necks are under persecution, we labour and have no rest*: and that other, *Woe is me now, for my souls is wearied because of murderers*.

But yet after all this *God* promiseth a time, when his people shall dwell *in a peaceable habitation, and in quiet resting places, when the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever*.

And after that both the *Beast and false Prophet, and Gog and Magog*, and together with them, the *Devil* that *deceived them*, shall be cast *into the lake of fire*; we read of a *new heaven and a new earth*, and of a *new Jerusalem* (a visioin of peace) that *shall come down from God out of Heaven* (and therefore is to be on earth) when *God shall wipe away all teares from his peoples eyes* (/GREEK/, out of their very eyes: so to dry up the spring, that as there shall be no outward occasion, so no inward ability of weeping) and *there shall be no* /42/ *death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any other pain, all such former things being passed away*.

This (indeed) the Scripture seemeth to express, may be usherd in with greatest troubles, as usually greatest births of *Gods* bounty are wont to be: and should those happier times (as some are ready to think) be now nearer and faster coming on, our present days and tempers, or distempers are such as may make a very sad preface to so happy a work; but yet this dark stormy night shall not hinder Sunrise, and that clear morning and bright day, in which the Churches shall injoy more rest, then hitherto they have attained. But what I have thus said, I desire may not be so understood and interpreted, as though

1. Either I hereby intend, with many now adays, to cry up a *fifth Monarchy*, to introduce confusion and *Anarchy*; for even in those happy days the *Prophet* speaks of *Kings that shall be nursing Fathers, and of Queens* /43/ *as nursing Mothers to the Church of God, Isa. 49.23.*

2. Or that I either think, or wish, that what *David* saith of the *Saints possessing the kingdome*, should be the lot of many such as in our days have monopolized the Title of *Saints*, which is made of late a *term of Art*, and a very *juggle*, and assumed by *Quakers, Ranters, Adamites*, and other most abominable Sectaries, *Saints per Antiphrasin*. As the unnaturall Sodomites in the *Old Testament* are call /HEBREW/ which word signifieth *Saints* or holy ones: they were *Saint Sodomites*, and ours are *Saint Ranters*, which hath made the very name of a *Saint*, and much more the persons of those that are truly such, to profane Souls odious. Should such *Saints* as these are, once have the *rule*, it is to be feared the Churches would have little of this *rest* which the Text speaketh of.

However, their frenzies should not prejudice the truth of God with sober-spirited Christians, who upon /44/ their best thoughts shall, in the *Scripture*, especially in the *Prophets*, finde many promises of such peaceable days not as yet fully accomplished, which therefore it is our duty to look, and pray, and prepare for, as the sweet close of the Churches troubles in this world, and a most joyfull both *pledge* and *preludium* of the *Saints* everlasting rest in heaven.

Mean while in the last place, let it minde *us* of this *Nation* both of Gods mercy, and our duty in reference to his present dispensations.

Some years since it was but little *rest and peace*, which the Churches and servants of *Christ* among us had, either of conscience or outward man, through some mens restlessness: That quarrell of *Gods* Covenant (when those Disturbers *sat still and were at rest*) he undertook in the late wars, that he might at the last (as the *prophet* speaketh) *give rest to the land*,

and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon. 1451

But mean while, in those sad commotions and concussions the *State* came to have as little *Rest* as the *Church*, when *Country was destroyed of Country, and City of City and one Neighbour of another*, so that *there was no peace to him that went out, or came in, but great vexation was upon all the inhabitants of the land.*

Which also proved a catching fire, and spread abroad, and was blown over to other lands, with such an heat as all the waters in the Seas between us could not quench, but they were all on a flame, so that we were encompassed not only (as before by God and Nature we were) with a wall of *water*, but of *fire* too, and this not (as in the Scripture promise) for our defence, but threatning our ruine. I need not tell you of the vastness of the expence of it to a *Nation* so much exhausted by former wars, nor of the stoppage and loss of Trade, which should have helped to have born that expence; nor of those many other dangers and mischiefs /46/ which would have accompanied and followed the continuance of those wars so *unnaturall* as against our own bowels, and so *unchristian* whilst with Brethren of the same Religion: it was little rest which we then had, and should in that way have had less.

But the *God of peace* hath in mercy at last quenched those flames, and so calmed those storms, that what was said of *Asa's* times, is in some measure applicable to ours, the land had rest, and *he had no war in those years, because the Lord had given him rest, 2 Chron. 14.6.* Which we are all with humble thankfulness to take notice of as *His gift*; for it is *He that maketh wars to cease, He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear asunder, and He burneth the Charretts in the fire, as the Psalmist speaketh, Psal. 49.9.* And therefore calleth upon *enemies, v. 10.* and saith, *Vacate, & videte, Be still, and know that I am God,* as before he had done on *his 1471 own people, Come and behold the works of the Lord, v. 8.* it is his work, and his mercy, and therefore calles upon us for our duty; which is,

1. *To eye, and own, and acknowledge God in all. Vacate & videte*, now that he hath in any measure given us rest, that we may be vacant for *God*, at leisure to consider of his doings, and to see that in the still calme Sunshine day, which we could not so well discern through the storm and tempest. For otherwise we shall be ready to be (as *Calvin* noteth on that Psalm) *ignavi & maligni in considerandis ejus operibus*, Either stupid, carelesse, and senselesse to take notice of any thing of *God*, or perverse or malignant in making a false construction of all; that what weaknesse, folly, and injustice of men which we have discovered in the late troubles we shall impute to *God*, in which an humble and wary eye of Faith will plainly see divine power, wisdom and righteousness. /48/

And on the other side we shall be prone to ascribe this begun peace, either to blinde *Fortune*, or to the wisdom and policy of quick-sighted men, which hath been spied out for us by a more gracious all-seeing eye of *God*. But a *watchfull* Christian will have a more *wakeing* eye, than when *God* hath given him rest, then to close it, but will look up to heaven, and say, *Deus nobis hac otia*.

2. And this *with all thankfulness*. This *Tertullian* thought was little enough for *Felix*, because that by him they enjoyed great quietnesse, and that very worthy deeds were done to their Nation by his providence, and how doth he flourish in his complement? /GREEK/, we accept it alwayes, and in all places most noble *Felix*: how doth he flaunt it with his *universals*, and *superlatives* with *Felix*? who at most was but an inferior instrument of all that good to them, if it had been true that he ascribes to him, for *Historians* write the quite contrary; and his trembling /49/ *Paul* reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and judgement, v. 25. plainly argueth that he was in his own conscience very guilty. It was therefore most likely the *Orators* fawning flattery which gave him the thanks and praise of what he never deserved. But without such fained glozing, with what humble zeal, and affectionate thankfulness

should we receive from the hand of *God*, (who ever have been the instruments) this so *universall* and *superlative* a mercy? that for the present we injoy so great a quietnesse, and that by his *Providence* all these /GREEK/ such most *worthy deeds* and achievements (never to be forgotten, but to be had in everlasting remembrance) *have been* and to this day *are done* to this Nation?

A mercy, 1. So great. 2. Vouchsafed to a *Nation* so unworthy.

1. How great the mercy is, you may the better conceive, if you will but think, what a quiet harbour is in comparison of a troubled sea, a calm after a storm to the mariner at sea, and a quiet repose and rest in the cool shade to a tyred labourer, or a sweltred travellour in a *wearly land*, which whosoever is carelessly senselesse of, deserves with murmuring, *Israel* to be brought back from *Kadesh* to the *Red Sea* again, from a *Canaan's* rest, to be again ingulfed in a Red sea of warre and blood, that so (as *God* saith of *Israel*, they *might know his service, and the service of the kingdomes of the countries*: So if we know not the benefit and blessing of peace by our injoyment of it, (as *Gideon taught the men of Succoth, with the thorns and bryars of the wilderness*) we may be made to know it by its contrary; what health is by sicknesse, and what the mercy and blessing of peace is, by the misery of a continued or renewed warre. What that may be, we might be this time have learned, by what in part for our shares, we have felt, too much, and yet blessed be *God*, that it hath been no more; we, as well as others, have found it a *Colluvies* of /51/ all evill, both of sin and misery, /GREEK/, if they call it the *father of all*, you may wel ad *mischiefe* to make up the sense, the very *abomination of desolation, abominable* for the outrages committed in it, and *making desolate*, in the sad and woful effects of it.

And therefore by so much the greater is this our blessing of peace, in that (if we would let it) it will bring

all the contrary good with it, the word is /GREEK/ in the Text, which importeth an uniting and and knitting together, and so the Apostle calleth it, /GREEK/, *the bond of peace*, that tyeth and coupleth together our hearts, and with all parts of our happinesse, in that the *Hebrews* may well call it /HEBREW/ from its perfection: let us therefore thankfully account and accept it as one of Gods good and *perfect gifts*, and of his infinite goodness and bounty, in vouchsafing it and (if our sins hinder not) many other blessings, together with it: *a troup cometh*; so *Leah* said of *Gad*, and so may we of peace, with /52/ *peace* a more free passage for the *Gospel of peace, mutuall love, the advance of Learning, Trades Increase, Piety, Plenty, all*; and therefore when the *Psalmist* could say no more, he endeth all with *The Lord will blesse his people with peace. Psal. 29.11.* And can we do lesse, then blesse him for vouchsafing *a mercy so great?*

2. Especially to a *Nation so wholly unworthy*; for as our misery in those dismall times of war was great, so our sin and guilt; both then, and before, and since, was, and is much greater.

In that bloody war it could not, but that much innocent blood was shed, which so *defileth the land*, that nothing but the blood of *Christ* can cleanse it. Rapine, and violence, and oppression, and that with a high hand was then practised, whilst many sucked the marrow out of those bones which others had broken.

All kinds of uncleanness grown brasen faced, and grown up to a *Ranting* madness, from which (as they said of the iniquity of *Peor*) /53/ *we are not cleansed until this day.*

And (what should have helped to purge away this filth) the Word and Truth of *God* blasphemed and corrupted, with a greater confluence of all sorts of errors and heresies, then all other *Nations*, and all former Ages put together can parallel, and these yet too much suffered. *Gods* Ordinances, Ministers, and Ministry melled and trampled upon by the

basest foot of pride.

Reformation hindred, obscured and derided.

And (I wish I might not say) *Reformers* themselves too too loathsomly corrupted, that it is to come to a *Medice cura teipsum*.

But I shall not rake any more in this sink; I onely say, may not not *God* justly visit *for these things, and should not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this? we lift up our eyes to our Idols, and shed blood, and shall we possesse the land? we stand upon our sword, and work abomination, and defile every one his neighbours wife, and shall* /54/ *we possesse the land? shall we have rest, who thus weary God with our sins? shall we have peace with men, who have expressed so much enmity against God? What hast thou to do with peace,* (said *Jehu* to *Joram*, and his messengers;) and it may justly be said to the people of this Nation, *As long as our whoredomes and witchcrafts are so many,* and yet if notwithstanding all this, *God yet speaks peace* to us *his people,* should not we *speak much to his praise?*

3. Yea, *and live to it?* How this may be, this pattern of these first and best Churches may direct us in the following particulars of the Text, which shew how they intertained and improved such a mercy. They then *were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost were multiplied,* which therefore remaineth as our duty, seeing we have received the like mercy.

These particulars are in the following Sermons to be further opened /55/ and pressed; for the present I shall onely touch upon that, which this first part of the Text already handled, most directly points at.

The sum of all is in *general,* that if our Churches, through *Gods* mercy, have rest in some kind and measure for the present, our prayer and care should be that we may have it compleated, and continued, every way, and for ever, that in stead of *Surge Domine, & dissepentur inimici,* Numb. 10.35. when the Ark was wandering in the wildernes, we

may say, *Surge Domine in requiem tuam, Psal. 132.8.* as it was then said, when it was settled in the Temple; and that as here in the Text, the Churches in *Judea, Galilee and Samaria*, so that happy day may come, wherein *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, may have their peace so settled, that they may be edified and multiplied.

But in particular our care and endeavour should be:

1. That if we have peace *with men, 156/* we may have also peace with *God*, and that with a greater and firmer assurance of his reconciled love, then we can have of theirs; for *Omnis homo mendax*, and the best men and friends are mutable: So *Jacob* when he makes a league with *Laban*, offers sacrifice, *Gen. 31.44.* with *54.* that he might as well propitiate *God*, as pacific man: And so in their *Peace-offerings*, *God* had his part, as well as *friends* had a feast of it, that so every way there might be a perfect Friendship and Atonement.

And there is great reason for it, Because in all jarrs and bloody contests with others, our quarrel first began with a provoked *God*, and therefore our Atonement and Agreement should begin there also.

Else our making peace with an *Inferiour officer*, whilst the *Commander* in chief continueth our enemy, will be but a very poor security; nay may become matter of greater provocation because he is left out, who is most concerned and *157/* interested; make we as fair weather either as we will or can here below, yet it will in the issue not prove fair weather indeed, as long as Heaven growne's, showre's, and thunder's. If *God* indeed please to *make peace in his high places*, (as *Bildads phrase* is, *Job 25.2.*) then (as *Elihu* adds) *If he give quietness, who can make trouble? But when he hideth his face, who then can behold him, whether it be done against a whole nation, or against a man onely, Job 34.29.*

2. If we have peace without, (to make it compleat and lasting) labour to have as much, or more peace within, that *our lusts may not warre in our members*; when enemies

leave off *warring* in *our countries*, take heed of giving warmth to any lust, which may soon grow so hot, to the provocation both of *God* and man, as may easily break out into a new combustion.

In particular, *cease from anger, and forsake wrath, and fret not thy self in any wise to do evil*; as the 158/ Psalmist exhorteth, *Psal. 37.8*. Take heed of maintaining animosities, and of retaining old grudges, in remembrance of former or later injuries; for, the seas do not leave rowling, as soon as the winde leaves blowing; there may be *great thoughts*, and swellings of *heart*, when there are great overtures of renewed love, and friendship, which (if so) are but the skinning over of a cankred soare, which all that while eateth in deeper, and at last will break out, and then be more incurable; or like a smothered fire, which burnes more cruelly, and in the issue bursts out more violently, when once the train is laid, and takes like *Absaloms* long concealing and disguising his malice against his brother *Amnon*, till he could meet with a fit opportunity to discover it, and then he did it to purpose, *2 Sam. 13.20, 22. with 23. 24 &c.*

3. If we have peace in the *State* and *Commonwealth*, I pray let it be our answerable care and endeavour, that (as it is in the Text) 159/ the *Churches may have rest* also, that we may have an *Ecclesiasticall* peace, as well as a *Civil*, for sometimes when the Commonwealth is in greatest quiet, the Church hath least rest from enemies, *Zech. 1.11. with 12.* And sometimes the more rest they have from persecutions from without, the more leasure they have had for brangling contentions among themselves; for prevention whereof take we care to lay aside parties, and factions, private opinions and interests which redound to the prejudice of truth, and the public peace, all vain *janglings* and *perverse disputings* of men of *corrupt mindes and destitute of the truth*, either for *Niceties*, or against *received* (especially if fundamental) truths, that it

may not be, *I am of Paul, and I of Cephas, and I of Apollo*, I am for this Minister, and I for that, till at last another steppeth-out, and saith, *and I am of Christ*, i.e., for no minister at all, but I am so *caught up in the Spirit*, that I am now above all Ordinances. *At non /60/ sic ab initio*, we see it was not so from the beginning, but those churches that are here *said to have rest*, in the 4th chapter, v. 32, are said to *have been of one heart, and of one soul*, and happy we! if we were so too, that once at last we may prove indeed so happy, as either to attain to that *unity of faith*, which the *Apostle* speaks of *Ephes.* 4.13. or at least, in the mean time to that *unity of Spirit* which you read of in v. 3. of that chapter, that either we may not differ from one another in judgement, or at least pity, and with meekness bear with one another, in those things wherein at present we cannot fully agree: otherwise, it will be,

1. Both very unworthy and unseemly for *to shed the blood of war in peace*, as the *Scriptures* phrase is, *1 King.* 2.5. and is /GREEK/, *in the depth of civil peace*, to continue in the *height of Church contests*; and so the peace of the State should onely in a manner build a Scaffold for the /61/ children of the Church to fight upon, whilest strangers and enemies sit by looking on and laughing, and it may be plotting their destruction; for,

2. It will also be very unlikely that the peace of the *State* should continue long in such disquiets of the *Church*, the *Temple* using to be a bulwark for the Town-house, and therefore that earthquake which shakes the one, will be very likely in time, if not suddenly, to overturn the other: It hath been no strange thing in the world, to see *Church-heats* bursting out into *State-combustions*.

Tantum Religio &c. zeal upon the account of Religion when once fiered hath oft proved wildfire. Stories relate what the *Jewish Zelotes* in this kind did in *Jerusalem*, and what flames such like *Incendiaries* in the former Age kindled in *Germany*: may never such red lines hereafter be read in our

Chronicles or Calendar.

4. And because the *Prophet* telleth /62/ us, that *quietness and assurance for ever is the effect of righteousness*, let it be the joynt endeavour of us all, that in our practice and pursuite of it, it may prove the *stability* of our times, Let *Daniels* counsel therefore to *Nebuchadnezzar* be mine to myself and to everyone here present. Now *break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor*, if it may be *the lengthning of our tranquillity*, *Dan.* 4.27. Otherwise our sins may soon disturb all, so as that even *Halcyon* days may but breed and usher in a greater storm, and some short warm gleames may onely service to make an after cold blast more piercing: A few drops in a drought helps the more to burn up the grass, and a little water cast into a great fire makes it afterward burn more fiercely; the *Lord* grant that our former and still continued sins may not make this *Interim* of our present peace, even the fewel of an after combustion. On that we might so keep our selves in *Gods* way, that our /63/ *feet may stand fixed within the gates of Jerusalem*, or vision of peace, *Psal.* 132.2.

5. And because it is the increase of *Christs government and peace, of which it's said, there shall be no end, Isa.* 9.7. To our utmost labour we to advance it, that he may confirme us, that the *establishment of his government*, may be the *settlement of our peace*, and that as his goings out to us have been wonderfull, so his *rest may be glorious, Isa.* 11.10. Do not we *stir up, and disquiet him*, and we may sit quietly and long enough under our *vines and figtrees*. Insum; the way long and long to continue our *rest*, is rightly to improve it, as the Churches here did, who when they had *rest were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost*, were multiplied. /64/

And were edified.

2. Sermon
preached in
Whitehall, July
23, 1654.

Having in the handling of the first part of the Text dispatched the first great blessing, the *Churches* rest; I come now to close with two most happy *concomitants or consequents* of it, that upon it, they were *edified*, and *multiplied*: and first of the former of them, the words in the *Greek* are / GREEK/, which most properly are to be rendred thus, *They had peace being edified*: which reading may admit of a twofold Interpretation.

Either that their edification was a means of their peace, *they being edified had peace*: as the *Syriack* rendreth it, as though their edification went before, and so their peace followed upon it.

Or that their edification was a consequent and an effect of their peace; and so *Beza* rendreth the words, *habentes pacem edificabantur*, *having peace they were edified*; 1651 to which agree our *Translators* who read it, *they had rest; and were edified*, as limiting their edification to have followed upon their rest.

Both readings may hold forth a wholesome Truth to us.

The former this.

Doct. 1. That our edifying maketh way for our rest, and our profiting by means to our continued peaceable enjoyment of them.

For although sometimes *Jerusalem's wall is built in a troublesome time*, and the more that some of *Gods* people are edified and thrive by the word, the less peace and rest, but the more trouble and persecution they suffer for it, *Matth. 13.21*.

Yet it is a pity that *grace & peace* should be parted, and therefore it is the sweetness of *Gods* goodness when we have (as it's said *Nehem. 4.6.*) a mind to work, and to edify our

selves and his Church, to grant us fair weather to build in. So *Solomon* while he was building the *Temple* had peace, and *Israel* in *Canaan*, when they thrice /66/ a year left their houses to come up to the Temple, were not assaulted by enemies, as at their first entrance into it, when they set upon that intermitted ordinance of Circumcision, which how painfull it was, and how it exposed them to danger, when they were soar of it, the Instance of the *Schechemites* tells us, when two men *Simeon* and *Levi* could come on a whole city and destroy it: but God secured them, that in that time none of the Nations of *Canaan* set upon them, whilst they had been so unable to have resisted them; and all this because *God* delighteth not to to pluck the child from the breast, when it thriveth by it, nor to send nipping *May* frosts to blast a growing and forward spring. It is certainly the best way to keep our candle light to do our work by it. Take we but care of our edification, and building up in faith and grace, and then let us trust *God* for our rest and settlement in either inward or outward peace. This the former Reading of the words affordeth. /67/

But I rather pitch upon the latter, which maketh their *being edified* a fruit and consequent of their *having rest*; that was their happinesse, and it *is our duty* to *improve our peace to our edification*. It were well that our material Churches which were battered and demolished in our late wars, might be repaired and rebuilt now in times of peace, but how much better if the spirituall true Churches of *Christ* were indeed savingly edified in their holy faith, now that there are foundations layd of our outward peace? *God* (I know) can *lay the beams of his Chambers in the waters*, *Psal.* 104.3. (a strange foundation, you would think, of any firme building) He can build up his Church in the midst of stormes and tempests, but as for us, it is ill to lay our foundations, or to build upon quicksands or in an Earth-quake; fair weather is the fittest time for us to build in, which whilst *God*, for the present sends us, and hath built our Scaffold for us, it's best for /68/

us to get the trowell into our hand, and to ply our work: for although *David* in his trouble may *prepare* much for the house of the Lord, and *desired to find him a Tabernacle*, yet a peaceable *Solomon built him an house*; what therefore *David* said to *Solomon* let me to you now, (as in *Solomons* time) *God hath given you rest* (almost) *on every side*, so that there is neither *Adversary nor evill occurrent*, *Arise and be doing*, and the Lord will be with you.

In the prosecuting of this particular, I shall endeavour to clear those two things.

1. What it is to be edified.

2. What great reason there is now that God hath given us peace and rest, that we should so be.

First, then for this Phrase of *being edified*, all know it is a *Metaphor* taken from materiall buildings, in which upon a foundation first laid, the superstructure is laid on and carried up, till the top-stone added compleat all. /69/

So in this our *Spirituell Architecture*, *Christ* being first laid for the *foundation*, (there *can* (and therefore must) be *no other*, 1 *Cor.* 3.11) and we being spiritually but really united to him, we come to be settled on him, and in him to grow up in grace and peace to everlasting life.

For edification in general importeth *settlement and growth, establishment and increase*.

Settlement, as when our *Saviour* saith, *On this rock I will build my Church*, there is *edification*; so as the *gates of hell shall not prevaile against it*, *Matth.* 16.18. there is *settlement*.

Growth and settlement together we have in *Col.* 2.7. in those two words, /GREEK/ *built up* and *established*, not onely established or settled, *but built up: built and built upon*, as the word is, *i.e.* the whole building upon the foundation, and one grace, and degree of grace upon another, that at length we come to be *built up* even to everlasting life; when thus /70/ confirmed and improved, then in the *general* we may be said to be edified.

But more *particularly* this Edification is,
 Either of the whole Church;
 Or of particular beleevers.

The *Church* is *Gods house*, 1 *Tim.* 3.15. and so he is said to build it, *Matth.* 16.18.

And *Beleevers* are *Gods Temple*, 1 *Cor.* 3.16, 17. / GREEK/ *Gods building*, 1 *Cor.* 3.9. and accordingly they as *lively stones* are said to *be built up a Spirituall house*, 1 *Pet.* 2.5. And accordingly,

The *Church* is said to *be built up and edified*, when either in the first founding and erecting, or in after repairing and reforming.

1. His word is *purely and orderly* dispensed, when upon *Christ* the foundation is built no *wood, hay, stubble* of *false* or *frothy* Doctrines, but *gold, silver, and precious stones* of *solid, and spiritual* truth, *as it is in Jesus*. So we finde *true instruction*, to /71/ be called *edification*, as 1 *Cor.* 14.4. where he that *Prophecieth*, i.e. instructeth the people, is said to *edify the Church*.

2. *Sacraments* and *Church Censures* are duly administered, and as in a true wrought building, a due *order*, and *Symmetry* kept and observed.

3. In a word, when the Church and all the Ordinances, and outward constitution, and state of it, is set up, and held up, enlarged, and settled, as we have it fitly to our present purpose pressed of the Temple in *Joash* his time, 2 *Chron.* 24.15. where it is said, that *the work was perfected by them, or healing went up upon the work*, when all the ruines and breaches were repaired, and *they set the house of God in his state, or forme, or upon his firm basis or foundation, and strengthened it*. So now: when the *Church* of *Christ* shall prove so unhappy as to have the breaches and decayes of it made up, shall be firmly settled on its true foundation, and raised up to its just stature and constitution, then /72/ it is more compleatly built up and edified.

And the like proportionably is to be said of particular

Believers, the true members of the Church, for they also are *edified*, when by the *Word* and other Ordinances, by which the *Church* it self was before said to be built up, they are

1. Brought to *Christ*, and built upon him as the onely true Foundation, 1. *Pet.* 2.4, 5. and in reference onely to him upon the *doctrinall* foundation of the *Prophets and Apostles*, *Christ* mean while continuing the corner-stone, *Eph.* 2.20.

2. And thereupon are confirmed and grow up in grace both in themselves, and with one another as it's added, *Eph.* 2.21. *in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord.* And thus we are said to be edified in *knowledge*, 1 *Cor.* 14.4. in *faith*, *Jude v.* 20. in *love*, 1 *Cor.* 8.1. *Eph.* 4.16. and the like may be said of all other gaces. 173/

3. So that a *good life*, as the topstone, is laid upon *good doctrine*, an outward holy conversation is added to all our inward grace, and holy profession, then, and truly not till then, *may we cry, Grace, grace to it*, as in the building of the second Temple, *Zechariah* 4.7.

4. And when we are thus *converted*, and *edified*, we further labour to *strengthen*, and build up our *Brethren*, *Luke* 22.32. 1 *Thes.* 5.11.

And therefore now for the applying of this to our selves. In the forementioned particulars we have our work cut out to our hand, and laid before us; we now have rest, as these here had, it concerneth us therefore not now to be *negligent* and idle, but to get up and be doing, that we may be edified, as they were.

And here our fifth great care must be, that *Christ* in all be laid for the only foundation. You may possibly think this a strange lesson to be taught them who already professe themselves *Christians*, as though 174/ we had need to *lay again the foundation*, as the *Apostle* speaketh, *Heb.* 6.1. but that our unhappy times are most unhappily become like those, which the *Psalmist* in his dayes spake of, in which

Foundations were destroyed. For now (that I may use the *Apostles* words) /GREEK/ *the very principles of the doctrine of Christ*, the most *Fundamental* Scripture truths; such I mean, as are not onely sufficient to build us up in a good life, as some now mince it, but such as are absolutely to be believed and practised to salvation, are not onely doubted of, but boldy and blasphemously denyed and impugned, and this for the most part *impune*, and without controul. Whilest the *Papist* robs *Christ* of his *offices*, the *Socinian* spoileth him of his *Deity*, the *Antiscripturist* of the *Scepter of his Kingdom*, and others blaspheme him into a *Notion*, a *Forme*, a very *m Impostor*. Lord! is thy *Church* edified, when *foundations* are thus *overturned*? and what *can*? what should the *righteous* /75/ *now do*? But the more that others pull down, the more they should labour to build up both themselves and others, in *their* most holy *faith*, upon the *foundations of the Apostles and Prophets*, *Jesus Christ himself being the corner-stnoe* with whom *whosoever gathereth not, scattereth*, and on whom whosoever (be he othrewise never so great a master builder) buildeth not, besides what he doth to others, is certain to ruine himself unavoidably, irrecoverably: we know (to this purpose) what became of those *Builders* that rejected this precious *Corner-stone*, *Matth. 24.42, 43. That whosoever falleth on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grinde him to powder.* He is sure to build a *Babel of confusion*, who layeth not *Christ* first, for the onely *foundation*. It is said, *that in the dayes of Lot, they planted, they builded*, but fire and brimstone from heaven soon consumed all those buildings: and in this busie /76/ age of ours, we are as intent to raise up *Fabricks* of our own, both in our *opinions and judgements*, and in our other *designes and practises*, thereby to advance our *estates and esteemes*, and because *Christ* and his *Truth* and *Grace* will not, cannot square with them, with those *Builders* we leave him out, and lay him aside, as not for our turn; But what *Castle-come-downs* will such buildings prove that are

daub'd with such untemper'd mortar? Certainly, such *wood, hay, and stubble* will burn. Such buildings will not stand that are built upon the *sand*, and not on *this rock*. In the close it will be found that this is not to *edification* but to *destruction*: let our first care therefore be to make *Christ* our ground-work and foundation.

And then the second should be that the *Ordinances of Christ* be set up, and kept up in their purity and power. This is *Gods building up of Zion*, when he *build a Tower (a Temple)* in the *midst of his vineyard*, *Isa. 5.2.* and *1771* setleth all the *Formes, Ordinances,* and offices of his house. This is the building of the Church, both in reference to the generall constitution of the whole, as also to the saving edification of the severall members of it.

When the wholesome word of *God* is dispensed according to his will: for it is *able to build us up*, *Act. 20.32.*

And when *Sacraments* and *Censures* are administred according to his word: for in the stedfast continuance, and communion in these *Ordinances*, the first and best *Believers* grew up, increased and multiplied, *Acts. 2.41, 42, &c.*

And from hence take we notice of our *sin*, and *duty*.

1. Our sin in this particular is very great; for although through *Gods mercy* the *State* hath some *rest*, yet the *Church*, according to those particulars, is very far from being edified. We are still on the pulling-down hand, or if building up, it is of *Babels*, in which we cannot agree, or understand one another; *1781* nay, of *Temples* and *Altars* to *Idols*, which was not only *Manassehs* sin, *2 Chron. 33.3, 4, 5.* but even *Solomons*, *1 Kings 11.7.* which the *Prophets* up and down cry out of in *Israel and Judah*, and in the mean while of the neglect and ruine of *Gods Temple*: a sin which we are sadly and deeply guilty of, whilest

1. The *Fanatick Enthusiast* is caught up so high in the Spirit, that he now is gotten above all *Ordinances*, and doth *tanquam exalto despiciere*, undervalue and despise them as

poor empty *Formes*, and weak *beggerly Rudiments* and *elements* for those of lower *Attainments* (as they in their gibberish are pleased to phrase them) to be trained up with. The *Lord* humble the blasphemous pride of these self-conceited men, who thus attempt to spurn down, (as much below them) *Christs* own Institutions, which he hath appointed as fit and able by his blessing to build up his people in faith and love, and by an humble and faithful improvement whereof, /79/ many of their betters both dead and alive, have attained to so much inward settlement and peace, and far more real and substantiall holinesse, and the *power of godlinesse*, than ever any of these our *Transcendents* in their high-flown way either have really attained, or can truly so much as pretend to. Constant observation, and too sad experience have taught us, that the *Church of God* hath been poorly edified by these who have daubed up their *Babel* with such *untempered mortar*, whilst Gods Temple and Ordinances are thus despised and trampled upon by these *Enthusiasts*.

2. Whilst by our *Atheisticall Politicians*, and other prophane sinners, both those Ordinances, and the desires and endeavours of all such as would advance them, are either openly opposed and hindred, or at least inwardly maligned and derided, as weak attempts of silly people to set and hold up sorry Bug-beares, which were at first onely inventions of more crafty men to keep /80/ Inferiors in aw, and blinde obedience. Thus *Calvins* course in the Reformation of *Geneva* hath with some but a little better interpretation. And so *Tobiah* of old jeared *Nehemiahs* building *Jerusalems* wals, *Nehem.* 4.3. and *Michal* despised David in her heart for dancing before the Ark in its ascent to *Zion*, *2 Sam.* 6.16. Now the *Lord* grant, that such scornfull malicious opposers and ruiners of the Church of Christ, may in due time be as much *cast down in their own eyes*, as they were *Nehem.* 6.16. when they *shall see this work to be wrought of God*, and as much then dejected, as they have been exceedingly grieved that there were, or any that seriously

endeavor it, like them, *Nehem.* 2.10.

3. But the Church is the more slowly edified, not onely by reason of such enemies malice and opposition, but also by other mens neglect through sloath and self-seeking: for with the returned Jews we are so eager on *building of our own houses*, that mean while we /81/ let the *house of God lye waste*, and with them perswade our selves that it is *not yet time to build it*; many other fair houses we may see every day almost every where going up apace, whiles Churches lye ruined, and shut up, or not frequented: Do not some of us build our own houses upon the ruines of *Gods*? To such the *Prophets* word is very heavy, whilest he cryeth *Wo to him that buildeth his house by unrighteousnesse and his chambers by wrong*; against such *the stone out of the wal wil cry*, and *the beams out of the Timber*. Such *Eagles feathers* will consume all such mens stately *plumes*, which they so feather their nests with, when they shall see them set on fire with such coals from the Altar which they dreamed not of: but I leave them.

And desire that all of us, even the best of us may be humbled for our remissenesse in setting upon, and carrying on this building up of the Church of Christ, which (as other Church-work is wont) goeth on very slowly, and may complain /82/ as the *Criple*, which lay so long at the pool of *Bethesda*, that while it is sometimes getting on, and in some forwardnesse alwayes some business or other (and usually of our own) steppeth in before it.

But better men in Scripture have written us a better copy. *David* now chose to be King, and therefore had businesse enough, with what speed he could, to settle his own house, yet in the first place takes care of Gods, would not enter into his princely palace, nor lye down on his soft bed, nor *sleep*, nay not so much as *slumber*, till he had found out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of *Jacob*, *Psal.* 132.3, 4, 5. The Lord pardon us, that whilest for these many years, we have been about this work, at least have

seemed to have been (*God* knoweth what from the heart we at first, and since have really intended) we have been so often nodding and slumbering, that at last, as to this businesse, we seem to be fallen fast asleep; and *He* in mercy grant that some terrible /83/ judgement do not at last awake us. But *David* we see had a more watchfull eye upon it.

And *Solomon* in his first and best dayes trode in his fathers steps, builds *Gods* house before his own, and although he was longer in building the latter, yet (it may be) it was because he employed more workmen, and more care and diligence about the former that he might the sooner dispatch it, when he was more desirous and earnest to injoy it.

And afterward in *Judahs* return from *Babylon*, *Ezra* layeth the foundations of the *Temple*, before *Nehemiah* raiseth up the *City* walls: and truly if the *Prophet* would be first served of the *widow of Zareptahs* provisions, before her selfe; is it fit that we should serve our selves before our God? this is our Sin.

2. And therefore the contrary is our Duty, that with one shoulder, with all our heart and utmost endeavour, we would set about this great good work, that *Gods Church* at last may be edified. /84/ It is said of *Baruch*, /HEBREW/ *flagranti animo instauravit*, that he earnestly repaired *Jerusalems* wall, *Nehem.* 3.20. and truly we have need,

As of much *wisdom*, when we are now to *build a Tower*, to sit down, and to *account the cost*, *Luke* 14.28.

So of much *courage and zeal* to carry on, and to go through with this work, for we may make account, with *Zerubbabel*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah* to meet with all that scorn and opposition that either man or devil, can help us with to hinder us: that we have need of *Baruchs* /HEBREW/ warmth & heat the more to quicken us, and to burn their cords asunder, the *zeal of Gods house should even eat us up*, as it did our Saviour; so as to consume and break through all such obstacles, that that word may never be said of us, *those*

men begun to build, but were not able to finish but that we may still advance and go through with it, as it is often repeated in that story of their repairing /85/ of *Jerusalem*, that they did not onely *build the walls*, and *lay the beams*, but also *set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof*, i.e. they rested not, till they had compleated all: *Nehem.* 3.3, 6, 15. In which chapter from the example of those builders of *Jerusalems walls*, we have many usefull directions in this like work of edifying the Church of *Christ*, and out of diverse others I make choice to instance only in two, for our better direction in it.

1. That all are to be employed in this good work.

2. But every one according to his own rank and calling.

This is a *boon* work which none must be exempted from, but all, of all *ages, sexes, degrees* and *conditions*, are to have their share, and accordingly to be engaged in. As in the *rearing up* of the *Tabernacle*, the women spun, and the men wrought, some brought gold and precious stones, others goats hair and more inferiour materials: So here in the building /86/ up of *Jerusalems walls*, you have all employed.

Both *sexes*, not only *men*, but even *women* prove *workmen*, and so you read of *Hallush and his daughters*, *v.* 12.

And the like you may there observe of all *callings* and *conditions* of the *people*, not only the richer *Gold-smiths*, who had *three* shares, *v.* 8.31.32. and the *Merchants*, who had *two*, *v.* 31, 32. but even the meaner *Heards-men* of *Tekoah*, who had their double share, *v.* 5.27. as usually it proves, that meaner men are the *true labourers*, not only in their own work, but also in carrying on the publick good.

But yet it is fit that the *Governours of the Church and State* should be *Principals*, and so here they were.

For in the 1. verse we finde *Eliashib* the *High Priest*, and *his Brethren* in the *first lot*, and beginning the good work; and with them other *Priests*, *v.* 22.28. and *Levites*, *v.* 17. yea,

inferiour *Nethinims* the /87/ Temple *water-drawers*, vers. 26 so that amongst them they had *five* lots.

But the *Princes* and *Rulers* had *eight*, and amongst them the *Rulers* of *Jerusalem* are set first, v. 9.12. not (it may be) so much for their place and dignity, as for their prime forwardness in so blessed a work, and withall they have *two* lots of the *eight* (as more rich and able and willing too, a good pattern for our chief Towns, and Cities in the like work) and the *Rulers* of inferiour places make up the other *six*, v. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Onely the ignoble *Nobles* of *Tekoah* (it may be some rich *Grasiers*, or Country covetous *Leards*, amongst their Neighbour Heardsmen) were too good, or rather too base, to *put their necks to the work of the Lord*, v. 5.

A fit *Model* for us in this building of the Church, to work by. The *Priests* had *five lots* in that, and the *Ministers* have a very great share in this: from the *high* /88/ *Priest* to the *lowest Nethinim*, all of greatest or least *places, parts, graces*, all *Churchmen* especially have an interest in this *Church-work*, as they have that special office in it, so they above all, should have a special care of it; Their /GREEK/ or proper work is to be *Builders*, 1 *Cor.* 3.9, 10. *Psal.* 118.22. And the very end of their office, gifts, and authority, is the edification of the Church, *Ephes.* 4.12 2 *Cor.* 10.8. Oh, therefore as by our variance we have made it a *Babel*, so by our union and joynt endeavours *Jerusalem* may once be it self, a *vision of peace*, and that now at last, as it was of old, it may be again *built as a City that is compact together*. For our encouragement wherein, take we notice of that remarkable providence *viz.* that *God* did so graciously accept, and highly esteem *Eliashibs* and the rest of the *Priests* beginning to build up *Jerusalems* wals, that whereas they began that happy work at the *sheep-gate*, *Neh* 3.1. that /89/ very place he so remarkably honoured, that he miraculously blessed it with that *healing pool of Bethesda*, which cured all commers, of which you read *John* 5.2, 3, 4

I cannot promise miracles: but I should hope for

a marvellous healing of our breaches, if according to this pattern our Ministers would be foremost in this blessed work of building up the Church of *Christ*.

In which *Magistrates* (as they have most power, so they) have the greater share, as in that pattern they had *eight* lots, to the Priests *five*, and so before we read, *Then rose up the chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, with the Priests and Levites whose spirit God had raised, to go to build the house of God, Ezr. 1.5.* and afterward, when their spirits were somewhat down by reason of many discouragements they met with, upon the *Prophets* stirring them up, *chap. 5.1* it is again said, *Then rose up Zerubbabel and Joshua, and began again to /90/ build it, the Prophets of God helping them, v. 2.* Ministers should be *helpers*, and *Magistrates* (especially supreme Magistrates) should be *Principals*. So *Cyrus* confesseth he had a charge from *God* laid upon him to build his house, *Ezra 1.2.* and how Christian Magistrates, who have far more, and stronger ties, can be loosed and exempted from this charge, I know not; this I find that *Abraham, Gen. 12.7, 8. Isaac, Gen. 26.25. Jacob, Gen. 33.20.* those great *Patriarchs*, where ever they pitched their Tent, they there built an Altar. *Micah*, though none of the best men, , yet (as it seemeth by his story) one of some good rank, accounted himself made when he had got a *Priest* and a *Teraphim*, and utterly undone when afterward he had lost them; as the loss of the Ark brake *Elies* neck, and his daughter in laws heart. *Joshua* takes care to place the Ark in *Shiloh*, which was in *Ephraim*, his Tribe. And although building of /91/ Altars to *God* was but rarely thought of by *Saul, 1 Sam. 14.35.* and the Ark of *God* in his time but little looked after *1 Chron. 13.3.* yet he getteth it to *Nob* in *Benjamin*, which was his Tribe. And afterward *David* when once come to the Throne getteth it to *Zion, 2 Sam. 6.* which was his own city, *v. 16.* It seemeth these great men thought it best, and their both duty and security to have the Ark of *God* by them: And it is worth such mens most serious thoughts to consider,

what both pains and cost *David* was at to settle it in *Zion*, and *Solomon* afterward in *Jerusalem*, and with what solemnity they did it: *David* gathereth all the chosen men of *Israel* with all the people to bring it up atrwith all kinds of musick: He himself dancing before it with all his might, though he was laughed at by *Michal* as a fool for so doing, *2 Sam. 6*. And *Solomon* to bring it to *Zion* to be settled in his Temple hath as great a convocation, *1 King. 8.1, 2, 3*. and He /92/ himself with the Princes went before it in the head of that Procession, *v. 5*. where it is added that they offered so many sheep and oxen that they could not be *told nor numbred for multitude*. Indeed *v. 63*. they are numbred to have been *two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep*: but was the greatest sacrifice for number of offerings, that ever was heard of, or read either in sacred or profane writers; which sheweth at what a rate they did (and all that are in their place, should value the building up of *Gods* house, and the settlement of his ordinances, and be no losers by them neither: for they will quit all the care and cost, which they put them or any to, as the Ark fully satisfied *Obed-edom* for its intertainment, *2 Sam. 6.12*. and so still

1. Their setting of *Gods* house will establish their own, as *Caesar* did by his own statues by erecting *Pompey's*. *God* promiseth to build *David* an house, because he did but only purpose to build him one, *2 Sam. 7.11. /93/*

2. It will be the most Orient Gemme in their Crown, is it self, & and will make them most honourable in the sight of *God* and man. So we finde that in all that royal state of *Solomon*, which ravisheth the *Queen of Sheba's* heart, after the meat of his table, and the sitting of his Servants, and all the rest of that bravery, the last, as chiefest, is added, viz, *His ascent into the house of God*, *1 King. 10.4, 5*. That made *Solomon* glorious while he lived, viz. the building of *Gods* house more then his own: and *Jehojada's* doing good in *Israel* both towards *God* and his house, gained him honour

in a royall buriall, when he was dead, 2 *Chron.* 24.16. Dead mens *monuments* used to be in *Churches*, but the building of *Gods true Church* would be their most glorious and lasting *monument*.

3. Nor will it be more honour to them from others, then truest inward satisfaction and comfort to themselves in the closing up of their lives, & at their last account. After all that great good which *Nehemiah* had done for the *State* in /94/ the foregoing Chapters, how sweetly and comfortably doth he close up all in the last Chapter of that Book, with reflecting upon his care and zeal for the house and ordinances of *God?* in his taking care for the sanctifying of the *Sabbath*, in his cleansing of the *Temple*, in his providing for the *Priests* portions, and in his chasing away such as intended and defiled the *Priesthood?* with what comfort and humble boldness could he say, *Remember me, o my God, concerning this*, and again, *Remember me concerning this also*. What happy *Items* were these in his last reckonings? and yet again not as though by his so often putting *God* in mind he were subject to forget, but the more to assure us that he will be sure to remember) again I say) he addeth the third time, *Remember me o God for good*, and so he ends his Book: and o happy all they who are in his place, if with such a word in their mouths they can end their lives, as with a sweet aire after a stroak struck by a skilfull hand on a well tune instrument. /95/

But although *Magistrates* in this work have the greatest task, yet the people, and all private Christians, yea the least and meanest of them, have their proportionable share, as the least stones, yea though they serve only for filling up the wall, in their place and proportion conduce much to the getting up of the building, and that as well as the chiest corner stones & they that lye in the foundation: He that *serveth the Mason*, helpeth up the building, as well as the *Master-workman*: The poor widow may cast *her two mites* into the treasury of the *Temple* and the *women* that spun goats hair

helped on the work of the Tabernacle, as well as *Bezaleel*: The rich *Gold-smiths* had *three lots*, *Nehem.* 3.8, 31,32. (as it was fit that their proportion should be greater answerable to their ability) and yet the *Heardsmen* of *Tekoah* had *two*, *v.* 5.27. The *Apostle* speaks of a /GREEK/, and an /GREEK/, and an /GREEK/, in every part of the body of *Christ*, in which the least member hath its *measure* of grace and ability, /96/ and answerable thereto it hath its *energy* or *effectuall working*, and, proportionable to it, its /GREEK/ or *supply* that it affordeth, and so by the joynt acting of all the members, *there is made an increase of the whole body, unto the edifying of it self in love.*

Let not therefore *Gideon* say, *My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my fathers house*, and wherewithall shall I have *Israel*? let not the poorest, and weakest, and most private Christian say, *My body, parts, estate*, are all weak and poor, and how then shall I ever do any thing towards the edifying of the Church, or advance the setting of the ordinances of *Christ*? For,

1. All the Saints are *in Circuitu*, round about the Throne, and in point of Communion with *Christ*, the poor may be as near to him as the richest, and therefore although such of you can otherwise do but little, yet your prayers may do very much with him, who alone must do all. This made *Paul* so frequently /97/ and earnestly begg the prayers of all, when he was upon this work, though he was a Master-builder.

2. Their holy life may yet do more, as effectually prevailing with him to continue and increase such means of grace, which they so thrive by, as long as his servants watch and work, he is pleased to keep in the light, it was not then so with *Ephesus*, when *Christ* threatned to *remove her Candlestick*, *Revel.* 2.5.

3. As weak and mean as they are their particular indeavours may much advance the Churches common service. As in great mens families, so in the house of *God*, there are variety of offices, some more mean and homely, and yet most

necessary, which persons of meaner parts and place are more fit for. A little *Piercer* is fitter to make a hole to drive in a nail, then a great *wimble*, and the *little finger*, may in some posture reach that which the greatest and longest cannot: and so in the body mystical, as well as natural, the *members /98/ that seem to be more feeble, are necessary*, 1 Cor. 12.22. And therefore in this building up of the Church, did we but seriously study it; and our selves, we should finde some lower services, which men of lower abilities, and standings, like our selves, and so we with them, may be most fit to stoop to, and never have occasion to *stand all the day* idle with this excuse, *that none hath hired us*, for every one of us, the very meanest of us may do something.

4. But many such weak ones joyning together may arise to a considerable ability. All buildings are not made onely of such vast square stones, as *Solomons Temple* was, but many of lesser bricks, nay little Flints (we see) if well laid together in good mortar serve to make very strong building: and that great Beam which no one strongest man can stirre, many weaker hands may easily lift up: How great a fire may little sticks make, if many, and laid together? *Jor* and *Dan*, though /99/ lesser Rivolets whilst asunder, when met and joyned in one Current, make an overflowing *Jordan*. How fast might this Church-work go up, if many hands, though but weak ones, would joyne in it? *The children gathered wood, whilst the fathers kindled the fire, and the women kneaded dough to make Cakes for the Queen of heaven:* and if many weaker hands with those that are stronger were joyntly put to this work, the house of the *King of heaven* would more speedily be built up and edified.

5. Although it should be little or nothing that either singly or together we could do of our selves, yet it might do much in setting others on work, who are able to do more, as *the Corinthians zeal provoked many*, 2 Cor. 9.2. little stickes used to kindle great ones. In the Church of *Christ*, there

are not only /GREEK/, but also /GREEK/, *Helps* as well as *Governments*; and such *helpers* weak *Inferiors* may prove, /100/ and so *Paul* the great *Apostle* calleth *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, that were but *Tent-makers*, his *helpers*, *Rom.* 16.3. Weak ones may help those that are more able,

Either by encouraging them in their work, as *Paul* when he doth *but see the Brethren is thankful, and taketh courage*, *Act.* 28.15.

Or at least by shaming their backwardness, with their forwardness, and that with this advantage, that herein the weakest are able to do the most, in that the weaker they are, the more they shame the stronger, if they fall short of their activity and diligence.

6. And yet the more, in that by provoking their strength, we shall improve our own weakness to be able to act the more strongly, our little wheels being carried about by their great ones, which we have set a going, and the great sluice opened and set a running turneth about our Mill; and the great Ship now under Sail carrieth the Cock /101/ boat along with it, which helped to weigh its anchor. So *Aquila* and *Priscilla* by helping *Apollos*, mightily helped themselves, and others by his greater abilities, for it is added, that *he helped them much, who had beleevd through grace*.

So that from these and the like considerations we see that private Christians, and even the weakest of them are engaged in this great good work of edifying the Church of *God*, in which, if they ply it, they may do much good.

I am sure, that by their contrary neglect, or practise they may both much hinder it, and at last ruine all. For,

1. It is but a very weak hand that cannot more powerfully draw a great weight down the hill, then a very strong arme can pull it up. How doth a little *Remora* stay a great ship in her full speed? and one stop in the least wheel or pin, make an huge engine stand still in its twisted motion? Very sorry men have proved /102/ sad hinderances to the

advance of the things of *Christ and his Church*, through their boldness, and other baseness, whilst the Devil can have more active Agents against the Church, then *Christ* can have for it.

2 Or although such sorry adversaries strength and ability may be little, yet their sins may be very great; they weak men, but theirs may *be mighty sins*; and so although in their private low standing they can do little with *men*, yet by their horrid abominations they may most highly provoke *God*, and so one *Achan* may *trouble all Israel*, and *one sinner destroy much good*, one otherwise weak hand pull down more, then many abler can build up; And thus we see that not onely *Magistrates* and *Ministers*, but all even the most private and meanest *Christians* have an interest and share in this blessed work of edifying and building up the Church of *Christ*: which was the *first* lesson we were to learn from the example of those repairers of /103/ *Jerusalem's* walls, in *Nehe.* 3.

But so, as that we must herewith take in the *second*, which was, that although all are ingaged to act, yet *every one according to his rank, and in his own proper calling and station*: for so we find it was in that pattern held out to us in the place before mentioned, where we find that several persons and companies had their several *lots and quarters*, and so they repaired *their parts*, *Nehem.* 3.20, 21, 31. and especially that part of the wall which was over against their *houses*, as you may observe, *v.* 19.23, 28, 29. which teacheth us, that although in this common work, we should all, of all sorts, join thy agree to be acting, yet so as that every one of us keep within the bounds of our own stations and callings, and so hold our selves to our own particular allotments, that we do not, either out of a vain conceit of our own sufficiency, or a rash head precipitancy /GREEK/, and being *vainly puffed up with a fleshly mind*, /104/ /GREEK/ *boldly intrude* into other mens places and employments which we are not fitted to, and so neither by *God* or *man* called to.

I would have the house of *God* built, the Church of

Christ edified, but I would not therefore have all *Ignaroes* prove *Preachers*, or *privy counsellors*, and every *Jac Ket* get up into his *Quercus Reformatoria*, which will as much advance the work, as *Uzza* did the setting of the Ark, by laying hold of it, (who by the *Law* should not have touched it) who stop't it, and not furthered it; or as much as a whole army will help on the victory, by running all on heaps in a confusion, and so rather tread down themselves, then their enemies. Mistake me not therefore, I onely bid you all *march on, but yet so as that you keep your ranks*. And for that purpose, mind and weigh well, the abilitie *God* hath given you, the calling in which he hath set you, and that particular work and cue in it, both in your private and publick relation, as may keep you from invading anothers /105/ province, which intrusions are usually accompanied with the neglect of our own lot, and so with the publick detriment, as had *Jerusalems* repairers bin busy to look to other mens alotments, the enemie might soon have come in at their breach, which they never looked to. Let us therefore with them labour to build up *Jerusalems* wall, but so as that our care be to look to our own *Frontage*, to that part of it which is over against our own houses, which fitly leads me from this 2d part of edifying the Church, in setting up, and setting public ordinances, to the

Third, and that is the edifying of our selves *in our establishment and growth in faith and all other saving graces*: for the whole is made up of the parts, and the growth of the body is in a proportionable increase of all the members. If ever therefore we would according to the square of the word edify the Church, we must take care to *build up our selves in our most holy faith*, /106/ as *Jude* exhortheth us, v. 20. that by faith coming to Christ *the living stone*, we also as *lively stones may be built up a Spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up Spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 2.4, 5. Otherwise we may gather *Churches*, as many now do, and build *material Churches*, as in and after *Constantines*

time, both He and many others did, and yet for all this, the *Church of God* may be but a very little edified. They do very ill, who cry down all *Formes*, although of *Gods* own making and institution; and they do little better, who make them indeed but bare *Formes*, like painted Churches, in a *Lantskip*. So the *Jewes* of old made a charme of the *Temple of the Lord*, *The Temple of the Lord*, *Jer. 7.4.* as before they made the Ark of God a /GREEK/, a *bug-bear* to fright enemies, which they themselves so long played with, that at last both They and It were carried away captive, *1Sam. 4.3, 4, 5.* /107/ It is not the crying up of *Holy Church*, with *Papists*; or *Reformed Churches* in the most refined *Formes* of them, with *Protestants*; these rested in are but *Names* and *Notions*, *Names* indeed of *God* by which, in our walking answerable to them, he is known, but horribly *taken in vain*, whilst rested in, and will do us no more good, then *Gebezies* laying the staff on the dead child, could bring life into it, or *Dauids* cloathes warmth to his spent body; nay we shall prove worse by them, as (they say) the *Cypress* tree the more it's watred, the more barren it groweth, worst men have often been found under best Ordinances. So in *Penuel* (which signifieth and face and presence of *God*) we meet with *scornfull Neuters*, *Judg. 8.8.* and in *Bethel* (the house of *God*) with feoffing Idolaters, *2 King. 2.23.* *Bethel* proveth *Beth-aven*, *Hos. 10.5.* /GREEK/ is but /GREEK/ *Circumcision* the *Concision*, *Philip. 3.2.* and the *nearer we are to the Church, the further from* /108/ *God, and nearer to a curse, and our end is to be burnt*; when after all shoures and Sunshines we bring forth onely *bryars and thornes*, *Heb. 6.7, 8.* The Church is indeed then built, when the members of it are truely and savingly edified, and are /GREEK/ as *lively, or living stones*, which do not onely lye in the wall but grow in the building: When inward grace thrives, according to outward means, and when our *communication*, and whole conversation, is *good to the use of edifying*, as the *Apostle* speaketh, *Eph. 4.29.* When a good life is built upon good Doctrine, then is the Church indeed

edified.

But so as (in the last place) that we labour to do as much for others, as that last mentioned place intimated, That we edifie /GREEK/ *one another*, *Singuli singulos*, 1 *Thes.* 5.11. and this mutually, /GREEK/, *Rom.* 14.19. that by our miscarriages we do not *edifie them in sin*; for such a kinde of untoward edifying the Scripture somewhere speaks of, but /109/ by pious admonitions, and holy examples, and all other good meanes, we endeavour to bring men to *Christ* the foundation, and that then they may be settled upon him, and grow up in him: and this also is held out to us in that former expression of *living stones*, which do not onely live and grow our selves, but are also lively and active to draw on others to the building: such a care the *Apostles* had of any where they found any hopes or beginnings, and therefore as soon as ever they heard that *Samaria* had *received the word of God*, they *presently sent unto them Peter and John* further to bring them on, and build them up, *Acts* 8.14, 15. which is excellently set down in that place of the *Canticles*, where we see what tender care the *elder Churches* had of their *little sister* in this holy *Oecodemy*; *if she were a wall, they would build upon her a palace of silver; if a door, they would inclose her with boards of cedar. If a door* that had hopened to *Christ*, their *inclosing* /110/ *her with boards*, or barres of Cedar, which never rotteth, expresth what care they had in strengthening her: *If a wall* (*i. e.* more confirmed and settled) *their building upon her a palace of silver*, hold forth their further endeavour for her continued growth, ornament, and perfection: and these two take up what before I said was generally contained in this duty of edification: and in particular,

1. When *Christ* as the foundation is first laid,
2. His *Ordinances* are set up and settled according to his Word.
3. We in the injoyment of them established and grow in grace our selves,

4. And are meanes and instruments busily employed for the effecting of the like in others, then in the sense of the Text, and other Scriptures the *Church is edified*, Which should the more earnestly be desired and endeavoured by us,

1. As *knowing the time*; as the *Apostle* speaketh, *Rom.* 13.11. /1111/ (for it is a duty very much incumbent on us in these last *Ages* to be indeavoured, because it is on *Gods* part) a mercy frequent promised to these latter dayes. If you look into the several books of the *Prophets*; in the end of many (if not of most) of them, you shall finde many gracious and glorious promises made of the then building of the Church. In this respect, it is the *work of the day*, and therefore, I hope we will not *stand all the day idle*, but that it may be our happinesse that these Prophecies and promises may be most happily fulfilled not onely upon us, but also by us, whilst we thus diligently act for their accomplishments.

But in two other respects it is the work of this *our day in England*, according to the two readings of the Text, which I before mentioned.

Either they then had rest, and thereupon were edified,
Or they were edified, and thereupon had rest, and accordingly we have two strong arguments yet further to presse this duty.

We have already through Gods mercy some rest, and therefore there is all reason that we should now be edified according to the first reading.

And again we have need to be edified, that so we may have our rest confirmed, and our begun peace continued, according to the second reading.

We have (with them) attained to some rest, and therefore in point of ingenuous gratitude, and that we may answer *Gods* gracious providence, we are now in so fit a season, to endeavour that we may be edified: For fair weather, (as I said before) is the fittest time to build both our own, and *Gods* house in *Solomon* saith, *There is a time to break down, & there*

is a time to build. We have had a time of too much breaking down in time of war, and therefore now, if ever, is a time to build up, in time of peace. *A clear shining after rain* makes a growing season, such is ours for the present, and therefore let us up and be doing: *Gods Temple /113/* was built without *axe and hammer*, 1 *King.* 6.7. but it was *beat down* by both, *Psal.* 74.6. War hindreth the building of *Gods house*, 1 *King.* 5.3. but Peace should further it, *v.* 4, 5. And therefore let us lay hold of this happy opportunity. In *Heathen Rome*, *Janus* his temple stood open onely in time of war, to sue to their gods for peace, which they then wanted, most disingenuous! like a man that openeth the door onely so far to his friend as to put out his hand to take in something from him, which he standeth in need of, and then to shut it upon him again. But true *Christians* are more ingenuous, and therefore would have the Church doores opened as much in time of Peace, that they may go in, and return thanks for mercy received Thus we read of *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 14.5, 6. *That kingdom was quiet before him, and the land had rest, and he had no war in those years, because the Lord had given him rest:* whereupon it's immediately added, *v.* 7. *Therefore he said unto /114/ Judah, Let us build while the land is yet before us; for we have sought the Lord our God, and he hath given us rest on every side, and so they built and prospered:* And so let us say, and do, who have the like occasion, that we may have the same blessing: Thus let us build, and so let us prosper, and this in building not so much our *own* houses as *Gods*. This was wont to be the care of *Gods* people in former times upon the like occasions; *Israel* when got out of *Egypt*, and through the Red sea, (and have not we?) reared up the *Tabernacle*: *Solomon*, when in peace, and no *evill or adversary* occurrent, builds *God* a Temple, which although afterwards their sins ruined, yet upon their return from *Babylon*, it was their *first* work to build it again the *second* time: and the like was the Christian Churches care upon the ceasing of the primitive persecutions. And so *God*

now by our present rest from former troubles tryeth

Both our *ingenuity* and *gratitude*, /115/ whether when he hath thus wrought for us, we will work and build for him.

And also our *wisdom*, whether we will take the fittest time for so needful a work. What more necessary to be done then to build up *Gods* house, that thereby we may edifie our selves in faith and grace to salvation? and what fitter time can we either have, or wish to do it in, then when the coast is clear, and we may be at leisure for it, and have nothing but our own naughty hearts to hinder us in it? But when shall we set about it, if not now? *God* hath given us *Rest*, but not to be restive, rest from outward trouble, that so we might be more expedite and ready thus to set upon his work, and so to work out our own salvation: Having *Rest*, as there is a fit reason for it, so there is all reason that we should labour to be edified, which was one Reading of the Words.

And being edified, we shall have rest, which was the other Reading of them, and affordeth another strong argument to inforce /116/ the duty, If edified, it will be a certain pledge and meanes of the continuance, settlement and establishment of our begun rest and peace. Read over *Judahs* story, and you shall ever finde that all prospered while the Temple and Ordinances of *God* were upheld and honoured: and it is to be observed that when *David* had settled the Ark, 1 *Chron.* 16.1. how in the sequele of that Chapter, he called upon heaven and earth, Sea, and fields, and trees of the wood to rejoyce, *v.* 31, 32, 33, &c. and how he puts together many parcels out of severall other Psalmes unto that one, as though all were not sufficient to praise God for such a mercy, into which so many are crowded. And how *v.* 30. when the Ark and Church was thus settled, he make account that the whole *world*, with it, were established; and no wonder, seeing that for its sake, it is continued: in this case the *Prophet Isaiah* saith, *Their peace should be* (not as a brook, which is soon dried up, but) as a *River*, /117/ continually flowing, and *their righteousnesse as the*

waves of the sea, one still coming on in the neck of another: Were it our case, we might expect an uninterrupted *series* of mercies.

But never shall I expect that at the long run, it shall be well with the *State*, if the Church continue to fare ill, or that our houses will stand firm, whiles *Gods lieth waste*: we may in that case build *castles in the air*, or upon a *sandy foundation*, which will not abide when the storm cometh; with *Cain* and *Nimrod*, we may build *Nods* and *Babels*, which according to the signification of those names, will end in *unsettlement*, and *confusion*: *They shall build, and I will throw down, saith the Lord, Mal. 1.4.*

The *Jews* tell us that the three last *Prophets* died all on one day, and that on the very same day *Alexander* as a Conquerour entred *Jerusalem*; whether true or not, we may make this use of it, to think and conclude upon it, that when thorough the unworthiness of a people /118/ true *Prophets* cease, outward peace useth to cease with them; and when the *Church* is not edified, fear lest the *State* be not thereby ruined.

But *work we with God* (as the Scriptures phrase is) and *God* will work for us: Build we up our selves in *our holy faith*, and build up his house according to his *holy Word*, and then *prove him if he will not open to us the windows of heaven, and pour us out such a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it, Mal. 3.10.* Build upon it, that he will *then build us, and not pull us down; plant us, and not pluck us up; even plant us assuredly. /HEBREW/ i.e. in truth and stability, /HEBREW/with his whole heart, and with his whole soul.* Let but the Churches of God *be edified*, and then according to the Text, we shall *have rest.* and that continued and established, and our *Churches* not onely settled, but also *multiplied.* /119/

Were multiplied

THIS was the second choice blessing, which accompanied or followe upon their peace, /GREEK/: which *the Vulgar, Calvin,* and some others read, *They were filled*, and refer this word to those that immediately went before, /GREEK/. Thus: *They were filled with the comfort of the holy Ghost*; which reading in it self beareth a good sense, but 1. breaketh what (I think) is the right contexture of the parts of the verse. 2. Nor doth the word /GREEK/ so well agree with a *Dative case*, as here it must according to that reading. 3. Nor usually (if at all in the *New Testament*) put for to *fill*, but rather to *increase and multiplie*. And so I here take it, and with our Translators read it; they having rest were 1. *edified*, 2. multiplied.

That is,

1. As the Apostles in the course /120/ of their Ministry converted many to Christianity: so more Churches were gathered in new places.

2. The former Churches in the same place were so increased by the conversion, and so accession of new members, that not being well able to meet in one congregation, for order sake, and for better edification, they were either divided into more Assemblies in the same place, or as new *Colonies* were from them sent abroad to stock and plant other places: and thus with the number of *Believers*, the number also of Churches was increased and multiplied.

In the handling of this particular, I shall endeavour to make out these two things.

1. That, as it is here recorded and reckoned, so indeed it is a very great blessing to have the Churches of *God* multiplied.

2. That it is an happy fruit and consequent of their

3. The third Sermon preached at St. Maries in Cambridge, Feb. 25. 1654.

having peace, and being edified, for so they lie in the Text. First *they* had *rest*, /121/ thereupon, next *they were edified*; upon both which in the last place and close of all followed, that *they were multiplied*.

It is a very great blessing to have the Churches of *Christ* increased and multiplied, for as such it is here recorded and reckoned; *viz*, As a 2^d happy effect of their peace: Having rest, they were both edified and multiplied: And for the further explaining of this particular, before the proof of it, I premise this double caution.

1. This multiplication and increase of the *Church*, is a very great blessing, when and where it may be had, but yet not so, as to be such a distinguishing note of the Church, as that that should be no Church, where through the malice of Satan and his instruments such multitudes are wanting. So indeed the *Papists* would characterize the Church by its far spreading, and over-grown multitudes, proving (as he saith) the *fineness of the church by the large measure*, as *Bellarmino* in his *Gemitus Columbae*, will needs make /122/ his society of *Jesuites* to be the right *Doves*, because of their fast and far flight, and their multiplying brood, rather from any thing that they have of Dovelike simplicity and Innocency, of which if he could prove them guilty, he would shew more strength and art then he hath done in all his whole controversies.

Such *vermine* may multiply by *swarmes*, whilst the *Lyon* and *Eagle*, and other more noble creatures (as *Aristotle* observeth) are /GREEK/, bring forth but by single *unities*; *Christ* once, when lost by his parents, was not found /GREEK/ in the company, but the woman his spouse is too oft to be found in the solitary *wilderness*, whiles the *waters whereon the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*.

The valley of the son of *Hinnom* is a /GREEK/, as *Hieram* observeth, and such a *Churchyard* we may finde in the *Popish* Churches, in which more are *buried*, /123/ then

are baptized into the true Church of Christ. For his *dove and undefiled is but one, whilst there are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins* (such as never had reference or affection to him) *without number*: And therefore whilst they cry, *Nos numerus sumus, &c* let it satisfie us that we are of *Christs* /GREEK/, little *little flock, to whom it is his Fathers good will to give the kingdom*: Multitudes rightly ordered are a blessing, but no infallible necessary distinguishing note of the Church, which is the first *Caution*.

The second I implied, when even now I said, *Multitudes well ordered*; and it is more plainly expressed in the Text, when first it's said, they were *edified*, and afterward that they were *multiplied*. For *Multiplication* without *Edification* breedeth onely confusion; like the swarmes of *flyes* in *Egypt, which corrupted the land, Exod. 8.14*. So at first, when *men began to multiplie upon* /124/ *the face of the earth, they defiled it, Gen. 6.1, 2*. Such *multitudes* may be *more then a good many*; too many for God (as once *Judg. 7.2, 4.*) to vouchsafe his gracious presence to: of such multitudes we may say with the *Prophet Isa. 9.3. Multiplicati gentem, non magnificasti laetitiam; Thou hast multiplied the nation, but not increased thy joy*: Little increase of joy to the Church by the accession of such multitudes. As when

1. Either the bulk of the Church is swollen up with multitudes of *hypocrites*, as *Israels camp* was with *that mixed multitude, Exod. 12.38*. A great deal of chaff may make a great heap on the floore, when there is never the more, but it may be the lesse wheat in the garner, and many bad humours in the body may make it swell and be greater, but never the healthier.

2. Or when the Church is rent in pieces by *Schismes* and *Factions*, and so of one *Congregation* are *Churches*, and they are multiplied, and the more the pity, because far enough from the sence of the Text, in which the true Churches of *Christ* are here said to be multiplied; nay hereby they are

minished, weakned, if not in some place wholly destroyed and ruinated. As in a demolished building the parts of it pulled asunder, and broken in pieces take up a greater room, but mean while the house is pulled down, and that liquor which is drawn out into many open pots groweth dead and vappid, which would have retained its spirits, if it had been kept together in one vessell. But this *Multiplication* here was without any *Division*; for these many *had one heart*, Acts 4.32. in their orderly *divisions*, they had no *fractions*, were *multiplied*, but both first were, and still continued to *be edified*, and *edification* in the proper nature and notion of it includeth a compacted union, and accordingly they had peace in *Brotherly communion*, as well as in freedome from *enemies persecutions*; /126/ Such a multiplication as a consequent or concomitant of edification, the Text and the point in hand hold forth for a very great blessing.

1. Multiplication is a blessing in *Nature* ever since *God* said, *Crescite & multiplicamini*, at the first Creation.

2. And promised as such in the *Covenant of grace*, to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and so all along, that *their seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude*.

3. A blessing to a *Family*: When the *wife is as the fruitfull vine by the house side*, and the *children like olive plants, roundabout the table*, *Psal.* 128.3.

4. And a blessing to the *State*: *For in the multitude of the people is the Kings honour, but in the want of people is the destruction of the Prince*, *Prov.* 14.28.

5. And why not as great or rather a greater blessing in the *house of God*, and the *Commonwealth of Israel*?

As such, it hath been desire and prayed for by the people of God, /127/ *Let Reuben live, and not die, and let not his men be few*, *Deut.* 33.6. and as such it hath been promised by *God* to his people, *I will multiply them, and they shall not be few, I will also glorifie them, and they shall not be small*, *Jer.* 30.19.

The contrary to it hath been frequently threatned on *Gods* part as a very heavy affliction; that whereas they *had been as the stars of heaven for multitude, they should be left few in number, Deut. 28.62.* when *the glory of Jacob is made thin, and the fatnesse of his flesh waxed lean, and they left as the shaking of an olive-tree, two or three berries on the top of the uppermost branch, Isa. 17.4, 6.* or yet more lonesome and solitary; As a single *Beacon on the top of a mountain, or as an ensign upon an hill,* as the same *Prophet* elegantly expresseth it, *Isa. 30.17.*

And on his peoples part as sadly bemoaned and groaned under, as under a very heavy burden. So *David* mournfully complaineth that /128/ the the *godly man ceaseth, and that the faithfull failed, Psal. 12.1.* and the wasted, consumed Church piteously cryeth out, *My leannesse, my leannesse, Isaiah 24.16.*

This truth the devil is convinced of, and therefore well knowing that the enlargement of *Christs* kingdom is the lessening of his, by himself and his instruments he laboureth to hinder it: *Come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiplie,* saith *Pharaoh, Exod. 1.10.*

And therefore God on the contrary, promoteth and advanceth it, when he intends to give his people a signall evidence of his favour and love.

Whether in worse dayes as a pledge and meanes of their after deliverance, as in that remarkable place *Exod. 1.7.* where speaking of *Israel in Egypt,* You have six words or expression in the Hebrew, /HEBREW/. 1. *They were fruitfull,* 2. *And increased abundantly,* 3. *And multiplied,* 4. *and waxed mighty and* /129/ *that* 5.6 in two words, /HEBREW/. *Valde, valde, exceedingly, so that the land was filled with them.* Not to expresse that the Hebrew women bare six children at a time, as *Baal Haturim* vainly *Cabalizeth, quo nihil nugacius,* but onely to express a most wonderfull prosperous increase. The 1st. word signifying that none of them was barren. 2. That they brought forth diverse at once, *more reptilium,* as the 2nd word signifieth, *Gen. 1.20.* And 3. those not short-lived: For

else they had not multiplied as the 3^d word word saith they did. 4. Nor weak and feeble, but strong and mighty, and all this doubled as the words are, and that to a *superlative* degree as the word there used in that language signifieth: thus then to the Church in that time of their bondage, as to the Christian Church in their first uprising, whilst yet under persecution: How oft do you read in the *Acts of the Apostles* of the /GREEK/, the *multitude* of Believers? When /GREEK/ /130/ *When the word of God increased, and the number of Disciples multiplied greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith, Acts 6.7. in that day of Gods power from the womb of the morning, he had the dew of his youth: Psal. 110.3. i.e.* The world was overspread with Believers and Churches, as the drops of dew in a morning cover the face of the earth; then they could say, *Vestra omnia implecimus* /?/?/ *urbes, insulus, castrila* /?/?/, &c. In those *first best dayes*, though under persecution, their numbers filled all places.

As we hope and believe in the *last best dayes*, they will fill the world, as is fully and magnificently expressed, *Isa. 60.* when multitudes of Believers shall not be (as at first) like *drops of dew that cover the earth*; but as *the overflowing waters that cover the sea, Isa. 11.9.* Then will the Churches of *Christ have rest, and be edified and multiplied.* All great blessings, and such as with which *God* useth to crown the best times.

And in particular, this blessing of the multiplication of true Saints, and Churches is very great. As by which,

1. A great deal of work is more easily done, much work by many hands, and great assistance by many helpers. *He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battell which was against me, for there were many with me, Psal. 55.18.* Not that *God* stands in need of multitudes to have his work done, or his people preserved; for *there is no restraint with him to save by many*, or by few: One *God* self-sufficient in himself, and All-sufficient to all his people, in their straits, and want of all other help is more than All: *My God, and I are good company,*

was the saying of a very good man.

But yet, as in ordinary course he works by means, so his work is often retarded, through the fewness of workmen, 2 *Chron.* /132/ 29.34. and on the contrary is better carried on by many hands; How was the very place *shaken* where the multitude of Beleevers, were met together, and lift up their voices /GREEK/? *Act.* 4.24, 31, 32. The publick prayers of many met together in the Church are the more prevalent, how much more joint the suffrages of many Churches? that way evry way the more good men there are, the *more good is done*.

2. *And the more mischief prevented or repelled.* Many theeves are not so ready or hardy to set upon so many honest men, or may be better resisted by a greater number, if they do: *a multitude of shepherds* called forth is able to withstand the Lion roaring on his prey. And so when the godly prove numerous and potent, true enemies prove seeming friends, as it's said, *Esther* 8.17. *many of the people of the land*, in that case, became *Jewes*; or if they will still appear enemies, the Church of *God* will appear *terrible*, when it /133/ *is become like an army with banners*, *Cant.* 6.4, 10.

3. Hence also more comfort and joy to the godly, for here, *the more the merrier, and the better cheer too*: thus the *Jewes* who had returned from *Babylon* prayed for the return of the rest that stayed behind, whose accession to them to fill up their numbers, they accounted would be *as rivers in the South*, i.e. most refreshing and comfortable *Psal.* 126.4. and so before, it was *with the voice of joy and praise*, when *David went to the house of God with a multitude.* *Psa.* 42.4. as elsewhere he greatly praiseth *God* when it was /HEBREW/ *in the midst of the multitude,* /HEBREW/ *in the great congregation*, if there be a full number of them, the Communion of Saints is more full, and their joy in it, more joy to them.

4. And (which is the greatest blessing of all) more glory to *God*, when he is praised, and blessed, and served by

so many; as a King in the midst of his army, or a /134/ great Lord incompassed with a great retinue of his servants and followers. This his praise will be most fully founded out when the whole *Chorus* in Heaven shall all together joyn in their *Hallelujah's*. A *praeludium* to which, even an heaven upon earth, is when many Churches from all quarters of the world shall sing their severall parts, as well as they can, to make up the *Comfort; Abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many redounds much to the glory of God, 2 Cor. 4.15.* But it will be a most royal sound which the *Trumpet of the 7th Angel* will make, and will fill the whole earth with the glorious praises of God, *when there shall be great voices in heaven, saying, All the Kingdomes of this world, are become the kingdomes of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever, Revel. 11.15.*

And thus we see, that in the multiplication of Churches; and true Beleevers in them, is contained a multiplyed blessing: we may then say with *Leah*, when /135/ such a *Gad* is born, that a Troop cometh.

And (which was the second thing to be cleared) this *blessing of Multiplication cometh upon the Churches peace and edification.*

Peace breeds plenty, as in other cases, so in this. The Churches (the Text saith) had peace, and thereupon it is added, that they were multiplied: Not but that *God* may, and often doth improve affliction and persecution to the enlargement of his Church, and the multiplying *Beleevers* in it as sickness make's some young ones grow tall, and cold *Northerly climes* use to be more *prolificall*: So *Israel* in *Egypt* most multiplied after *Josephs* death; and so had lost their best friend to support them, and when most burdned and afflicted. And the scattering of the *Disciples* mentioned: *Act. 8.1.* appears from the *4th verse* following but to have been a sowing of the seed of the word, and the Preachers as *seedsmen* for a following more plenfull harvest, as after times made *Tertullians* /136/ word true, *Semen est sanguis Christianorum,*

that the Christians blood became seed to beget many to *Christ*: such trees of righteousness grow fast in winter, whose cold blasts and blusters do not so much blow out, as like bellows blow up this divine flame; times of persecution by Gods happy improvement of them, have proved time of the Churches multiplication.

But yet (as you use to say) *it's pity that fair weather should do any hurt*, nay it's pity if it do not a great deal of good.

And if in it vermine swarm, it is some bodies fault, if something better also do not thrive, that Churches of God be not multiplied.

1. When they have fewer and less discouragements and hinderances which naturally and usually like cold blasts nip and check an out-putting spring. It was a very low Ebb, when *there was no Smith found in all Israel*, and as low when there are few or no Ministers left in the Church; very /137/ low it was when *five horses were as all the multitude of Israel*, and yet lower when they are brought down to the like number, who *are the Charrets of Israel and the horsemen thereof*.

2. When on the contrary they have many encouragements and furtherances, *viz.*

When *Ministers with Paul, Act. 28.31.* may Preach not onely /GREEK/ no man *forbidding and hindring*, but also /GREEK/ , with all *confidence and boldness*, whilst Christian *Magistrates command*, maintain and countenance them in so doing.

And Christian *professors* have the like vacancy and freedome, that they be as good as they will for any thing which they meet with coming cross either from *God* or *man*. This freedome (I acknowledge) through our corruption and perverseness may breed many hypocrites; yet it helpeth to nourish and cherish multitudes of sincere hearted Christians, as the same fair weather which makes bad weeds grow, helpeth /138/ more wholesome hearbs to flourish and multiply.

Foule weather in the Church make's invenomed enemies (like Snailles, and Frogges, and Toades) to creep out of their holes in abundance; but fairer and calmer dayes give the people of *God* opportunity, and invite them to appear abroad in greater numbers, as the men of *Israel*, who had before hid themselves, when they heard that the Philistines fled, came forth and increased the hoste, 1 *Sam.* 14.22. as afterward in *Solomons* reign, when the *land had peace, and every man dwelt safely under his vine and figge tree, the Pomaeria, of the City of God* were so enlarged, and the number of its Citizens so much increased, that it was from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, 1 *King.* 4.24, 25. Churches are multiplied first when their peace is setled.

And therefore all that I shall say for the Application of this, is in the word of the *Psalmist*; *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and /139/ say, Peace be within thy wals, and plenteousness within thy palaces, even plenty of all other blessings, and above all of blessed Beleevers, which then either do, or should increase and multiply; for whereas warre inlargeth the Territories of other Tyrants, a godly peace helpeth in a great measure to enlarge the Kingdome of the Prince of peace, therefore all the sons of peace pray for peace that the Gospel of peace may be all over preached, and the Churches of Christ thereby multiplied.*

2. But that, with their peace they may be also edified, for so in the Text it's said first they *were edified*, and then and thereupon it's added that they *were multiplied*; *The true edification of the Church maketh much for the right and orderly multiplication of it.*

And this according to the double edification of it, before mentioned.

1. Whether we mean the edification of the *whole Church*, which was when *the Ordinances of /140/ Christ* are set and held up in power and purity, the *word* being purely preached, the *Sacraments* and other holy things of *God* duly dispensed and administred: For as when *God* had at

first created, and set all creatures in their severall rankes and orders, He then said, *Increase and multiply*, Gen. 1.28. So when things in his house are duely ordered, and dispensed, then we may expect a multiplied increase; for the Ordinances are *Christs bed of love*, in which many are begotten to him; and when that *Mariage feast is made ready, and guests are invited, then the house is filled, and the mariage furnished with guests*, Matth. 21.10. So it was in the first preaching of the Gospel, there went out *Perusalem and all Judea, and all the regions about to John Baptist*, and in that crowd *the Kingdome of Heaven suffered violence, and every one pressed into it*; and afterward *Christ* said that *when He should be lifted up* (as on the Cross, so in the ministry of the Gospel) /141/ *He would draw all men unto him*, which was fully made good in that wonderful confluence of numberless numbers of Beleevers, which all the world over, even upon the swords point, crowded in to *Christ* and to martyrdom together, when once in the ministry of the Gospel *He was lifted up as an Ensigne*, to this our *Shiloh* were then the gatherings of the people, as of Souldiers to the colours of the Captain of their Salvation. *Peters* net was then full, and he taketh 153 *great fishes* at one draught, nay some thousands of Souls at one Sermon; when Ordinances were rightly dispensed. But as *Peter* at another time *toiled all the night, and took nothing*: So now with us while the word and Ordinances of *Christ* have so woefully been either corrupted, or despised and trampled upon, and so the house of *God* rather ruined, then built up and edified, we have had *Professors* for now, but how few sincere ones? but thin congregations, and but slender /142/ account of any having conversion, and coming on to *Christ* in those few, the /GREEK/ have been of another way, Multitudes have been and are the badge of *Mahomets* heard, and the *Popes* Synagogue, and with us of such, as have been the frequent followers of greatest Seducers and Corrupters, as where the *Carion* is there the *Kytes* are gathered together.

And therefore the greater is our sin, and matter of our moan, and should be of all our cares and endeavours, especially of such with whom *God* hath entrusted the care of his Church and People, that his house may once be built, and at length better frequented and filled, and that not by flights of *Kytes* to the *Carion*, but of *Eagles* to that dead body, that saw no corruption; and of *Doves* to the *windowes*, for such promises there are made, and yet in part, nay (it may be) in a great measure, if not wholly, to be accomplished; that all *Nations shall come flying and flowing* into Christ, /143/ when *the mountain of the Lords house shall be established in the top of the mountains*; They then shall be multiplied, when in this sense *the whole Church* shall be thus edified.

2. As also when the *particular members of the Church* shall themselves hereby come savingly to be edified in faith and love, then and thereby Churches and Beleeveres come to be multiplied.

For as it is their duty, so it will be their care and indeavour with *Peter*, when *converted*, to *strengthen their brethren*, and when they themselves are once edified and built upon *Christ*, to do what they can (as we heard out of 1 *Thes.* 5.11.) mutually to edify one another, for they come to *Christ* (as before we shewed out of 1 *Pet.* 2.4, 5.) *as living stones*; not to lye still as in a dead wall, no nor onely to live and grow themselves, but also to draw on others to the building, as in the place of *Isaiah* 2. when all *Nations* are promised to *flow to the house of the Lord*, v. 2. /144/it is added v. 3. *And many people shall go, and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord*; as before it was said of *Zebulun and Issachar*, that they should call the people to the mountain, i.e. those two Tribes being in the utmost Coasts, and so at a far distance from the Ark and Temple, shall yet through their own pains and diligence in coming to it, by their example, invite and shew others that dwell nearer to it the like, yea and call on other Nations (with whom by reason of their

situation on the Sea coast, they had occasion to traffique) to bear them company; so studious were they, and so carefull should we be, when we have acquaintance with *Christ*, to draw on others to like communion with him. Our *Saviour* saith that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees compassed sea and land to make Proselytes to themselves*; and *Paul* foretold that after his departure Seducers would be studious to speak *perverse things, to draw away Disciples* /145/ *after them*, and what *Quoy-ducks Jesuites* and other *Popish emissaries* now are, and how busy to bring whole Sholes and flights into their Nets, we in part see, and I wish that we were more aware of their present practises.

But all that they do is only to fill the *Synagogue of Satan* by the emptying (what they can) the *Church of Christ*; O that we might once prove as wise and faithfull and diligent for *God and Christ*, as they are for *Satan and Antichrist*, that by building up our selves, and one another, the Churches of God may be so *edified*, that at last they may be more multiplied!

But this tendeth to the 3^d part of the Text in these words:/146/ *Walking in the fear of the Lord, &c.*

3. Sermon
preached in
Pauls, April
1655.

Walking in the fear of the Lord, &c.

WHich words have a double aspect, and look either

1. To the peace they had, as the happy fruit of it: having *rest they walked in the fear of the Lord, &c.*

2. Or to their edification and multiplication, as the cause of means of them; so as the whole verse may be thus expressed, Having peace they upon it walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost, and thereupon it came to pass that they were edified and multiplied: which double respect that these words bear as coming between their peace and their edification and multiplication, as the effect of the one, and the cause or means of the other, in the handling of them will hold out unto us,

1. Our *duty*, viz. that upon our enjoying of peace and rest, we then especially (then if ever, then /147/ more than ever) should labour to walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost.

2. *An effectual argument to inforce it*, because thus doing will be the most effectual way and means to have the Churches of Christ edified and multiplied.

I begin with the duty, and first with the first part of it, in those words, *walking in the fear of the Lord*; and the Note thence is this.

That *when God vouchsafeth to his Churches rest and peace, it is their duty then especially to walk in his fear.*

And here I shall not need by way of explication to hint, that

1. By *walking* is meant their diligent and constant practise and course of life.

2. And by *Gods fear*,

Primarily and most properly is meant that sanctified

affection or sanctifying grace, both in the habit and act of it, whereby out of a filial and ingenuous awfulness, we are afraid to offend God /148/ by sinning against him.

And *Tropically* the whole worship and service of God, of which this fear as it is one great and especial part, so also it awfully commandeth and putteth us upon all the rest, and withholds us from the contrary.

So that this their *walking in the fear of the Lord*, was their diligent and constant course of obedience and service, out of an awfull and reverential respect to him, and an ingenuous and filial *fear* to offend him. This was their practise when *God* had given them rest, and it is the duty incumbent now on us, when the like mercy is vouchsafed to us: *viz.* now upon consideration of it to *serve him with reverence and godly fear*: indeed it must be *without* unbelieving and slavish *fear* of man, *Luke* 1.74. but with as much, nay with more *Reverential fear* of *God* then ever; for although *perfect love casteth out fear*, *1 John* 4.18. yet in true filial there is as much, nay more love then fear, and /149/ so, they who are said to *fear God*, *Psal.* 145.19. are in the 20th verse immediately following styled such as *love him*. To have fear and joy meet is a riddle to a carnal heart, yet to *rejoyce with trembling*, is a peece of *the mystery of godliness*, which Grace teacheth and a godly heart is acquainted with. And especially upon the receipt of any greater mercy, as at the Resurrection of our *Saviour*, it is said of the two *Maries*, that they departed from the sepulchre with *fear and great joy*, *Matth.* 28.8. So in any other kinde of *Resurrection*, wherein *God* pleaseth to raise us (as it were) from the grave, such a sweet mixture of those seemingly contrary graces should be felt in our hearts, and expressed in our carriages; so as at the same time to *rejoyce in his goodness*, *Nehe.* 9.25. & yet to *fear him and his goodness*, *Hos.* 3.5. Slavish spirits may fear his *greatness*, but a *good* heart will fear him for his *goodness*, will *fear when enlarged*, *Isa.* 60.5. and with such a *Systole* and *Diastole* doth /150/ it

breathe and live.

This being a great part of that Tribute which our Sovereign *Lord* requireth for all his bounty and blessings; *And now Israel what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God &c. Deut. 10.12.* and which a soul truly subjected to *Christ* doth most freely pay, from mercy takes an argument of fear, *There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared, Psal. 130.4.* it saith, *Let us fear the Lord who giveth unto us rain, and reserveth to us the appointed weeks of the harves, Jer. 5.24* fear's him for plenty, and fear's him for peace, as in a peaceable *Solomons* reign, *when the mountains shall bring peace to the people, Psal. 72.3.* and so you might think to find them most secure, it is added, that *they shall fear him as long as the Sun and Moon indure, v. 5.* the less that in their peace they fear their enemies, the more they fear their peaceable King. That in *Solomon* as a type, fore-propheesied what should /151/ be under the more peaceable government of *Jesus Christ*: and in this *Text* that *prophecy* was fulfilled, for when these his best subjects *had rest and were still*, even then they *trembled, walking in the fear of the Lord.*

But you will say, Is fear consistent with the security of peace? or rather is it not an aguish distemper to stand quaking and trembling in the Summers war Sunshine? The *Psalmist* saith when the Sea-man when he is tossed and reeleth to and fro, and *staggers* in a tempest, *is like a drunken man*, but is it not right our drunkenness, or rather madness to do so in a calme, and when gotten on the shoare?

To which I answer; It is so indeed, to do so out of a slavish or unbelieving distraction or despondency, which yet the best of *Gods* servants are sometimes overtaken with, yea and that sometimes when both for inward and outward man, they have all cause of joy, and an holy confidence and security. /152/

But (as the Schoole observeth) there is a double act of a chast and filial fear.

1. One when we avoid sin for fear of offending *God*, and so of being in any measure separated or estranged from him, and thereby of losing of any either measure or manifestation of that good which we injoy through communion with him. And thus *Austin* defineth *fear* to be *Fuga animi ne perdat quod diligit*.

2. The other is an awfull Reverence of God, not as to any fear in us of our loss of him, but onely as in himself he is the most perfect and absolute good, and so most worthy of all humble observance.

The first of these they truly say is only here *in via*, whilst we are here travellers in our way because when we come to our journies end, and confirmed in glory, there will be no danger, and therefore no fear of any such offence, and loss and disjunction. But the latter abideth, yea is perfected in heaven, and so is both of *in via* and /153/ *in Patria*. I am sure both of them are (or at least should be) found in us whilst we are here in the way, and that not only in the foulest, but even in the fairest plat of it, where we should not onely *be afraid of Gods judgements*, *Psal.* 119.120. but also of his tenderest mercies, not only in the time of our danger and trouble, but of our greatest rest and security: even then we should walk in the fear of the Lord, and that upon a twofold ground, answerable to that aforementioned double act of this godly fear.

1. In the time of our rest and peace we have great need to put forth the first Act of it in taking heed of offending God, and so of being estranged from him, because Then we are in the greatest danger of it.

2. And as great cause we have Then also to put forth that second Act of a Reverential observance of him as the greatest and chiefest good, as having then strongest ingagements layd upon us, and we thereby being put upon the strongest /154/ trial of our filial awfull ingenuity.

First in time of peace, we have need to walk, and

to go armed with *Gods* fear, not onely *because of fear in the night*, but also by reason of the danger of the brightest day of prosperity and peace; and that danger is double, both *outward* and *inward*.

1. *Outward*; for in that sense we have something to lose, and are not out of all danger of losing it. It is true, that through *Gods* mercy, with these Churches in the Text, we have attained to some measure of rest from some of our former troubles which we conflicted with in the height and heat of our former wars; but yet *Fortunam reverenter habere*, me thinks may yet be to us a good *Memento*. For as for your City, the very sad fires which have so frequently broken out of late, may warn you that all the sparks of *Gods* displeasure are not quite extinguished, and me thinks call loud upon you in way of publick humiliation, with *Israel*, to meet together, /155/ and *draw water and pour it out before the Lord* in prayers and tears, which will be more effectual then all your Engines to quench such skarefires. And for the whole land, were we more settled then we are, we are not as yet arrived at that *everlasting rest*., which shall never be disturbed or interrupted,

And besides, our present peace is but very tender, and in a crazy condition.

At best, whilst we are in this lower Region, *clouds may return after rain*, one misery and mischief after another; yea after the brightest Sunshine.

A lightsome and calm day may end in a gloomy and stormy evening, *Isa.* 21.12.

Yea *our Sun may go down at Noon*, *Amos*, 8.9. when we think it's gotten up to its full height.

Nay in the morning, *Jer.* 20.16. when it's now but newly up; for at that time of day, *God* rained down fire and brimstone on *Sodom and Gomorrah*, *Gen.* 19. /156/ 23. 24. And all this may be more possible, if not probable: Because

1. So unstable and inconstant are mens mindes, and all our best outward injoyments, a very *shadow*, a *Scheme*, a

vain show that passeth away, like the *Sea* which although (it may be) calm now, yet may suddenly prove boisterous and tempestuous as soon as shall be again blown upon. But I shall not here inlarge on this Argument.

2. So provoking may our sins prove, that as they disquiet *God*, so they may easily disturb and discompose our peace, when we may think it best settled. *Hic Davus perturbat omnia*, as it is well observed by *one* upon *Hos.* 1.1. that in the time of *Jeroboam* the second when *Israel* or the *ten Tribes* were then in the most flourishing outward condition, even then for *His* and *Their* sins, the Lord, by that his *Prophet*, threatens their utter destruction: That first verse telleth you that he prophesied in his dayes, and how sad and heavy /157/ that Prophesie was, you may read in the sequel of it, and yet how outwardly prosperous for the present he and his times were, their story will inform you, 2 *Kin.* 14.23 *ad finem*. And shall we (as the Scriptures phrase is) *forsake the fear of the Lord?* Upon it, the *Lord* may yet so forsake us, that our awlese, fearlesse miscarriages may produce most fearful miscarriages in our greatest concernments.

3. And this the rather, because *God* is wont to be very observant how we intertain newly vouchsafed or restored mercies, and the proveth more than ordinarily severe in punishing our unworthy and unthankful receiving or abuse of them. Partly the better to remember us of our former sins, which before deprived us of them.

And partly to make us the more wary for the future, that we do not in the like kinde abuse them.

Instances of which we have in his dreadfull proceeding against *Achan*, /158/ at *Israels* first entrance into *Canaan*,
 Against the *Bethshemites*, at the return of the *Ark*,
 And against *Ananias* and *Saphira* in the first preaching of the *Gospel*.

The Lord in mercy grant, that it may not be exemplified in us upon our unworthy returns for mercies newly either

vouchsafed or restored to us. However for the present it may with us, yet let us not say with *Agag*, that *the bitterness of death is past*, and then take heart the more *bitterly* to provoke *God*: for the *bitterest* of the cup may yet be behind in the bottom. And therefore let the man that is now recovering out of a sicknesse, look well to himself, that he fall not into a relapse, and so quite overthrow himself, which in that crazy condition of his is soon done: whilst *we stand*, let us not be *high-minded*, but *fear*; even when we *rest in peace*, let us *walk in fear and trembling*, in our greatest security: let us fear *God*; for even then we lye at his mercy. /159/ *Outward* and temporall danger then may be great.

But *inward and spirituall* is then especially far greater, and then therefore calleth for our more watchful fear and circumspection: Because if we shall be then so disingenuous, and ingratefull as to provoke *God* by our sins, our danger, because *Gods* indignation, will be very great.

And yet (which is our both sin and misery) then we are most subject to do so, then as much, nay more then ever, to forget both our selves and him, and so by our sins most bitterly to provoke him. As the man after a vein opened, at the turning of the blood is most subject to sink down into a *swoon*, so we into sin upon the return and our injoyment of a lost mercy. The *thorny ground* is cloaked with riches and pleasures, which could not with the *stony ground* be beaten off by persecutions; and therefore our *Saviours* last and greatest temptation was with the glory of the world; and *Joseph* was most put to it by the charmes of /160/ fleshly allurements, who as to imprisonments and all other miseries was impregnable.

When peace and plenty is restored and continued, *God* doth, and we *may* know how prone we are to grow

Loose upon liberty When prison door is set open, and we got out of the deep miry lane, between the inclosures of the thorn hedges (which kept us from starting out) into the open Common; how apt are we to run out of the way, and so

to lose *our God*, and *our selves* together? *Job* feared it in his children, lest in their feasts they should blaspheme *God*: and *Agur* feared it in himself, lest in his plenty he should deny him: *Rehoboam* as soon as ever he felt his own legg, and could stand on them, *forsook God*, as it's remarkably expressed, 2 *Chron.* 12.1. and even *Hezekiah* himself did not make such a return as might have well beseemed him, 2 *Chron.* 32.25.

More particularly, how subject are we in time of peace to grow /161/

1. *Secure and carelesse*, when we are now about *taking our rest to fall asleep*, when we are (as we think) without danger, then to be without fear and care, as they of *Laish*, *Judg.* 18.7. *Babylon*, *Isa.* 47.8. and *Nineveh*, *Zeph.* 2.25. in in their peace and prosperity are all of them said to *dwell carelesly*; *Feasting without fear*, *Jude v.* 12. otherwise then we heard *Job* did. *Because they have not changes, therefore they fear not God*, *Psal.* 55.19. *Yet they fear not God*, so we have it in the *Margin*, which implyeth their Duty, that then they should most of all have feared *God*. But our translators read it, *Therefore they feared not God*, which sheweth their practise, and I wish it did not ours. Our *peace make us secure*.

2. *Worldly*: as the man recovering from a sickness often groweth greedy, so the returned *Jews*, when at quiet in their own houses so wholly minded them, that they neglected *Gods*; which is notoriously our sin for the present, /162/ now that we are a little thrust out of the storm at sea into the haven, we are so earnest to make our own markets, that *God* and *Religion*, (and I wish none else) are very great losers.

3. *Nayproud and petulant*, in our carriage towards men, yea and *God* too. This *Nehemiah* in his prayer complaineth of, that *after they had rest, they did evill*; and *Moses* before makes it his complaint of the same people, that even *Jeshurun* (which signifieth an upright people) when *waxed fat, kicked*, alluding in the sense, and some think in the very word to /

HEBREW/ , an unbroken wanton Bullock, which the more fed, proves the more petulant; of the Seamens Religion, who proves more boisteous and outrageous when got ashore , then the sea it self was before in the tempest.

In generall, we are not wont to be the same men in peace and prosperity, that we were in our trouble and perplexity: Like *Aeneas Sylvius* when chose Pope was called *Pius 2.* who before he was /163/ made *Pope* was very strong and earnest for the *Councels* authority and prehemincy over the *Pope*, but when *Pope* once, he was as much against it, which gave some occasion to say that *Pius negavit, quod Aeneas probaverat.* It is too often the sin of better men, when God remembreth them, then most of all to forget him and themselves; and this not from any defect in God, or his gift, but onely from our abuse of it: as *Ambrose saith*, it is to be referrec, *non ad imprudentiam largientis, sed ad male utentis errorem.* And therefore then in an especiall manner we have need of this holy fear of *God* to ballast our vain light hearts, that they overset not.

And if *Fear* in the generall nature of it be *mali probabiliter futuri*, as *Biel* conceiveth, or *impendentis*, as *Tully* expresseth it, /GREEK/ as *Aristotle* defineth it, then according to all those expressions, in greatest peace, we have greatest need of this holy fear: This evil of /164/ sin, and thereby of misery and mischief, being not onely *probable* and at a distance, but very near and *imminent*: which makes this first Argument to put forth the first forementioned act of filial fear in time of our greatest peace, because our danger, both in point of sin and misery, is then very great.

But there was a second Argument propounded which may then as much inforce that second act of this godly fear: *viz.* most awfully to reverence him as the chiefest good; because that his goodnesse is very much then manifested, and thereby grace hath the strongest ingagements laid upon it, and it put to the greatest tryal of its awful ingenuity: *chains of afflictions*

being changed into *thick cords of love*, to try which of them will more strongly draw and binde us to obedience. In some kinde to fear God when we are in outward danger or misery, is but naturall: As the *good thief* said unto the bad, *Dost not even thou fear God?* when he was now upon the crosse, *Luke* 23.40. A slavish fear in such a case may aw us, and this onely from self love, out of which principle the *Indians* serve the *Devil*, *Ne noceat*: But it is the love of *God* that constraineth us out of ingenuity to fear to offend him, when no terror either from him or man frighteth us, This, this is that which they call *Timor filialis*, *Amicalis*, *Castus*, and as *Valentia* styleth it, *Gratus, quo Beneficiatus timet offendere Beneficiatam*. the fear of a *dutifull childe*, of a *chast spouse*, and of a *thank full friend*, that is afraid to offend his Benefactor: and doth most awfully *Reverence God*, *ex intuitu amoris, est divinae perfectionis*, from consideration of his infinite perfection in him self, and bounty to us. This fear is greatest in the holy *Angels and Saints glorified*, and in us here when we are got nearest to heaven, in a greatest likenesse to them, and have received choicest mercies from *God*, as *inward* or *outward peace*, &c. Then it is that we are put upon the strongest tryal, as when *God* rained down *Manna* /166/ from Heaven; He then said, *He would prove whether they would walk in his wayes*, *Exod.* 16.4. As a servant is not so well tryed whether he will obey his Master, if he be sent on a journey in a wet stormy day, or be set to a hard peece of work without convenient tooles or materials, when he hath so much to plead for his excuse; but if sent on a fair day upon an easie journey, and hath all materials & conveniences for his work laid by him, if he now hang off, and do contrary, this will more fully try him. And so now doth *God* us, when in our time of peace and liberty we have nothing besides our own sloathfull and sinfull hearts to discourage and hinder, but all requisites which may encourage and help us in his service. And therefore seeing we are now upon this tryall, it concerneth us much to look to it how we

acquit our selves, that now in this time of our peace, the lesse that we fear man, the more we fear *God*, so as to receive this mercy with a trembling hand, as the Elders of *Bethlehem* /167/ did *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 16.4. and *Isaac* did *Gods* manifesting his will to blesse his son *Jacob*, *Gen.* 28.33.

And then also to *follow God trembling*, as Hos. 11.10. 11. in a reverentiall adoring of him for his goodnesse, and in an awfull care that we do not ill requite him by any unworthy miscarriages: that hence

1. Upon the tryall we may be found faithfull, and have this strong evidence made out to us of our ingenuity.

2. We may in some measure answer to what is always found in *God*, and in such like dispensations, *viz.* That there is greatest awfulnesse in his *smiles*; and His is a *dread* when a *most serene* Majesty. *Dominion and fear is with him, even when he maketh peace in his high places.* He never more kindly humbleth and aweth the creature, then when he draweth nearest to it, in a way of mercy. So the *Angels* in heaven cover their faces, when in nearest approaches they behold His; and the penitent /168/ sinner is never more low and lowly on his knee, then when he prostrateth himself at the *throne of grace*, and *God* holdeth out to him the *golden scepter*: *God* did so to *Abraham*, in his ready granting his petitions and then *Abraham* in his own eyes was *dust and ashes*, *Genesis* 18.27.

3. That hereby also we may come to have a more sure and sanctified injoyment of this our peace, and whatever other mercies are wrapped up in it; which we may with more confidence expect, whilst this holy *Fear* stands *Sentinel*, and is upon the watch, against security, pride, wantonnesse, and those other excesses which Peace is subject to breed in our hearts (as vermin are wont to do in standing waters) which may corrupt it, and at last again justly deprive us of it.

Which fitly leadeth me to the second part of this point, which was, that this *walking in the fear of God* in time of peace, will be a speciall meanes of both edifying and

multiplying the Churches of *Christ*, /169/ as it was here in the Text, which affordeth two other arguments more strongly to inforce this duty.

First, that walking in Gods fear helpeth much /?/?/ edifying of the Church.

1. Whether of the whole Church in setting and keeping up the Ordinances of God in their power and purity. For so *Noah moved with fear built an Ark. Heb. 11.7.* And *Nehemiah* who was famous for building up *Jerusalem's* wall, was as eminent in *Gods fear Chap. 5, 9, 15.* and the like we read, *Acts 13.16.* That those that *feared God gave audience to his word.* And had we of late more feared *God*, we should not have dared so boldly and impudently to have profaned his holy Ordinances.

2. Of of the particular members of the Church in grace and holinesse, whilst they *serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, Heb. 12.28.* and not only *work out their own salvation with fer and trembling, Phil. 2.12.* but also do as much for others, /170/ *even save them with fear, plucking them out of the fire, Jud. 23.* and thus by these means the Churches of God being *edified,*

They will also be *multiplied*, according to that *Isa. 60.5. Thou shalt see and flow together, thy heart shall fear and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted to thee, and the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee,* expressing the great confluence of people to the Church, upon the preaching of the Gospel, as it was here when they walked in the fear of the Lord, they wanted not company of fellow-travellers, nor should we, if we took the same course.

Partly by our carefull endeavours labouring to gain strangers and enemies over to *Christ.*

And partly by our holy examples (as the Apostle speaketh of Christian women) winning them to *God, whilst they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.*

Whereas on the contrary, our fearfull impieties fright

away /171/ strangers from our communion, are an offence to *Jewes and Gentiles*, as well as to the Church of *God*. The abominable practises of *Christians* are a stumbling block in the way to *Jews and Turks*, and *Infidels* without, as the unworthy and unchristian carriages of *Professors* are to those that are estranged from the wayes of grace within the pale of the Church: And hence in part it is, that the *wayes of Zion mourn, and her gates are desolate, and the high wayes are unoccupied*, Lam. 1.4. Judg. 5.6. This was a great part of their *lamentation* then, as being a fruit of the enemies violence in time of war; but how much more sadly should it now be lamented by us, when it is the effect of our most unworthy walking in these times of rest and peace? we have rest, as they here had, but we do not walk in the fear of the Lord as they did, and therefore it is that the Churches of God, as not now as they were then, *edified, and multiplied*.

Use 1. Which may shew us our sin, and call /172/ upon us earnestly to be deeply humbled for it: Let us therefore *remember our fault this day*; for *God* hath been graciously pleased to *come out to us* in mercy and peace, but we have forgotten to *walk with him*, in reverence and godly fear. *Indulsisti Genti Domine, indulsisti genti, nunquid glorificatus es?* So the Vulgar readeth that in Isai. 26.15. He said it of that *Nation*, and we may as fitly apply it to ours. *Lord thou hast increased*, (or indulged) this *Nation*, thou hast indulged this our *Nation* with peace and plenty; but *nunquid glorificatus es?* art thou thereby glorified? Nay, *gravatus es*, as *Piscator* readeth it, (and the word /HEBREW/ there used will bear it) *Lord*, thou art *burdened*, and *pressed* by our *sins*, as *the cart is with sheaves*. Instead of *walking in Gods fear*, we are boldly and we are boldly and presumptuously risen up against *God*, and that in most *horrid* blasphemies, and most *fearfull*, nay *fearless daring ranting* impieties. Our rest hath made us secure, and our /173/ plenty petulant, nay rampant, and that against *God* himself. We do not say in our hearts, Let us *now fear the Lord*

our God, who giveth us rain, the former and the latter, in his season, and reserveth to us the appointed weeks of the harvest, that establisheth peace in our borders, &c. Psal. 147.13, 14. And therefore the lesse that we fear man, the more let us now reverence and fear God. No, but our greater plenty serveth us the more to fulfill our lusts, and occasioneth even our murmurings at his overflowing bounty, which may constrain him to bring us to a low ebb in the turning of the tide, that we may be punished with scarcity, who rest not satisfied with his plenty, and by our peace and rest, we take the more liberty to look about for our selves, and to oppresse others. Such a requitall this is, as if any in the time of our former straits should have told us that we would make, in case *God* should deliver us, we should have been ready to spit in his face, and defied both him and it, with /174/ *Hazaels* words, but *are we dogs that we should do these things?* But it appeareth now that *our hearts are deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked, we did not know them,* not that bottomlesse depth of abominable wickednesse that was in them: Well, but *our sin hath found us out,* or rather *God hath found us out,* and that to be very *hatefull.* He hath discovered to us as the most base and unworthy ingratitude and disingenuity of our Spirits, so our invincible perverseness, when neither *mourning* to us *will make us weep, nor piping dance.*

He expected that our former peace should have quited our lusts, at least that our after wars should have subdued them, as *Austine* observeth, *qua solit corruptos hominutos more bello emendare, &c.* But both he and we find that *war cannot mend us, and peace maketh us worse. O foolish people and unwise!* But *do we thus requite the Lord?* by waging open war against him, when he hath made peace /175/ for us with our neighbors. Do we turn spiritual grace *into wantonnesse,* and temporall peace into rebellion? but what in the close of all will come of this? or as the *Prophet* said, *What shall we do in the end of it?* Unlesse we betimes bethink our

selves and repent, will not *God* be provoked *with the froward to deal frowardly?*

1. With such disingenuous ones, not to deal (may I with reverence so speak?) so disingenuously? Ingenuity doth not use to upbraid courtesies vouchsafed, nor doth *God*, (who giveth to all /GREEK/ *liberally*) *upbraid any*, for often either asking or receiving, *Jam.* 1.5. But yet such unworthy and base ingratitude doth inforce him, and so he did often to *Israel*, and not onely to *Baasha*, 1 *King.* 16.2. and *Jeroboam*, 1 *Kings* 14.7, 8. and *Saul*, 2 *Sam.* 15.17. but also to *David* himself, who was more ingenuous, and therefore such upbraiding of him could not but be very grievous, and yet *He* had it, 2 *Sam.* 12.7, 8, 9. and when he /176/ so inculcateth his mercies & favours to *Eli* and his house, and saith *Did I appear to the house of thy Father? and did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel? and did I give him all the offerings?* Every such question, especially so reiterated, *Did I, and Did I, and Did I?* had a sharpned point, and no doubt gave a deep thrust and wound in *Elies* tender heart; told him, that whereas *God* had done *so, and so, and so* for him, he did not expect that he should have done *so, and so, and so* against him, for which he thus sadly upbraided him; And may not *God* more often, and more sadly repeat over and over the same or like words to us of this Nation? But did I not in answer to the *Martyrs prayers and hopes* after the popery and persecution of those dayes, restore the Gospel once more agan to *England*, and gave peace and plenty with it?

And when upon your wantonnesse, some Taskmasters grew corrupt, and cruell, did I not hear your cries, and eased you /177/ of those burdens?

And when in those changes your dangers grew greater, did I not make bare my arm in the sight of all Nations, to *pluck you as brands out of the fire*, and to reserve you to be a people, nay a praise, as at this day? This I have done, and what have you done? Have you not, as the *Lord* said there to *Eli*,

kicked at my sacrifice? trampled under foot all my holy *Things, Truth, Worship, Ordinances, All?* and do you murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely, &c as though you were delivered to do all these abominations? And is this my requital? As it's said of *Abimelechs* speech to *Sarah*, thus she was reprov'd. So truly with such like as these, if we have any ingenuity in us, we may be even confounded, and all this, because that with our most unworthy carriage, we inforce God to upbraid us with his mercies, which an ingenuous Christian should blush at.

2. Nay, to deprive us of them, which a more servile spirit may tremble at: & this we may the rather fear, because the faithfull and true *God* hath in good earnest threatned it; that because *they served him not for the abundance of all things, they should serve their enemies in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and in the want of all things:* and truly then, why may we not justly fear, because in this our peace and rest, we will not fear *God*, that worse times will come, in which we shall fear and feel something else which will be more uncomfortable? And to this purpose let me end this with these two *conclusions*.

1. As on the one side, our *fear of God is our security, our treasure, Isa. 33.6.* and the best meanes to secure it. According to that of *Austin, Homo time Deum, & minamem mundum ridebis: Men fear God, and then thou mayest laugh at a threatning of a persecuting world;* or if you will, according to that of *Moses, Exod. 20.20.* When at *Sinai* it so terribly thundred and lightned, &c. He then saith to the People, *Fear not, for God is come to prove you, [179] that his fear may be before your face, that you sin not,* as though he had said, Fear not other things that you may fear *God*, and fear but him and then you need not fear any thing else; *fear God, and fear not thunder;* which some of the great *Emperours* were so terrified with. As *Gods* fear (I say) on the one hand, is our great security,

2. So on the other the want of *Gods* fear hath these

two undoing mischiefs accompanying it.

It make way for all the most fearfull evils, for by this daring impudence we inforce *God* to shew himself that he may assert his sovereignty which by such Braves is affronted.

And it also maketh them most terrible and overwhelming when they come, as not feared to be either prevented or provided for: And so this careless security (as that of *Laish*) when such unexpected evils do indeed come, it makes them more astonishing and dreadful.

Which therefore should alarm and awaken us out of this supinity /180/ and calleth loud upon us in the words of the *Psalmist*, Stand in *awe and sin not*; our wars have made us *souldiers*, and so less afraid of dangers from men, but let them not withall make us *Rebels* in hardning us against *God*, but let us be so wise, as in good earnest to be afraid of those terrible judgements which *God* useth to inflict for *mercies abused*, nay let us prove more ingenuous, and with these in the Text, let us *walk in the fear of the Lord*, for these favours *vouchsafed and enjoyed*; for at the same time *God* is *fearful in praises*, as well for peace and deliverance vouchsafed to his people, as for vengeance taken on his enemies.

Never should an ingenuous and heavenly spirited Christian be more *in the fear of the Lord*, as *Solomons* Phrase is, or as in the Phrase of the *Text*, *walk in it*, then when we most walk in his Sunshine, never maintain a more reverential awe of him, then when we receive most mercy from him, we are most freed & loosed from /181/ the fears of men, we are then most ingaged and obliged to *God*: He well said, *In magna fortuna, minima licentia est*; what ever a loose heart doth, yet a gracious spirit in greatest freedome taketh least liberty to prove licentious, as looking at himself by such cords of love bound the father to a most awfull observance. And therefore seeing we now are in the very same case and circumstances, should we not joyn with *Nehemiah* in saying with him the very same words; and happy we, were it with the same spirit!

and they are the very words of this Text: *Ought we not to walk in the fear of the Lord?* if we well consider all, *but ought we not?*

If *Danger escaped*; thoughts of it, though past, naturally and usually are wont to strike us with trembling.

If *mercies and deliverances vouchsafed*; as we should fear God, *that* it may be well, *Deut.* 5.29. so much more *when*, and *because* it is well with us; we should not with the *Disciples* fear only *when* /182/ *we are entering into the cloud*, but it will be most ingenuous if we fear *God* most when we are got out of it: *If I be a Father, where is my honour?* (saith *God*) and if *I be a Master*, (especially if so good a Master as thus to protect, deliver and maintain you) *where is my fear?* *Servatus* should be *Servus*, let every such birth of *Gods* goodness, be named *Obed*, i.e. a *servant of God*: *Beneficium officium*, let every *mercy* be an obligation to *duty*, and let every *prodigal Son* received into favour, make good *Absaloms* name, but not practise his Rebellion: but when not *worthy to be called a Son*, let him desire his Father to make him /GREEK/ *one of his hired servants*, not as a mercenary slave to serve for hire, but to be wholly at his dispose, though in the lowest place or employment, as those hired servants were wont to be. And in a word, when God hath shoven us so much grace, *let us have grace to serve him* /GREEK/ /183/ /GREEK/ i.e. on *Gods* part, so as that we may please him, and on ours, with an holy *shamefacedness* as the word is, to blush at the least unseemlyness and unworthiness; and with godly fear,

With a *cautelous fear* of losing and forfeiting that mercy we have received.

But especially with an *holy godly fear* of offending that *God* who hath vouchsafed it.

And therefore with an answerable care to walk worthy of it, which would be a greater mercy, then the *peace* it self vouchsafed to us.

And therefore when ever such a gift, proveth a blessing indeed, you shall find these two meet both in *Gods* gifts, and

his peoples desire and indeavour:

1. When *God* in mercy giveth the one, he also addeth the other as *2 Chron. 32.22*. He did not only *deliver Hezekiah and Jerusalem from their enemies*, but it is also added, that *He guided them on every side*, Not did he only /184/ *bring up David out of the horrible pit, and set his feet on a rock, but also then ordered his goings, Psal. 40.2*. Guiding mercy is as necessary as *delivering mercy*, to make the blessing complete, and therefore in that case *God* giveth it.

2 And his servants do as much desire and indeavour after it. So *David* when he prayeth that *God would deliver him from the oppression of man, promiseth then to keep his precepts, Psal. 119.134*. and *when God had kept his feet from falling, Psal. 116.8*. he will not stumble again more dangerously, (as sometimes after a recovery both we and our horses do) but he will then walk uprightly, and therefore immediately adde's in *v. 9. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living*. Now the *Lord* who hath upheld us of this *Nation* in so many foul and dangerous stumbles, and to this day hath kept us on our feet, keep us from proudly strutting it, with *Nebuchadnezzar*, standing stiffly on /185/

on our own leggs, and saying *Is not this great Babel, &c.* lest it prove a *Babel* indeed, and at last end in *confusion*: But *He* help us with *David* there to walk humbly and uprightly before *God*, and with these there in the Text, who when they had *peace, walked in the fear of the Lord. /186/*

And in the Comfort of the Holy Ghost.

WHich is the last particular to be observed in the Text, and is as the 2nd effect of their peace, so the 2nd cause or means of their being edified and multiplied: for so the right method is, God *gave* them *rest*, upon it, they *walked as in the fear of the Lord*, so also in *the comfort of the holy Ghost*, and so they happily came to be *edified and multiplied*: so that in handling of this, I shall much waht follow the same order that I did in the former particular, and labour to declare,

1. What is here meant by this *comfort of the holy Ghost*.
2. That it should be a consequent and concomitant of our outward peace and rest.
3. That so it will be a speciall means of the Churches *edifying* and multiplying. /187/

For the first the word in the Greek is, /GREEK/ translated *Comfort*, answering to /GREEK/, a name given to the *Holy Ghost*, *John* 14.16. and there and elsewhere rendred by our Translators, *Comforter*. I acknowledge the word signifieth *an exhorter, a pleader, or an Advocate*, as well as a *Comforter*. And this word /GREEK/ in the Text, in diverse places of the *New Testament* signifieth *Exhortation*, and accordingly some referring these words to the last word /GREEK/ *were multiplied*, make this the meaning of the whole, *They were multiplied by the Admonition or Exhorting of the holy Ghost, i. e., many were converted by the Apostles discharging their office and duty in Exhortation &c to which they were designed by the coming of the holy Ghost the true Paraclete*: which Paraphrase and Exposition holdeth forth a sober sense, but yet me thinks /GREEK/ is something too harshly translated, *the exhortation of the holy Ghost*. And therefore /188/ hath need of that Paraphrase to smooth it: whereas if we read it as our Translators

5. Sermon
preached at St.
Maries
in Cambridge.
June 17, 1655

do, The *Comfort of the holy Ghost*, (in which sense the word / GREEK/ is most commonly taken in the *New Testament*) it runn's more smoothly, and is understood more easily; and so I shall crave leave to take it, and accordingly the meaning is, that *they conversing as in Gods fear, so in the comfort and joy of the Spirit*, (viz. *which he worketh and maintaineth*) *felt in their hearts, and expressed to one another, and to all in their lives, they thereupon were edified themselves, and were multiplied by the accession of others.*

The Second thing therefore which we have now to do, is to shew that, as it was here with these happy Christians in the Text, so it is incumbent on us now in this time of our peace to *indeavour to walk in the comfort of the holy Ghost*. This the *Scripture* elsewhere calleth the *walking in the light of Gods countenance*, as *Psal.* 89.15, 16. Blessed is the people /189/ that know the joyful sound, *they shall walk /?/ Lord in the Light of thy countenance, and in thy name They shall rejoyce all the day.* That *joyfull sound* signifieth the presence of *God* with his people, as the sounding of the trumpets did in the Law, when they were out to battell. When therefore Gods people hear and take notice of such a joyfull sound; so that as *Balaam* said, *Numb.* 23.21. *God is with them, and the shoute of a King is among them*, as overmastering their enemies, and giving them rest and peace, then they are to *walk* and march on in *the light of his countenance*, so as *in his name to rejoyce all the day.* By it we should be able to do as much in the *darkest night*, as *Job* saith, *when Gods candle shone upon his head, by his light he walked through darkness*, *Job* 29.3. but with how much more joy in *God*, when in a brighter day the *Sun of righteousness* shineth out in brighter beams of love and mercy? In *outward peace*, we should have *inward joy, and /190/ spiritual comfort in temporal refreshments*; and when in times of peace we may walk abroad at *large* we should have *hearts enlarged to walk as in the fear of the Lord*, so in *the comfort of the holy Ghost*.

First, that *this* comfort may qualify *that* Fear, and

characterize and evidence it to be the *fear of God*, when joyed with the peace and comfort and *joy of the holy Ghost*, a slavish *fear* hath torment, saith the *Apostle*, and therefore no joy, but in heavenly and more ingenuous tempers Godly fear, and spiritual joy know the way how to meet, and imbrace, and uphold one the other. Natural fear contracteth the heart, but an holy fear enlargeth it, *Isa.* 60.5. in those happier days of the Church it is said, *Thy heart shall fear, and be enlarged*, when taken with a reverential awe and admiration of *Gods* wonderfull goodness, then most enlarged in joyfull praises and thanksgivings: So it is, and will be most fully in heaven, God no /191/ where else so reverentially feared, nor no where so much rejoiced in and prayed: such a blessed heavenly temper, we should be aspiring to here below: to *fear God and his goodness*, *Hos.* 3.5. and to *rejoyce in his goodness*, *Nehem.* 9.25. together. Then especially we ought to fear him, that our joy may not prove light and wanton, and yet even then to rejoyce in him, that our fear may manifest it self, not to be slavish, but filial, becoming such blessed children of so great and good a Father. Thus first in times of rest and peace, we should walk in the comfort of *Gods* Spirit, to qualify that *former fear*.

Secondly, to answer, and to suite with our *present peace*, and so it proveth /HEBREW/ a duty in its *season*, which maketh every thing beautifull. God expecting that his severall dispensations should be intertained with sutable affections and deportments, *In the day of prosperity be joyfull, but in the day of adversity consider*, and as *there is a time to weep* /192/ *so there is a time to laugh*, *Eccles.* 3.4. And what time more fit for that then when *God* smiles? As it is said of the *Jewes* upon the restoring and settling of *Jerusalems* peace, *That they rejoiced because God had made them to rejoyce*, *Neh.* 12.43.

The contrary hereunto is one kinde of *taking Gods name in vain* in crossing one of those ends, which he intendeth in bestowing such mercies, which is, that *we should*

serve the Lord with joyfulness and gladnesse of heart, for the abundance of all things, Deut. 28.47. and to delight our selves in the abundance of peace, Psal. 37.11. which being neglected, Gods end is frustrated, and so his Name is taken in vain; for that is in vain, which falleth short of its end. And therefore it is, that there are so many and frequent commands of God to his people Israel to rejoyce before him in their Festivals, and in every good thing which he gave them, Deut. 26.11. /HEBREW/ Deut. 16.15. Thou shalt surely, or onely rejoyce. /193/ Now this a sowre lowring either out of discontent or dejectednesse wholly frustrateth, and takes out (as to us) the sweetness of Gods goodnesse, by the bitterness of our spirits: For what good will a costly rich suite do on his back all whose bones are broken within? and although it be never so fair weather above head, but deep foul way will make but uncomfortable travelling, and therefore such uncomfortableness of spirit under such chearing providences is as sutable as a mourning suite on a marriage day, or fasting on a Festivall, or on a Lords day, in the esteem of the primitive Christians. It shutteth out clear day-light, that we may mope in the dark; and sendeth up foggs from a muddled heart to obscure the clear Sun-shine: This Nehemiah forbad his people, and would have them be of good cheer on a good day, and told them that the joy of the Lord would be their strength, Neh. 8.9, 10. God would have our hearts keep time with his hand, when there is peace without, would have an /194/ answerable serenity within. Job expected that his bed should comfort him, Job 7.11. and so they here, in the Text when they had rest, they walked as in the fear of the Lord, so in the comfort of the holy Ghost.

And its well said, in the comfort of *the holy Ghost*, that it might not onely be sutable to their outward peace, but that it might also sanctifie it, and spiritualize all the comfort and joy which they had in it.

For otherwise most commonly in outward peace and prosperity we are ready to take comfort enough, and in some

kindes and eases too much (as we shall see more afterward in the application) we are very subject to make an idol of it (as *Israel* delivered from *Egypt* made a golden calf) and with them then *to eat and drink and rise up to play*. How easie a thing is it to overjoy outward comforts, and to forget God by looking too much on his lovetokens? and so to spend and powr out our delight on the gift, that /195/ there is none left for the giver? as *Nehemiah* sadly complaineth of that people, that although *they delighted themselvs in Gods great goodnesse*, *Nehem.* 9.25. yet they could not finde in their hearts *to serve him in his great goodnesse*, v. 35.

And on the contrary how hard a thing is it, spiritually to rejoyce in God, when we have many temporall delights to intertain us? as it is with a man to keep up his appetite, and to taste as much sweetnesse in his food, when he is used to a constant *high* feed, as he did when he was kept to short pining commons. In summer when it is warmest without, we use to be faintest within: To what a blessed height and strength of grace hath that Christian attained, who can delight himself as much in God in more peaceable and prosperous times amidst all other delights, as he did in harder times, when he had nothing else but God to comfort him? That man lives much by faith, who by its hand can hang as much upon God in a promise, when he hath /196/ many other slaves of comfort to lean on, and to support him, as if he had none. This hard lesson *God* was teaching *Israel* under the Law, when in the beginning and ending of their harvest, and other times of outward mirth and gladnesse, He appointed them holy *Festivals*, in which he so often (as you heard) called upon them to rejoyce, but still it was to be *before the Lord*, as the *Apostle* would have us to rejoyce *again and again*, but *ever in him*, *Phil.* 4.4. As another *Apostle*, *when we are merry would have sing Psalmes*, to keep our hearts in an heavenly tune, *Jam.* 5.13. And this lesson as hard as it is, these prime Scholars in *Christs School* had happily taken out, who could rejoyce

in God both notwithstanding all troubles, and also *In*, yea and *above* all comforts. So we finde them *eating their meat with gladnesse*, when under persecution, *Acts 2.46.* and here *walking in the comfort of the holy Ghost* in the midst of all those other *comforts* which their peace and /197/ rest did afford them: *Non inebriati sunt deliciis & terreus gaudio, sed freti Dei presidio plus animi & fiducia ad Deum glorificandum sumpserunt*, as *Calvin* observeth upon the Text. They were not drunk with these outward contentments, nor so immersed in the comforts which their peace brought them, but that this *oyl of gladnesse*, the grace and comfort of the *holy Spirit*, did still swim on the top of all, and was more to them, as it was to *David*, *Psal. 4.6, 7.* then all corn, and wine, and oyl in their greatest abundance. The comfort of outward peace they thankfully received and made use of, but it was the comfort of the holy Ghost that *they walked in*; this was their *way and walk*, and the other but their *viaticum*; without this comfort, all other would have been to them as *Jobs* friends were to him, very *miserable comforters*; but thorns to choak the word, and intangle and pierce their hearts; and like bird-lime have cleaved so fast, as to have kept their souls /198/ being upon the wing, and so imbase and defile them, that heavens light would not have been able to shine through those windows so all over besmeared with such filth.

As therefore sweetest honie stands in need of being clarified, so do our peace and sweetest outward contentments by these more spiritual and divine comforts and joyes of the *holy Ghost*, that our delight in them may be /GREEK/ , more pure and limpid, and spirituall, may not be as weights to presse us down to the earth, but be onely as *onus alarum*, as understeps, nay as wings to lift and mount us up to *God*, and so to enjoy him, in them, and above them: not as crass earthy bodies to terminate our sight, but as transparent glasses to transmit to our eyes and harts the light of *Gods countenance* in the face of *Jesus Christ*. This is right, and as it should be, when

it is not meat but mercy that feedeth us, nor other sweetest musick, but a better melodie in our hearts that layeth us down to our /199/ rest, as here in the Text, they had *Rest*: But it was the comfort of the holy Ghost that made their sleep sweet, in giving rest to their soul; according to that blessing which God would have put on his *Israel*, *Numb. 6.26. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and so give thee peace.* For these Reasons in our outward peace, we should walk in the comfort of the holy Ghost, which was the *second* thing propounded to our consideration in the handling of this Point.

The *Third* was to shew, This this our walking in the comfort of the holy Ghost, would much conduce to the Churches *edifying* and multiplying, as we here finde in the Text, that upon their thus walking, *they were edified and multiplied*, and this will here also afford two arguments to inforce this duty.

First then, Christians walking in the joy and comfort of the holy Ghost, will much help to the edification and building up of the Church. We before heard that in /200/ fair weather *without*, it is best to build our own houses; and truly *Gods* house goeth up fasteth when we have serenity *within*: For whereas fear, and grief, and dejectedness duls and deads the spirits, weakneth the man, and makes him unfit for any thing; on the contrary, *The joy of the Lord is our strength*: a chearful spirit of our own bringeth life and strength to our own work, and proportionably the joy and comfort of *Gods* Spirit will help to make better riddance of his. So we see that *when the heart is enlarged*, the foot runs the wayes of *Gods commandments*, *Psal. 119.32.* When the heavy-hearted proveth heavy-heeled, and cometh fainting and lagging behinde; a raised spirit, enlarged with the comforts of *Gods* spirit, as *John* overran *Peter*, so he another that faints and despondes, and *Ilia ducit*. Such an one waiting on the *Lord reneweth his strength, and mounteth up with wings like an eagle (flyeth strongly and swiftly) runneth and is not weary, /201/*

walketh and doth not faint: or rather like the blessed *Angels*, who because they *always behold the face of God*, in one sense (*viz.* in joy) behold it also in another, *viz.* *As the eyes of a servant look to the hand of his Master*, (as ready prest to do his commands) so they to mark the least intimations of *Gods* will, and so presently and speedily to go about it, whose joy in *God addeth wings to their hands, and maketh their feet sparkle* for haste, as we have it in *Ezekiels* vision; even so would this *oyl of gladnesse* oyle our wheels in any way that *God* should send us; and in particular in this great work of building up and edifying the Church of Christ.

1. Whether it be in helping up and settling his *House and Ordinances:* for it never goeth faster up, than when his servants lay the foundations of it with joyful shoutings and praises; as it was *Ezr.* 3.11. and so at last *bring forth the top-stone of it* with like shoutfull acclamations, *crying, Grace, Grace to it*, as we finde it, *Zech.* 4.7. /202/ So then in that second Temple, as before the people *were joyfull and glad of heart* in the dedication of the first Temple, 1 *Kin.* 8.66. as the joy of *Jerusalem was heard afar off* when the walls of it were afterward built up and finished, *Nehem.* 12.43. Thus under the Law.

And in the beginning of the *Gospel* they were these that here in the Text *walked thus in the comfort of the holy Ghost*, who were the first happy promulgers of it.

And blessed *Paul* though he came in to this work after them, yet in this (as in all else) he came no whit behinde them. But he that *laboured more abundantly then they all*, was (as his story and Epistles every where testifie) as chearfull, rejoicing, yea *triumphing in God*, as any.

Which, in part, may be the reason, why more ordinarily *Gods* Ministers are lesse soiled with uncomfortable dejections, and more enlarged with the consolations of his Spirit then divers others, *viz.* /203/ That they may be in better case more effectually to comfort others, 2 *Cor.* 1.4. and

more ably to help up the *house* of God in the more lively dispensation of his Ordinances.

2. Or if we consider the edification of the Church in the building up of our selves in our most holy faith, and the Graces of *Gods* Spirit; truly the *comfort of the holy Ghost is a very great heartner and furtherer of those graces*, which as sweet flowers open themselves, and flourish most in this happy Sunshine, but too often close up and droop, and hang down the head in a cloudy rainy day; so that if this part of the Churches edification consist in pulling down the old building and setting up the new, in our establishment and growth in grace, and mortification of sin, nothing more effectually conduceth to it then this joy and comfort.

1. Nothing more furthereth the mortification of sin, and corruption. Repentance indeed and godly sorrow doth very much this /204/ way, whilst it maketh us sensible of the loathsomeness and bitterness of sin, but this joy and comfort of the *Spirit* doth more by its presenting us with the unconceivable sweetness of *Gods* favour and grace, in *Christ*, as *Paul* when he had been *wrapped up to heaven*, was then most impatient of *a thorn in the flesh*, 2 *Cor.* 12. In heaven where is all joy, there is no sin, and had we here more of heavenly joyes, we should be less troubled with sinfull corruptions; these spirituall comforts would so satisfie, yea swallow us up with delight in them, that we should not need the supply of any sensuall or sinfull contentments, but they would make us despise them as low, poor, and empty, yea abhor them as most loathsome and abominable in themselves, especially to us then, when we are ravished with more high and holy, and heavenly delights; such foggs would quite vanish in the Noon-day Sun, and this Summers heat would dry up even the springs of /205/ these polluted streams. When a peaceable *Solomon* is seated on the Throne, all enemies are subdued, 1 *King.* 5.4. and 9.21. and never more than when we are settled and established in the peace of *God*, and the comfort of his

Spirit, are our *corruptions mortified*.

2. Or our *Graces confirmed and increased*. The *fruits* of the Spirit (saith the *Apostle*, *Gal.* 5.22 ,23.) are *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*. See what a cluster there is of them, but mark how *love, joy, and peace* are set in the head of them, as animating, actuating and giving life to all the rest. The *cheerfull Christian*, is the *fruitfull Christian*; most agile and active for *God*. And although in his more nimble speed he may have oftner trips, yet the melancholick spirit, though it's possible he may have fewer, yet usually they are more sad and heavy falls. The sad Christian may, by reason of his watchfulness seldome *do evill*, but the cheerfull Christian by reason of his /206/ activeness, usually doth the *most good*. When the *Sun of righteousness thus ariseth on us with healing in his wings, we then go forth and grow as calves of the stall*, *Mal.* 4.2. not for wantonness, but for lively activity. So in *nature* our *cheerfull youth* is the growing and active age and part of our life, whereas *sad old age* sitteth still, shrinks up, and groweth, but it's downward. But as to the life and vigour of *Grace*, blessed bee *God*, that the aged decrepit Christian may be a hearty old man, and his serving Sun may shine bright and warm, so that he may be warm at heart in that old winter of his old age. the comforts of Gods Spirits (in the decay of all other naturall, vitall, and animall Spirits) may be then greater than ever, and thereupon his Graces more lively then ever before; and so this plant of righteousness which shot up so in the spring, doth still grow even in winter, *and brings forth more fruit in old age, and is fat and flourishing*, and so like the Crocodile) /207/ groweth as long as he liveth: and the more peace, and joy, and comfort of the *Spirit* that he hath, the more grace he hath, the good old man thriving well with so good a Nurse, the more fruit he beareth, and the more sweetness, and less harshness it hath: and thereby this sweet comfort doth not only thus help us to edifie *our selves*, but,

Which is the 3^d part of the edification of the Church, it much helpeth us also to edifie *others*. For as in Nature, grief and sadness make's us heavy and listless to stirre abroad, it contract's the spirits whilst joy and cheerfulness dilate's them, and send's them out: so here, whilst the drooping sinner sitteth moping in a corner, and the sorrowfull Christian is retired in private with *Ephraim bemoaning himself*, and weeping over his own sins; the cheerfull Beleever invlivened and enlarged with the comforts of the *holy Ghost*, with *Elihu*, is *full and must have vent*; is lively, and so becomes active to do /208/ good to others as well as to himself, and as the forehorse with the bells lead's on the rest of the Teame. Thus *David* (as the *choragus*) with the voice of joy and praise, went in the head of the multitude that kept holy-day, *Psal.* 42.4. like *Nehemiah* who had the *Trumpeter* with him, and then the walls of *Jerusalem* went up apace: never did Drum and Trumpet more animate the Souldier to fight, then a cheerfull Christian the rest of his company to *Gods* hardest and hottest services. But this fitly leadeth me from the first benefit of the *comfort of the holy Ghost* in *edifying* the Churches, to the

Second, *viz.* the *multiplying* of them: for so we finde here, that when they walked in this comfort, they were not only *edified*, but also *multiplied*. It doth not onely much help and edifie them who are already come in, but proveth a strong attractive to them without; and so make's the company of BeleEVERS swell and break out into multitudes. /209/

For whereas the uncomfortable droopings of Christians like the *evil spies* bring an *evil report* on the *good land*, and make strangers beleeve, that *Gods Eden* is a *howling wilderness*, and his *Goshen* a land of darkness, that there is no joy or comfort to be found in the ways of *God*, when they who walk in them finde, or at least express so little, and so they are afraid to venture that way, and thereupon leave them to walk, or sit down solitary in it, wherein they can meet with so little comfort, and therefore with as little company.

On the contrary, however howling wildernesses are solitary, yet more pleasant walkes, and cheerfull persons in them use to have more company: Musick, we know, gathereth crowds' about it; and so should we finde about us, if we could sing, and *make melody in our hearts to God*, we might then hope to make up a fuller Comfort. When an experienced Christian can say with *David, Come and I will tell you what God hath done /210/ for my soul*, indeed more then I can tell you; hath in this way of his *Grace* settled me in *peace*, and filled my heart with *joy unspeakable and full of glory* (/GREEK/ the word is) even with *glorified joy*;

He can do no less then draw many to admiration and communion.

Thus the spouse by so pathetically displaying her *Beloveds* love and loveliness, made the daughters of *Jerusalem* to enquire after him, that they might seek him with her: and what think you did those loud Proclamations made to all the world by *Paul*, and the other *Apostles* and *Disciples*, of the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, and *the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of the knowledge of the love of God*, what (I say) did it, what could it do less then alarme the whole world, and make them *gather as clouds*, and fly as *Doves to the windowes?* as the *Prophet* expresseth it, *Isa.* 60.8.

Whilst the *spirit of fear and bondage* /211/ in the ministry of the *Law*, contracted it into the narrow bounds of *Palestina*; the *Gospel of peace*, (when it was preached, and the *love of God* thereby more plentifully *shed abroad* in Beleevers hearts) spred abroad in all the world, and instead of a few *Proselytes* before, made all Nations *Converts*: How wonderfully ductile is this pure gold? how abundantly efficacious would the *glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*, shining out in the raised and enlarged hearts, and cheerfull carriages of Christians be to draw all mens eyes and hearts to it? No wonder then, if when these first best Christians did thus *walk as in the fear of the Lord, so in the comfort of the*

holy Ghost, the Churches of Christ were thus both edified and multiplied.

Which in the Application of it, serveth to shew us both our sin and duty, and both double.

1. That some Christians at all times, and most at some times, yea in the time of outward rest /212/ and peace are too gloomy and dejected.

And therefore their duty is to labour to be more comfortable.

2. Our sin on the other hand is, that as at other times, so especially in times of peace and outward prosperity whilst we are jocund and pleasant, our joyes are carnal, and sensual.

And therefore our duty is, that then especially we labour to have them more spiritual, that if we then *walk in comfort*, we make sure that it be in the *comfort of the holy Ghost*.

First then the sin that too many of *Gods* people are to be humbled for is, that contrary to this lovely example in the Text, they do not walk comfortably, or in the comfort of the *holy Ghost*. They do indeed after a fashion *walk in fear*, but not in *the fear of the Lord*, but in such a fear as *Damascen* makes *segnities & stupor* to be the two parts of it, in a dejected stupid disconsolateness, or (as the Prophet expresseth it) *in darkness, where they see no light*, or what /213/ the see, troubleth them; as it useth to do to weak or soar eyes, They have such an aguish distemper about them, that (as was said before) they stand shaking in a Summers Sunshine. So that when *God* sendeth outward peace, and therewith also means and materials of inward refreshment, in stead of this *walking in the comfort of Gods Spirit*, they sit down in the most uncomfortable dejectedness of their own. Yea although his *Spirit* be on purpose sent to be a *Comforter*, *John* 14.16, 26. yet, (with *Rachel*) they *will not be comforted*. *Jer.* 31.15.

But (as the Prophet said) *wherefore do I see every mans hands on his loynes, and so many faces gather blackness?*

Is *God* who was wont to *love a cheerful giver*, and to take *pleasure in the prosperity of his servants*, now become like those cruel Lords, which make their *labourers groan out of the City*? Or an *Egyptian Taskmaster*, to make his servants *lives bitter with* /214/ *hard bondage*? Is he become *a wilderness*, or a *land of darkness*: so barren that no pleasant sent grows on it, or so dark that it cannot be seen and found if any do, when so much gloominess is on his servants spirits, and on their *eyelids the very shadow of death*? Or is his house, which used to be the *beauty of holiness*, and in which *every one spake of his glory*, become now a *Trophonius's Den*, after entrance into which we must never look for a smile more, nothing in it to be seen but melancholick sad dumps, nothing to be heard but *wilderness howlings*, in stead of *Temple songs*? for joyfull praises, and glorious triumphings in him, shall we only have uncomfortable bemoanings of our selves, nay discontented complaints made *to him*, yea and it may be sometimes of *him* too? But (as *Eliphaz* said) *are the consolations of God small to us*: and the comforts of his Spirit not worth the looking after? are *wisdomes wayes*, all of which were wont to be *pleasantness and* /215/ *peace*, now turned quite out of that Rode? In a word, is the *Spirit of God* now become no more a *Comforter*, when his people are no more *comfortable*? Of such I desire this, that they would but consider, what folly and ingratitude this is,

1. That they are thus *alwayes*, and in a manner *onely* on the murmuring and complaining hand, as though amidst all their sorrowes, (and many of them not of Gods, but of their own making) there were no no sweetness of *God* for either outward or inward man to be felt, and which they might, yea and should rejoyce in, and praise him for; although we naturally *are all, and alwayes, and onely evill*, yet is God, are all, are any of his dispensations so too? Is hell broke loose upon earth, that our cup should be like that, *Rev. 14.10. / GREEK/ of the wine of the fierce wrath of God poured out (or*

mixed) without mixture, i.e. so mixed with all sorts of most bitter and deadly ingredients, that /216/ withall there is no mixture of any thing that may any way allay it from being altogether or onely grievous and vexatious? In thy bitterest cup was there no mixture of some sweetnesse, for which thou mayest well *take the cup of salvation*, and bless God? Was it wholly and onely bitter, that with more sowness of spirit thou onely makest such a sowre face at it? *Hezekiah* could say of his /HEBREW/ It was *bitter, bitter*, very bitter, double bitter as his redoubled word expresseth it, but yet he could notwithstanding that, taste so much sweetnesse of Gods love to his soul with it, and in it, that as in a double word he had expressed the double bitterness of that cup, *Isa.* 31.16. So in sense of that intermixed sweetnesse he preportionably doubled his words of praise and thanksgiving: *The living, the living* shall praise thee, as I do this day, *v.*19. take thee at thy word, yet as long as I hear thee complaining, I perceive that thou yet art, alive & *Hezekiah* /217/ conceived that to be mercy: and therefore say thou likewise, although I am very sick and poor, and depised from without, and wounded within, yet for all this I yet live, and therefore although that makes me cry out /HEBREW/ Oh bitterness, bitterness, yet his onely, if I have nothing else, is mercy that I live, and therefore I will with *Hezekiah* cry /HEBREW/ *The living, the living* shall praise thee, as I do this day. Its ingratitude therefore, to be onely complaining, there is some sweetnesse certainly, nay unlesse thy palat were too much vitiated, thou wouldest taste a great deal, and many wayes, for which thou shouldest chearfully give thanks.

2. Or in case it should be *onely* and *every* way ill with thee, yet think here again, might it not have been worse? Hath God made such *a way to his anger*, as to let it all out upon thee, *Psal.* 78.50. or rather is it not so with thee, as the Psalmist in *v.*38. of the same *Psalm* saith it was with *Israel* of old, /218/ that he hath not *stirred up all his wrath*? Hath

God, thinkest thou, as bad as thy case is, *done his worst to thee?* So indeed said a desperate Woman upon the losse of her Husband and children, and was soon confused by an heavier hand of that God whom she so defied upon her self and the very place where she so blasphemed. But I hope thou art not arrived at the height of her blasphemy. Thou canst not but acknowledge that although it be very ill with thee, yet it might have been, and thou hast deserved that it might have been much worse, and that is some comfort.

3. But if for all this, you will be onely on your sad thoughts, then I pray you, amongst many others of them, which will be worse and which your own discontented hearts invent and buble up, let me suggest these few, which it would be well if you would, and that very *sadly* think of, *viz.*

1. How much by this your unkinde grief you grieve your Comforter, the Spirit of God both in /219/ himself, and in the hearts of his people.

2. How much also you wrong and wound your own selves prove *Heautontimorumeni* self-torturers and executioners, and this

3. Needlesly and fruitlesly, for which *God* will never thank you, but before he hath done with you, make you in a meeker way grieve over these distempered griefs.

4. Nay, mischievously, whilst they too oft kindle a smothered fire of hell in your bosomes, and make you fierce to fret against others, yourselves, yea *God* himself. The whole frame of a mans spirits being no way made better, but every way the worse by them, beside what was before mentioned,

God dishonoured as harsh and tyrannicall.

His wayes, as wholly uncomfortable.

His children, as so many moiping fools.

To the disheartning of on-commers, and the making of strangers and enemies either so slye, or in /220/ a more full aversation, or more heavily to fall on with fiercer blasphemies and opposition.

Now then if this be any of our sins,

We have the more cause seriously to think, and set on our Duty, and that the *Apostle* prescribeth us, *Phil.* 4.4. to *rejoyce in the Lord alwayes*, and that *alwayes* includeth

The day of affliction: and so in the Saints coldest winter dayes their Sun oftentimes shineth very bright, as stars do in a frosty, and a clear Lanthorn in the darkest night. Such could *rejoyce* for the whip, *Acts* 5.41. and sing in the stocks at midnight, *Acts* 16.25; and clap their hands in the flames, as *Hawks* and *Smith* did amongst our other *Martyrs*.

But especially when God sendeth peace and prosperity, our hearts should keep time and tune with his hand, by *rejoicing in his goodnesse*, *Neh.* 9.25. and by walking comfortably and cheerfully in the light of his countenance: Let it not be foule way below, when it is /221/ fair weather above head, let us not *lowre* when *God smileth*. *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoyce ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart*, *Psal.* 32.11.

1. For this is *comely for the upright*, *Psal.* 33.1.

2. The badge of *Gods*, people according to that phrase of the Psalmist, *The gladnesse of thy nation*, *Psal.* 106.4.

3. It proclaimeth to all the world, that we serve a good Master, *and that there is no unrighteousness in him*, *Psal.* 92.14. that he is All-suffient for our good; for, *Non perfecte gaudet quis de aliquo, nisi cui perfecte sufficit illud de quo gaudet*, as *Aquinas* truly determineth it.

No man can perfectly rejoyce in that person, who is not sufficiently and perfectly possessed of tha thing in which he most rejoiceth.

4. It is the signe and evidence of a good conscience, *2 Cor.* 1.12. that our debts are discharged, when we can be so merry, and that we have /222/ no inward gripings, when we have so cheerfull a countenance.

5. It is that which will inable us to service, *Neh.* 8.10.

6. And render both us and it amiable and acceptable

both to *God* and man. For *he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men*, saith the *Apostle, Rom. 14.18*. And those things which he so commendeth, in the 17. *v.* immediatly going before you shall be read to be *righteousness and peace and joy in the holy Ghost*.

7. In which (he there saith) the kingdom of God consisteth most fully in the state of glory, where there is all joy and no grief, where *David* doth not *groan*, nor *Hezekiah* *chatter*, nor *Peter* *weep bitterly*. Sighs are then turned into *Hallelujahs* most fully (I say) in the kingdom of glory hereafter; but very comfortably, yea and gloriously now also in the estate of grace: where *righteousnesse* is the *root*, and *peace* the *pleasant blossom*, and *joy* the *sweetest fruit*. /223/

Make we therefore sure of the first, that we begin with it, but rest not till we attain to the last, till we be possessed of all that which this blessed Kingdom consists in: For if Kings will fight, and meaner men will sue for the least part of their kingdom and inheritance, why should not we as earnestly sue to God, and fight against all the powers of darknesse for the whole of ours? not onely for *righteousnesse*, but also for *peace and joy in the holy Ghost*? But here that last clause must especially be taken notice of, and answerable care taken, that it be the joy of the *holy Ghost*; which the kingdom of God (there we see) in part *consists* in; and so here it was comfort, but the *comfort of the holy Ghost*, which these Churches in the Text walked in: which leadeth me to the consideration of

The second part both of our sin and duty: for we live in too merry a world, in which although there be too little of the comfort and joy of the *holy Ghost*, yet there is too too much of other mirth and /224/ jollity. *Hilary* somewhere distinguishes of a *Palace* and a *Prison* joy. Not onely kings and great ones can be merry in their Palaces, but even condemned malefactors can in their prisons sometimes make a desperate mad merriment and frolick immediatly before their execution, as we see in the example of *Belshazzar Dan*.

5. and the rich Glutton in the Gospel, *Luke* 12.91, 20. most joviall at their feasts the very same night that they were called to their last great reckoning. Particularly,

There is a *feather-joy*: as when two fools (who are used to be painted alwayes laughing) make themselves sport in blowing a feather from one to the other; to which I cannot but compare the vain froth of your *Jokes* and leasts, as in other places, so especially in the Universities, and this both in private meetings, and publick Schools, without which *Sales*, in this wanton age, all exercises a-most are accounted insipid, and this not onely by *Juniors*, but also /225/ by others, whose greater standing should perswade them to give better example, for the honour of *God*, and of the University. These which favour onely, and that so rankly of the vanity and rottennesse of our hearts, are for certain, none of the Divine *Spirits* breathings: Do you in your consciences think that these vain jeasts and merriments have the least favour of the *comfort of the holy Ghost*, which these best Christians walked in? had their communications one with another been at the rate of these our vain and frothy jeastlings, (the vying and bandying of which is like *Solomons* vanity tossed to and fro of those that seek death) they might have gathered company enough to them, but it would have been no gathering of *Churches* as the Text here calls these, but (as *Abimelecks* was) of *light and vain persons*; and if by them they might have been *multiplied*, yet surely not so as therewith to be edified.

There is a Tavern or more profane mirth, in drinking and /226/ roaring and revelling, and in stead of another Ministrell, *David must be the song of the drunkards*; nor can the *Philistines* be merry, unless *Samson* be made the *fool* in the Play: unless they scoff and jear the wayes and servants of *God* (as *Mr Greenham* saith) *the fools cannot tell how to be merry*, and then the Devill is merry with them for company. But what? not merry without abusing their hoste? This some must dearly pay for, when a reckoning is called for, or they

rather called to make it. Then they will be off from their merry pinnes, and will find that this was very far from being the *comfort of the holy Ghost*, wherein and whereby that good Spirit and our comforter was grieved, and holinesse scoffed and laughed at.

And the like we may say of all those joyes and comforts which men take in any sinfull wayes and practises; as in this kind *Esau comforted* himself in his thoughts of revenge, *Gen. 27.42.* The King of *Israel* was *made glad with lyes*, *Hos. 7.3.* And when the *Chaldeans* /227/ could oppresse, it's said, that *then they rejoiced and were glad*, *Hab. 1.11.* But as the Lord said of his peoples idolatries, *Should I have comfort in these? Isa. 57.6.* So may such say to these their Idols, but can we have comfort in these, which provoke *God*, and greive his Spirit, and for which we our selves also must grieve, either here bitterly, or in Hell eternally? That was a smart expression of the *Jesuite Cotton* in one of his Epistles to *Chamier*. *Non est mi Chamire, non est Salus, ruere in sempiternum interitum alacriter.* It is no true mirth thus to go leaping merrily into hell. It is no *comfort of the Spirit*, which grieves the *Spirit*, no *joy of the holy Ghost*, that is thus fed with such unholy practises. And then as *Joab* asked *David*, *Why delightest thou in this thing? 2 Sam. 24.3.* canst thou give a good reason for it? Me thinks this is a very strong one against it. That in any thing, wherein *God* giveth thee leave to rejoyce and take comfort, thou not onely *mayest*, but thou *oughtest* before /228/ thy setting upon it to pray to him for a blessing upon it, and afterwards to return him thanks and praise for it: But *canst* thou, *darest* thou do so in these thy sinfull delights? although thou beest so sensual and profane as to make bold with them, yet I hope thou art not become so impudently bold, and desperate, as to pray to *God*, or to praise him for them. Remember that the *Kingdome of God* is *first in righteousness*, and then in *peace*, and *joy in the holy ghost*. *Gaudium in fine*, as *Bernard* observeth upon that place, joy cometh at the end, but so as to begin

at righteousness, and therefore we are not *praecipiti saltu* (as he there speaks) by leaping over righteousness, or rather by despitefully trampling upon it, to Commence *Doctors* of this mad *Musick per saltum*, to be sure it is not joy or *comfort of the holy Ghost*, which maketh a mock or scorn of *holiness*.

Thirdly, there is a *worldlings* joy. As we read of *Ammons* heart *merry with wine*, *2 Sam.* 13.28. /229/ As they in *Amos* 6.5. with their *Musick*, and others with *their wealth*, *Hab.* 1.15. The honours, pleasures, and profits of the world, are the things which worldly men take up, and make merry with, but as the *Prophet* said in another case, Is this *your joyous city?* so may I in this, But are these the cordials which your hearts are strengthened and cheered with? is this the joy which (I do not say as you are *Christians*, but) as rational men you can take up with?

1. They are not fit to comfort you, being so vain, gross and sensual, which the worst men most partake of, and the very brute beasts in many of them exceed you; such froth and dreggs are too coarse to be the flower of that cup that should make thy heart glad, as either thou art Christian or Man, they as such unfit to comfort thee.

2. And (it may be) Thou, in such a condition as thou art, not fit to receive comfort from them, for what ever they are, let me further ask /230/ thee, art thou the man that art in case so much to rejoyce in them? for then I hope thou art sure that thy *God* is reconciled, thy sins pardoned, thy peace made. If thy heart say No, then both it and *God* ask thee, But canst thou then be so merry and jolly? Before thou makest thy self drunk with these sweets, there are other greater matters soberly and sadly to be thought of; and to be taken care of. *Augustus* wondred that a man deep in debt could sleep, and would needs buy his bed. And *Chrysostom* when he considereth that we must all stand before the judgement Seat of *Christ*, asketh *how we can laugh?* And may not then such wonder at themselves, that when they are so deeply

obnoxious to *Gods* wrath, and so certain to be brought at last to a strict account should be so merry. What! walk a while and frisk it by the light of these poor sparks, and *at last lye down in sorrow?* laugh, and sing, and roar it here for a while, and roar in Hell to eternity? /231/

Which therefore on the contrary should teach us our duty. As the *Apostle* speaketh of *marrying*, so may we of all our rejoycing, whatever our liberty otherwise be, yet it must be *only in the Lord*. *God* envyeth not our *joy*, but he would not have us *grieve* him with it, He sometimes giveth us outward peace and prosperity, & with it free liberty and good leave to rejoyce in it; provided, that we write after our copy here in the Text, and that especially in these 3 particulars.

1. That we begin at the right end, and use a right Method; that we begin with righteousness, if we would end in joy, and let the first step in our *walk*, (as it was here in the Text) be in *Gods* fear, before we take this second, to joy and *comfort*, and to this end

2. That we be sure, that our joy be not in things unlawfull, nor we inordinate and sensual in our over doing in those that are lawfull, as here they had rest, but it was not after they had drunk drunk with present injoyments, as before we observed out of *Calvin*. /232/

3. Nay that we Sublimate, and Spiritualize all our joy and delight in outward and temporal *injoyments*: that in the midst of them all not onely (as it was with *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 2.9. *our wisdome may remain with us*) not as Hounds which lose the sent whilest they hunt in sweet fields, it were well if we did not the favour and relish of the things of Heaven whiles we are immersed buried in the sweets of this lower region, but that whilest we enjoy them we may be our own men, and injoy our selves, nay injoy *God in them*, and *above them*, nay yet more, and *by* them, that they may be improved as helps and advantages to our more spiritual and heavenly delights in *Christ* and the things of his kingdome, as by their having rest

and peace from the solicitations and oppositions of men, they thereupon walked in comfort, but it is carefully added, that it was the *comfort of the holy Ghost*. Oh let us not then be of the *Serpentine* brood that *feedeth onely on th dust* /233/ *of the earth*, nor let us drink drunk with the dreggs of earthly pudly contentments, but let us draw the wine of our consolation off from these feculent *lees*, and so have our pleasure and delight more limpid, *spiritful*, even truly *spiritual*. *Aristotle* telleth us that the pleasure of his contemplative happiness is /GREEK/ sincere, *sine cera*, without the commixture of corporeal dreggs; how much more should the Christians be so, who aspireth to an higher happiness? and if our terrestrial bodies be not nourished, with massy and drossy pulp or bulk of what we eat, but with the more spirituouse juice of it, how much rather should the celestial souls of Christians be with the spiritual comforts of the *holy Spirit*, even in the midst of all outward enjoyments: which should not be *instar velorum*, (as *Calvin* somewhere expresseth it) as *vailes* over our eyes that we cannot see *God* in them, and so forget him, as they there did, but rather as *Frontlets* to put us in mind /234/ of him, and our duty, which is in the midst of temporal mercies, to maintain in them, yea and by this blessed Art of divine *Chymistry* to extract out of them spiritual joyes. Our practise indeed herein is too often quite contrary, for when filled with outward contentments we through a brutish sensuality make them *contentments indeed*, i.e. such as we are fully content, and take up with, to the dulling at least, if not the extinguishing of all spirituall joy, as *fat* men use to be *frigid*, and when we are full fed, we grow drowsy; the lusciousness of these feculant sweets taking away the tast of more divine and sweeter comforts, we are so drunk with the one, that we are neither sensible nor capable of the other; nay sometimes we prove worse, as some men when drunk grow fierce and outrageous, so in this kind of drunkenness we do not onely fall short of these diviner comforts, but too often

rise up against *God* himself the giver of them, even *Jeshurun*, *when grown fat*, /235/ begins to *kick*, *Deut.* 32.15. At least the heaping of such grosser fewell, keepeth the fire from burning, as it was in *Ridleys Martyrdome*, and so too often in our hearts, those sparkling joyes which should mount up to heaven, are smothered and choked, as the *thornes of pleasures and lusts of other things*, are said to *choak* the word, and so these stifle all our spiritual comforts. And what is this but in the clear *warm Sunshine* to sit *dulling* over our *culinary fire*? and to shut out *Heavens light*, that by such *candle-light* we may work the works of *darkness*.

But such of us, as are children of the day, what ever our outward condition be, let our delight be, to be in heavens light, in the shine of the Sun of righteousness; and if others will have theirs to be in *corn and wine*, let ours with *David*, be in *Gods lifting up the light of his countenance upon us*, that not onely his face may be towards us (for so a mans may be, and yet, if held down, may not be seen /236/ by us) but so lifted up, as to be beheld by us: that not onely *God* may be reconciled to us, but that we may see and know so much, and let the same *Davids* prayer ever be ours, let *thy mercifull kindness be for my comfort Psal.* 119.76. not my estate, honour, friends, or any thing else, but *thy mercifull kindness*, Lord let that, let that be for my comfort, and then as He addeth in another *Psalm*, *Thou has made him exceeding glad with the light of thy countenance, Psal.* 21.6. Glad we may be of outward refreshments, even glad at *heart* in the sweet comfort of friends, as *Aaron was of Moses, Exod.* 4.14. but *exceeding glad*, the light of *Gods* countenance shining out in the face of *Jesus Christ* onely should make us, as in this blessed example in the Text, they were no doubt joyfully thankfull for their outward rest and peace.

But the *comfort of the holy Ghost* was their most pleasant *walk*, which it's therefore said, *they walked in*: in whose steps we /237/ should tread, and for our encouragement herein

consider that

1. On the one side this spiritual joy in *God* will be more than able to fill up what ever shall be wanting (as a great deal always will be) in our outward comforts: Have we never so much, if there be never so little wanting, that little want troubleth us more then all that great deal else which we enjoy can satisfie, or in that case can pacify us; at a little hole in the wall or window we feel a cooler winde come in then if the window had been all open; *Haman* is in such a pett, for want of a cap and a knee, as without it all the *glory of his riches* and the *multitude of his children*, and that great deal more which he reckoneth up , *Esth.* 5.11, 12. *availeth him nothing*, c. 13. but he that hath this *comfort of the holy Ghost*, hath more then enough to answer and satisfy for all that otherwise he wants, *I have all, I abound, I am full* saith *Paul*, he speaketh at the rate of one that /238/ had now risen from a full and rich feast or banquet, whereas this great *all* that he is so filled with, was but a present that those *Philippians* had sent him, and *Calvin* thinks it was no great matter, and yet as though he had received as much as all the world was worth, he crieth out, *I have all, I am full*, viz. because he was filled with all *joy and peace in beleiving*: Such *with their Saviour*, have *meat to eat that others know* not of: even *hidden Manna*; as that was laid up in the ark, so this hide in a Christians breast, and there it abides incorruptible *vinum in pectore*, able to make us a full meal of hungry Commons, and to make up what ever our dish or cup wants of full, as the aire doth all the Caverns, yea and least chinks in the earth, so that there is no *vacuum*: on the one side I say the comforts of the *Spirit* sweetneth and supplieth what ever is bitter or defective in outward comforts.

2. Whereas on the other hand, our sitting down, and taking up (and /239/ so committing folly) with these outward mercies, takes out, yea embittereth all the sweet of them, as a child begotten of fornication or adultery may be a very sweet and pleasant one, and how much comfort and joy saith the

parent should I have in it, but that it is a bastard, and that dampeth all, and how much refreshment (may others say) might we have in this estate, pleasure, preferment, but that our hearts have gone a whoring from God after them, as it's said of *Ephraim*, *Hos.* 13.1. though when he spake *trembling he exalted himself in Israel, yet when he sinned in Baal he dyed;* or as it is said of the King of *Tyrus*, *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee, Ezech.* 29.15. that blasts and kills all. And therefore as it is said of *Abishag*, *that she ministred to David, and cherished him, but he knew her not.* So with Gods good leave (and much good do it you) let these outward comforts cheer and /240/ refresh us, but let us not commit folly with them, that they do not befool us of better, *i.e.* of spirituall delights, but that in their greatest entertainments, we may retain (nay have quickned by them) a spirituall appetite and ability to taste more sweetness in more blessed dainties, as in here in their outward peace, amidst the crowd of other comforts they had hearts not shrunk up and contracted but enlarged to *walk in the comfort of the holy Ghost.*

A help hereto, would be in our Survey and valuation of Gods gifts to us, in temporall mercies to be sensible of spiritual, as *Jacob* in his children of the *Grace of God which had given* them, *Gen.* 33.5. and accordingly the Psalmist all along in *Psal.* 136. speaking of outward deliverances and provisions, in redeeming from enemies, and *giving of food &c.* at the mention of every one of them endeth every verse, with this thankfull *Epiphonema for his mercy indureth for ever.* /241/ Labour we with him to see *ever induring mercies in transitory injoyments*, that they come to us from a *Fathers* love, by the blood of his *Son*, in the way of a covenant, proceeding from electing love, and leading to everlasting life, and that will add to them more worthand weight, not to abase and press down, and bury our souls under them, but so as to raise up our hearts to *God* by them, and to that more precious love of the

Giver, which hath put so much worth into them. So (with these in the Text) in outward peace we may maintain yea and advance in our Hearts the *fear of the Lord and the comfort of the holy Ghost*.

But there is yet one word more, which we must think of, and that is /GREEK/ *They walked* in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost and that containeth and holdeth forth to us, *Assiduity, constancy, and Progress*. It was 1. their daily practise. 2. And this in their constant continued course, and /242/ 3. Which they advanced in: and so should we, joyn both holy *fear*, and heavenly *joy* together, and then labour to be assiduous, and constant, and increasing in both, for else either *suddain uncertain pangs of fear*, or *flashes of joy* will be no evidence of such as walk with God to heaven and happiness, but if both be joyned, and dayly and constantly held on, and advanced in, it will be the due temper of a right travelour in the way, and a sure pledge and first fruits of what we shall come to, and meet with at our journeys end; where our *fear* shall be *only* and yet most *fully reverential*, and our *comfort* and *joy* most *spiritual, full, and eternal*. /243/

The form of Sound Words

2 Tim. 1.13. Hold fast the form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

IN the *4th verse* we find young *Timothy* weeping, not out of a childish weakness, but from a sad apprehension of real danger. He a young *Steersman* in his new office of an *Evangelist* was lanced out into the deep when windes were loud, and seas went high, and (as it may be) he might think of that /GREEK/ of some making shipwrack of the faith which he had read of in the *first chapter* of the former *Epistle*. And then wonder not, if *Moses* be loath that *Jethro* (who might *be in stead of eyes to him*) should have /244/ seen in a wilderness, if the *Disciples cry out for fear* in the Tempest when they think *Christ* is absent; if *Aeneas* sigh when he hath lost his *Palinurus*, and if *Timothy* weep when *Paul* his former *Pilot* had left him. So hardly is this *Nursling* snatched from the breast, ready (if not with the *Galatians to pluck out*, yet) to weep out his eyes for such a loss. And therefore to buoy up his spirit, that it might not sink in these deep waters, he writes this *second Epistle* to him, in which, He

Partly encourageth him to keep up his heart, and to bear up against the storme that lay upon him, in the *foregoing verses*, and partly he directs him in *This*, to have his eye fixed on the *card and compass* which he had left with him, *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.*

In which words we have these particulars.

1. A forme of words, /245/ /GREEK/
2. Set out by their excellent quality, /GREEK/ they are *sound* ones.
3. By the speaker or utterer of them. *Paul* himself /GREEK/ *which thou hast heard of me.*

4. From the Subject matter, /GREEK/ *in faith and love.*

5. From the Principall Author /GREEK/ *which is in Christ Jesus.*

6. By the Adjunct duty which we owe and must performe to them, in that word /GREEK/ *hold fast.* It is *to have and to hold;* so have it, that he hold it; and so hold it that he may ever have it. *Hold fast the forme of sound words, &c.*

From the first it seemeth that *Formes* so much decayed in our times, were not so undervalued in *Pauls*, who you see had left with *Timothy* /GREEK/ , *a forme of words*, which the *Greek Interpreters*, paraphrase by /GREEK/ &c. *a picture or pattern, /246/ &c.* and make account that he He alluded to the *Painters or Limmers Act;* as *Polycletes* made a Statue according to the rules of his Art, which he called his *Canon*, to be the standard or standing rule and Sampler which others should work by. Such a *copy* had *Paul* written *Timothy*, both for *matter and forme, things and words*, in his doctrine and preaching, that indeed it was not so much like the *Painters* /GREEK/, which most properly signifieth the first lines or ruder draught, as the *Orators* rather, which the *Rhetoricians* describe to be a *Representing a thing by words, so fully to the life, that it is not so much heard as seen.* Such was that /GREEK/ that forme of knowledge and truth Rom. 2.20 and that /GREEK/ that *System* or Short Modell of the *Principles of the doctrine of Christ, Heb. 6.1.* Such were of old their ancient *Creeds, Canons of Councils*, and since the *Confessions and Catechismes* whither of whole *Churches* /247/ or of particular men, their *Summes, Institutions, Systems, Syntagmes, Synopses*, or by what ever other name you call such Modells of Divinity, as orderly lay down together such divine truths as are scattered up and down in the Scripture, or explain such as there seem to be something obscure, and so present them, in a full and clear distinct view, for the better help, especially of a weaker eye against the *fascinations of juggling imposters.* A practise,

1. Ever in use, since *God* himself wrote the *Decalogue* as the Summary of things to be done. And Christ taught us his own *prayer*, as a Pattern of ours, in what is to be desired. And the *Apostles* their *Canons*, *Act.* 15. and the Primitive *Churches* and *Fathers* their *Creeeds*, and so along till the *Arians* and other *Hereticks*, who were pinched by them, did therefore complain of them, as in our times of deformity and confusion we have systems and confessions of faith often twitted /248/ and slighted, but the best is that it is by such as will in this, as other things tread in their dear friends the *Socinians* and *Arminians* steps, who cannot indure such checks of their extravagant corruptions, and it is but the wild ass that brayeth against such inclosures and treads down all fences, because she meaneth to run wild in the wilderness.

Of great use.

1. Not with the widow of *Tekoah* to *fetch about* /*HEBREW*/ a *form of speech*, the better to deceive, or to train up men to rest in *Formalities*, as the *Jews* did in that *Form of knowledge*, *Rom.* 2.20. or as those Deceivers in a *forme of godliness*, *2 Tim.* 3.5. who yet are not there blamed because they had a *forme*, but because they wanted life and *power*, we very readily subscribe to what *Hierom* saith, that Scripture truth, is *in medulla, non in superficie, non in terminorum foliis, sed in radice rationis*, and say with *Synesius* that the *holy Ghost* /*GREEK*/ though /249/ every Title and Iota in it is sacred yet it is the kernel of the doctrine, and not so much the shell of the words, that we so much stand upon. And therefore if any shall conceitedly affect and insist upon any *formes* of words of their own making as are meerly leaves, or that cover some poysonous toad of error and impiety under them, we will very readily call them (as *Nazianzen* did his Adversary) *A. B. C. sophysters, and wording sycophants*; Such empty shells of *Formalities* we leave to more empty vain hearts (like children) to play with, and those /*GREEK*/ those formed feigned words (which the *Apostle* speaks of) *2 Pet.* 2.3. to

those deceitful Hucksters to make merchandise with, which some of them who now a dayes decry *formes* most, are most, are most notoriously guilty of, and in this kind of all others the most affected *Formalists*: who with their *new lights* have got a set of new-minted words, and phrases, a strain of high flown *canting* in their /250/ /GREEK/ and /GREEK/ right out those /GREEK/ even *swelling words of vanity*, which *Peter* observed and noted in the Seducers of his time, and *Calvin* in the *Libertines* and *Quintinists* of his, and the *Shibboleth* of many in ours, by which although we cannot understand their language, yet we may easily come to know them, whilst their *form of speech bewraieth them*.

2. Not to be onely bare *Declarations* of what we believe: An *ecce fidem meam*, or Apologies and Purgations of our selves from the Aspersion and slanders of others, who either misconceive or willfully misreport us: For this use the *Remonstrants* themselves will allow of them, and no wonder, because when they are deservedly taxed, they have need to Apologize. But this is all that they will allow them, because they do so dearly hugg that *Helena* of theirs, their *libertas prophetandi*, as their main interest, and on which they have set their property, as being their *picalium* onely, and so /251/ become impatient of any such restraint: though I cannot but wonder that they should say, that the Primitive Churches and Christians intended no more by their *Creeds*, *Canons* and *Confessions*, then by them onely to testifie, *Non quid credendum esset, sed quid ipsi crediderint*, when they read so often in *Austin*, *Firmissime crede, & nullatenus dubites*; and when in their *Synods* and *Councils*, they did so frequently (and if fear too too liberally) thunder out their *Anathemates* against those that taught contrary to their determinations, and when the *Remonstrants* themselves do so cry out of *Athanasius* for pride, and in his *quicumque vult salvari, &c.* which he prefixeth before the Articles of his *Creed*.

3. I add therefore in the 3^d place, that those *Formes*

of sound Words are useful, and in some cases are necessary, and so have been used as Declarations, not onely of what we our selves believe, but also, of what we judge that all should believe (unless we could /252/ think that others might rightly believe that as true, which we in our conscience judge to be false, a goodly peece of our ingenuous loving-hearted *Arminians* charity) and also desire and require, that all should professe, or at least not openly contradict, with whom we joyn in nearest Church Communion: So it was with the *Apostles* in their *Canons, Acts 15*. And so it is with particular Churches in their Articles and Confessions to this day; and so may it be alwayes; *Ringantur licet & rumpantur Socino-Remonstrantes*. Notwithstanding all the rage and invectives of *Socinians, Arminians, Libertines*, and other Sectaries, who will rather disturb, yea and ruine both Churches and States, and snap asunder the sacred *bond of Peace*, then be thus hampred.

4. They are therefore in the 4th place *Communions Tessarae & Judices*, not onely *badges* of our Christian Church Communion, but also great helps and furtherers of it, whereby uncomfortable /253/ table divisions may be prevented, and the peace of the Church be better preserved, whilst we all profess the same Truth, and *speak the same thing, being perfectly joyned together in the same minde, and the same judgement*. 1 *Cor* 1.10. The Remonstrants indeed tell us that there are *Non pauci pii, & probi*, many honest godly men (they mean their own sweet selves and their *dear* party, for who so honest and godly as they?) who dislike such *Formes and Confessions* as derogatory to the Authority, Sufficiency and *perspicuity* of the Scriptures. 2. As a wrong to liberty of conscience, and of Prophesying. 3. As a great cause of Schismes and Factions in the Church.

For the first, *They fear where no fear is*. No fear of taking from the Authority and Perspicuity of the Scriptures, by these confessions which are wholly built upon them, and for matter wholly, and for Words and Phrases in a great part

taken out of them, not so much as by a single private *Ministers* /254/ confirming and explaining of them in the course of his Ministry, which I hope they are not against, unless they who are so chary and tender of the *liberty of Prophesying*, which when Christ instituted in his Church, he sure never intended it should be any blemish or prejudice to the Scriptures Authority or Perspicuity.

For the *2d* let the Papists answer to God and man for their Tyranny over Gods Peoples Consciences and true liberty: The *Spanish Inquisition*, when God *makes inquisition for blood* there shed, in this kinde will be sadly accountable. We that have been this way pinched our selves I hope should never have imposed upon others the like yoke of slavery. Some indeed (that their tongues might be as licentious as their practises) lavish it at large, speak loud, as though they had hired a *Tertullus* to help them with invectives, or some mercenary Lawyer to draw up a bill in chancery /255/ with a most horrid charge that hath never a word of truth in it: General outcries against an intended acted Tyranny; but they should instance in particulars and make them good; mean while as long as the skin is whole, though they pour vinegar on us, it will not smart, and we think *Paul* was a sufficient answer, *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me*. I only here add that whilst this liberty of *conscience* and *Prophesying* is so tendred in this particular by those *honest holy men* the *Remonstrants* spake of, we may conclude that they themselves were those holy men they meant, because (as I shewed before) they have impropriated this plea for this liberty to themselves, and therefore we onely bring home these stray goods from the common, to the true owners inclosure.

But (to return from this digression) the *3d* danger of Schismes and Factions which they suggest will be the fruit of those Formes and Confessions, is that which in this /256/ particular I am especially to take notice of, and all that I shall now say to it is, that when they have put the pen into an

Episcopus his hand, He knoweth how to flant and flourish it, make a great letter of it, and make a terrible *Gorgons* head in it, and his pen and tongue here runs riot. To all which, it will be sufficient onely to say, *Verba quid audio, fact quum videam?* Whatever either *He* or any of *His may in umbra Philosophare vel Rhetoricare*, either write in his study, or talk to them that will believe himn; I suppose they that will believe him are such as are blinde, and so cannot see what is done in the world, and so cannot disprove him, but that confessions breed Schismes and Divisions, whilst that liberty and Toleration which they so much plead for, will conjoyn all in peace and Christian union, yet the sad experience of the whole Church in several Ages, we might put them in minde of their own, we are too sure that *Ours* in these wofully distracted times doth too sadly inform of the /257/ contrary, & cryeth aloud, that the not keeping more close to such *Formes of sound Words*, (which our Church was sometimes famous for in point of Doctrine) but every one may speake and write the vain Phansies of his own heart, and *impune* spread foulest heresies and blasphemies, hath miserably torn us in pieces, and divided us in *semper divisibilia*. The Lord in mercy speedily heal these gashes and ruptures; Of which cure this will be one special meanes of holding fast /GREEK/ *the form of sound and wholesome words*, for so

5. That is a further spiritual end and use of it, that by the help thereof present controversies as they arise may be the better understood and determind. So *Acts* 15.

6. And so also they may be as memorials to posterity of their forefathers faith, and be left as *depositums* (as they are called in the verse following the Text) to be kept as their legacies or inheritances, and so to be intailed as to be transmitted from father to son, *ad* /258/ *natos natorum, qui nascuntur ab illis*, in all successions to the preventing of after innovations and corruptions:

But more particularly they are especially usefull

1. *To weak ones* (it was in relief to such the Apostles that first framed their *Cannons*, *Acts* 15.24. whilst what is more diffusedly scattered up and down in the whole Scripture is gathered together in a *Synopsis* for their better view, and what may be there by reason of some Words or Phrases which we now are lesse acquainted with, more obscurely expressed, is here more familiarly presented to their weaker understanding: a right and fit closing of such weak infants heads, as a Festuke in their hand to help them to spell, and pronounce right. Such fluid metall hath need of a mould to bring it to a consistent forme, such weak lambs and silly sheep need to be put into such inclosures (which loose heads and hearts will call and esteem pinfolds) which otherwise will be ready to wander and go astray /259/ in the broad Common.

2. To discover and repulse Seducers, and *subverters* of the *souls of Gods* people, *Acts* 15.24. As the same pale which keeps in the *Deer*, keeps out the ravenous wilde beast; and therefore although we do not make them either *first or second rules of faith*, as the *Remonstrants* are ready to asperse us, yet for Them to allow them, *ne quidem ullum quantumvis infimum in Ecclesia locum* (as their words are) we cannot but think is too too illiberal, at least in *Clement Alexandrinus* his phrase, with their good leave, let them be /GREEK/ A fence to the vineyard, and so they will be in some place in the Church, and of some very good use too, indeed of more then they would willingly have them; and *hinc illa labrymae*. Because the foot is swoln, it therefore complains of the shoo as too strait: and so none more cry out of these *Formes*, then they who have *formed* to themselves some *deformed* monsters in opinion or practise, and then the crooked piece /260/ of timber would have the square and straight rule cast away, as the Painter drave away the true Cock, that it might not discover the sillinesse of his painted one. There are few but know what made the *Remonstrants* such enemies to *Synods* and their determinations, whilst they cryed up the *liberty*

of *Prophesying*. And with us, when times were fast hasting to *Popery*, the word *Institutions* (because *Calvins*) was scorned as proud with more pride; and of late since Church affairs have been in a confusion, we here have had *Confessions of Faith*, and such like *Formes* at every turn so taken up, and flurled, and all upon the same account, which will make me like *Formes* never the worse, because men of corrupt judgements, and such as make *Grace* and *Scripture*, yea, *Christ himself but Formes*, think and speak slightly of them; but rather the better, because they who would manifestly bring in corruption, and all confusion are against them, because indeed such *Formes* are /261/ against them. The dam stops and checks the violent stream, and that is it which makes it swell and murmur. The eye is sore, and therefore cannot endure the Light; the wares they would put off are sophisticate, and therefore like not too light a shop. It's a sign of the better physick, and that it meets with the peccant humour, if it makes the distempered Patient sick of it, and the foul stomack ready to call it up with loathing.

But then the Physick must in it self be wholesome,
Which is the second particular in the Text, /GREEK/
but /GREEK/ a form of words we would have, but then they must be *sound* ones: A word which our *Apostle* oft makes use of, twice in the former Epistle, Chap. 1.10. and 6.3. and twice in this here: in the Text, and Chap. 4.3. and four times in that to *Titus*, Chap. 1.9, 13 and Chap 2.2.8. in all *with* that we may be *sound in the faith*; He calleth for *sound words*: *Sani* and *Sanantus*, Sound, and healing /262/ it must be *sound speech*, and wholesome healing doctrine, and these two Readings take up all that I would speak of it, indeed all that is contained in it.

These words must be /GREEK/ , found in themselves, containing solid and savoury & saving truths, without trash and mixture of vanity and error, especially such as more poisonous and deadly: *Sincere milk*, 1 *Pet.* 2.2. without

the poyson of malice and guile. *v. 1. pure wheat, Jer. 23.28.* without the chaff of vanity; *perfect, Psal. 19.7.* without defect. *Right ibid.* without crookednesse, *pure without drosse, v. 8 clear* without spot, *v. 9. true, ibid.* in a word /HEBREW/ truth in the abstract, and /HEBREW/ *righteous altogether*, in the whole complex. Such and so found are *Gods* words. *But what is the chaff to the wheat?* Such are not.

1. The writings of *Philosophers* in which, although some would now make us believe they can find out a new way to heaven, yet if they would but look better, or but read over *Plutarchs* book *de Philosophorum* /263/ *placitis*, whilst (with *Austin*) they could not finde *Christ* there, the would finde so much error and corruption, and folly there, as would fully make out *Pauls* /GREEK/, and /GREEK/ *Rom. 1.21, 22.* and that they were become so vain and foolish, that there would be no ground of hope left to any of their greatest Admirers, by them to *be made wise to salvation*, but that every learned man, at least every spirituall Christian may write *Tertullians motto* on the backside of their books, *Animam non dant, quia non habent.* Something they were able to do in discovering false Religions, but not at all able to manifest the true: *Abana* and *Pharpha*, and other rivers of *Damascus*, *Naaman may think are better than all the waters of Israel.* But for all that it's *Israels Jordan* that he must wash in, if he would be cleansed from his leprosie. They are these wholsom healing words that must work that cure, not a *Philosophers*, not a *Socrates* his dictates. /264/

2. Such is not the *Jewish Talmud*, with all the rest of their *Cabalisticall difficiles nuga*, and ridiculous *Rabbinical* fooleries; In which field whatever good corn is to be found (which some are ready to over-rate) yet it is so thin sown, and so overgrown with the gayes of their vain fables, and up and down with the poysonous weed of their false doctrines and superstitions, with a deadly enmity to *Jesus Christ* the Tree of Life, that it appears to be like that earth which *God has cursed*:

and although some of them dare blasphemously compare the *Law* to Water, and their *Mishne* to wine, and their *Talmud* *Vino condito*, yet this precious peece of theirs is so mixed with ridiculous fables, and foolish concepts, that in such *fooleries* you may plainly read a *Jew*, who hath denied and crucified the *Wisdom of God*: and some men, it may be, have not been much mistaken, who have observed an odd tincture in those Christians spirits and notions, or Crotchets, who have too much doated on /265/ their Writings.

3. Such is not *Mahomets Alcoran*: which if learned men be beholden to for the pure *Arabick* language, and so for *words*, yet it is such an unlicked *deformed* peece, that I cannot call it a *Form* of Words, especially so far from *sound* ones, that except the often asserting of *Gods Omniscience*, and some few such particulars, which here and there you meet with in it, in stead of these /GREEK/ we may safely say there is /GREEK/. So confused and contradictory it is, both to the Scripture, and to it self; so absurd and ridiculous, that it is one of the great judgements of *God* upon this sinfull world, that so great a part of it should be taken with it: and but that it promiseth bodily delights & pleasures, which best suites with sensuall beasts, and keeps down Learning, and so keeps them from being rationall men, it would never have so taken with *Mahumetans* abroad, or with us *Christians*, I had almost said us *English men* here at home, that it should be /266/ so believed by them, or of late be translated and printed by us in this fruitfull season, and rank soil, in which every sprigg of any poysonous weed so soon takes, whilst others elsewhere burn it.

4. And lastly, such is not the *golden Legend*, which is all over drosse, or if there be any metall in it, *Lud. Vives* telleth you what it is, when he saith that he who made it was *plumbei oris, & ferrei cordis*, and he might have added *anea frontis*, for he had a brasen face, that could not blush at those ridiculous lyes which he heapeth up in it. Nor the diseased swoln *body*

of the *Popes Canon lawes*, in which great heap is a great deal of *chaff*, which yet *Pope Eugenius* will have swept up, and taken in to make up the full measure of their iniquity, and to make the bulk the bigger, no onely, *Gratians decreta*, but also the Cardinals *Paleae* must be pressed in: *Totus liber approbatus est, etiam cum omnibus Paleis*, as *D'Marta* tels us.

These and such like empty vanities, and rotten /GREEK/, are none /267/ of these *sound words*, which a heart *sound in Gods statutes* will close with, or stick to; neither Christianity nor common prudence would have us *magno conatu nugas*, break our arme by throwing such light feathers with our whole might, or lean with our whole weight upon such *broken reeds* of Egypt which wil break and wound us; and yet such is our folly and vanity, that falling short of that /HEBREW/ *that substantiall sound wisdom*, which *Christ* is, and his word affords us, *pro Innone nubem*, we grasp such shadowes, and having gone a whoring from *God*, and conceiving sin, the womans *Pica* is become both the man and womans disease, we feed on trash, and long for such strange Kickshawes. A distemper which not onely this last and worst is, but even the first and best was sick of, especially our *Timothies Ephesians*, and *Titus* his *Cretians*, their /GREEK/ trained them up to curiosities, and the others *slow bellies* could rise no higher than dull *old wives fables*, and some other /268/ such like trifles. And therefore you shall finde that in these Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus* such toyes are more decryed then in all the rest of the Bible, and they in them more bett upon then any other argument, as the earnest contending about

Endlesse Genealogies, 1 *Tim.* 1.4. like some of our hot disputes about some Punctilio in *Chronologie*.

Jewish and profane old wives fables, 1 *Tim.* 1.4. 4.7. *Tit.* 1.14. It may not be so much worse then the dust that is raised about some old *Legend*, or some doubtfull or false passage in *Church History*, *strife about words*, and *Logomachies*,

1 *Tim.* 6.4 2 *Tim.* 2.14. Such *Tully* saith, made up the greatest part of the sage *Stoicks* disputations: and how much better are the high and proud contests of those who account themselves the greatest Scholars about their *verball Critiscismes*?

Oppositions of science falsly so called, & /GREEK/, 1 *Tim.* 6.10. answerable to the ancient and now present *Gnosticks*, /269/ high flown sublimated speculations.

Foolish and unlearned questions, and perverse disputations and contentions about the Law, 2 *Tim.* 2.23. 1 *Tim.* 6.5. *Tit.* 3.9. paralleled by our busie *Questionists* and *Querists*, with whom all that should prove fruit runs up into the blade: the power of godlinesse evaporating into debates, debates indeed in more sense then one, who study to dispute more then to live, and that usually about doubtfull *Queries*, whilst they deny confessed and grounded even fundamentall truths; or about the *Mint and Anise of Church Discipline and Ceremonies*, and such *Accessories*, with the neglect of those /GREEK/ the *weightier things of the Law*, more solid and substantiall truths, and such as contain in them the life and *power of godlinesse*, *Quantum est in rebus inane?* O the vanity of *corrupt mindes, and destitute of the truth*, that kindle such fires in chips and straw, to set all in a combustion! Our *Apostle* in one place /270/ calleth it a *disease, /GREEK/*, which our times are very sick of; in another an *Itch, /GREEK/*: for as that is seated in the outward parts of the body, so this in the tongues and fancies of superficiall *Christians, who after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, not being able to endure sound doctrine.*

But it is firm ground that a wise man treads hard on, good food that a good stomach feeds heartily on, that which the *faithfull soul* must hold fast is the *faithful word, Tit.* 1.9. The *Form of sound words*, as here in the Text. First *Sani*, in themselves *Sound*, and not trash.

Sanantes, in their use *wholsom, and not poison*: for too many such destructive words and doctrines there are, which

eat like a canker, and subvert the hearers, 2. Tim. 2.14, 17. make them erre from the faith, yea so as to *make shipwrack of it*, 1 Tim. 1.19. 6.21. Trent Canons are a *Form* of words, but so far from *sound ones*, that some have not amiss expounded /271/ that in Revel. 16.3. of them, that *they made the sea become as the blood of a dead man, that every living thing died in it.*

H. Nichols his *Evangelium Regni; A Raccovian Catechism; the Remonstrants Confession*, are *formes of words* too, but many of them dangerous ones.

Many such *Formes* are in these times of *Deformation* rather than *Reformation* minted daily, which He would ingage very far, who should give his word, that they are such *words of truth and sobernesse*, that the soul which hungers after *Christ* may have wholesome food or Physick from them.

Some of them swelling the soul with the proud doctrines of *perfection*, and self-exaltation.

Others (nay some of the same) rendring it very caryon and rottennesse, with their ranting Principles and answerable practises of *Libertinisme* and loosnesse.

Some starving it by corrupting or denying the food of it, the holy *Scriptures and Sacraments*.

All so poysoning it, that you may /272/ see those of this diet like *Amnon*, or some other man who hath some foul disease upon him, ill thriving colour fading, hair shedding, flesh decaying and putrifying, even his bones and marrow consuming; the very outward profession of godlinesse blasted, and the inward power of it, not so much neglected as despised; witnesses from Heaven against such corrupt doctrines, and saddest evidences of *Gods wrath from heaven* against such wretched men, whiles he thus *sends leannesse into their souls*. But is this wholesome food that they no better thrive by? No, but such as

1. A true savoury spirit relisheth; for although some poyson be so subtile as it's hardly at first discovered, yet *as the*

ear tryeth words, and the mouth takes its meat, so the sheep of *Christs* pasture, even by a divine instinct, discern what food is wholesom, and what is otherwise: and not onely they *who have their senses exercised to discern good and evil*, but even the new-born babe hath such a taste, as /273/ soon as it's made *partaker of the divine nature*, that it can tell when *the sincere milk of the word* is adulterated, though, it may be, it cannot tell wherein or wherewith: as that godly Christian (who had a better heart then head) had his spirit rising against something which he heard in a Sermon, but he could not tell why, which afterward was made out to him to be very corrupt doctrine: and I think he said not amisse, who said, that in judging doctrines and practises, he gave much, though not to vain *Enthusiases*, yet to the /GREEK/ or propension of the spirits of sober believers; for although the Scripture be the Rule, or the Pole-starre, yet the spirits of the faithfull savingly touched from heaven point to it; so that it is likely to be an unsavoury or poysonous weed, which the flock of *Christs* sheep generally will let stand, and not feed on; and I should much suspect that either Doctrine or practise, which the hearts of the godly universally have an inward Antipathy against: as on /274/ the contrary *It seemed good to the holy Ghost and us*, was the ground and tenor of a Synodical decision in the best times, *Act. 15.28.* and proportionably the hearty complacential closing of those who have the Spirit of God, (though not in the same kind or measure which those had) is a great help, and a good guide to a right judgment of discretion, and to this conclusion, that it's like to be wholesome food which healthfull sound men do generally and in a manner naturally relish and feed on.

2. Especially that, which they recover and gain health and strength, and so thrive by. It is /GREEK/, *sincere milke* which the new-born babe batten's and *growe's by*, 1 *Pet. 2.2.* *Jerichoes* waters were healed, when the Lands barrenness was removed, and the *Sun of righteousnens is then risen with*

healing in his wings, when they who are under his beams and influence, go forth and grow as calves of the stall; and they are planted in the house of the Lord, [275] who flourish in the Courts of our God, and still bring forth fruit even in old age, and are fat and flourishing.

As on the contrary, it is but bad soile, in which good plants are starved or cankered: Is it likely to be wholesome diet, which men, otherwise well and healthfull, do not thrive on?

But it is no other then heavens shine and flowers that make the plants of righteousness grow, and bud, and flourish, and bring forth fruit: for I cannot in this respect assent to the Remonstrants dictates, *Ex fructibus astimandi sunt homines, non semper doctrina*, it's a *good tree* (our Saviour tells us) *which bringeth forth good fruit*, and the same may be said of good doctrin, and although by the corruption of mens hearts, good doctrine may not alwayes bring forth good fruit in their lives, yet it's bad doctrine which naturally bringeth forth what is ba and abominable.

But wholsome food, even the bread of life let us ever esteem that, by [276] which the man of God liveth, and thriveth, cheerfully doth and suffereth *Gods* will, and constantly holdeth on in *Gods* way, and in the strength of it (with *Elijah*) *walketh 40. days and 40. nights*, through the wiloderness of this world, *till he come to the mount of God*. In a word, that is sound doctrine, which a sound heart relishes and thrives by. But because *man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God*; it is not sufficient that these sound words have *mans approbation*, if not withall *Gods institution*, that as they are *acceptable* words, so also *words of truth, words of the wise*, but withall *given by one Shepheard*.

Which leads to the 3d. particular in the Text, *viz.* the *Speaker* by whom they were delivered in those words, *which thou hast heard of me. Non a quocunque magistro*, as Lombard

and *Espencaus* paraphrase it: not from every *dogmatizing Master*, but from an *Apostle of Christ*, infallibly /277/ directed by the Spirit of *Christ*. Such truths as have been delivered to us by *Christ* himself, the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, immediately inspired by the *Spirit of God*, and now recorded in the *Scriptures of truth*, either expressed in them, or plainly and directly by good and strong consequence drawn from them: these are those words, and *formes* of sound words, which we are to hold fast, and abide by, as a *light to our feet*, *Psal.* 119.105. *2 Pet.* 1.19. the *rule* of our faith and life, *Gal.* 6.16. and therefore called *Canonical*, the *Foundation* on which we are to build, *Ephes.* 2.20. that /GREEK/ that *mould* of *doctrine* into which we are to be cast, *Rom.* 6.17. that /GREEK/that *Form of knowledge and truth* by which we are to be *informed*. No other fallible Land-mark, but the holy Scriptures Card and *Compass* and Pole-star, which we are to steer our course by, if we would not make shipwrack of faith and a good conscience. These, these onely /278/ are the *words of this life*; what ever therefore either they expressly affirm, or is from them soundly and directly gathered and commended to us, whether by whole Churches, or particular Persons, although they be not expressed wholly in Scripture words, yet if according to the Analogy of faith, for the further clearing of Scripture sense, and the better discovering of errors and heresies as they arise, we willingly accept, and carefully hold fast. But what ever *Creeeds*, *Canons*, *Confessions*, *Constitutions*, *Catechismes*, &c either of private men, or of whole Churches, yea of that Church which now nameth it self Catholick, shall obtrude upon us anything directly or by good consequence *contrary* to the Scripture in any thing, yea or but /GREEK/ *besides* what the Scripture teaches us in the parts and essentials of *Gods* worship, or in any thing in doctrine or practise pretended as necessary to salvation, *eadem facilitate contemnitur qua probatur*, we stick not easily /279/ to reject it, and being backed with the *Apostles* authority, to pronounce

him (whether man or Angel) *Anathema*, who shall teach and impose it: and *in hoc sensu* we particularly & especially reject,
 1. All *humane unwritten Traditions*: 2. All feigned Divine Revelations.

For humane unwritten Traditions, Bellarmine indeed applieth to them this Text, and maketh them at least part of that *Depositum* in the following verse: nor can I deny, but that *Chrysostom* upon the Text, and other Greek Interpreters (after their manner following him) run their descant upon the word /GREEK/ which *thou hast heard*, as relating to what *Paul* had delivered to *Timothy* by word of mouth; from which Popish writers take a rise to cry up their *unwritten Traditions*, which being the strongest stake in their rotten hedge they most highly cry up, and most earnestly contend for

In their *Elogiums* which they give them, they are their *Homericum* /GREEK/ their Antidote against all infections.
 /280/

Lydius Lapis, by which they will try all doctrines.

Sacrum Thesei filum, safely to guide you in all *Labyrinths* and *Meanders*.

Gladius Goliath, non est similis ei, the sword of their *Goliath Pope* to offend and strike down all opposors.

Ajaxis Clypeus, to defend them, and to ward off all blows from their enemies.

Nay *Fidei fundamentum*, the very foundation of their *Popish* faith, and the onely foundation of it so far as *Popish*, which if overturned, their *Babel* cometh down; and take but away, what partly we hold with them agreeable to Scripture, and what they maintain only by Tradition, and what is besides left of Popery would be a poor thin nothing, and therefore here they fight *tanquam pro aris & focis*, or if you will we may leave out the *tanquam*: *Elaborandum est ut hic locus quam diligentissime explicaretur & muniretur*, saith *Canus*: and good reason when he had before (*cap. 3*) /281/ said, *Traditiones majorem vim habere ad Hereticos resellendos, quam Scripturas*;

good reason that they should so earnestly fight for Tradition, because by them they can better confute us whom they call Hereticks, then by Scriptures. We kindly thank him for this fair acknowledgement, they are not so much the Scriptures as their Traditions, which they must knock us poor Hereticks down with. By which they rather appear to be the Hereticks: for of such *Tertullian* of old said, *nec stare se posse, si de solu Scripturu cogantur quastiones suas sestere.*

Tradition is *Helena* and *Venus*, which they so paint and trim up. They are modest men amongst them that will afford the Scriptures an equall share of dignity and respect with them, for it's as little, as they can give them, to be equall with the Scriptures: *Eque sunt observando*, saith *Eckius*; and *pari pietatis affectu & reverentia suscipit &c.* saith the *Council of Trent*, like him in *Nicephorus*, /282/ whom they call *Beatus Theodosius* (two names too good for such a blasphemer) who getting in the the pulpit denounced an Anathema, *si quis quatuor Synodos quatuor Evangelii non exaequet*, pronounced that man accursed who did not make the four first *Synods* equal with the four *Gospels*: which yet he might better do, then the Cardinal *Julianus* in the *Council of Basil*, exhort them to give no less credit to the *Council* then to the *Gospel*; Or the *Council of Trent*, anathematize all that did not thus equal their vain Traditions with the books of the Old and New Testament. But they stay not here, it is not enough with them to have their Traditions equalled with the holy Scriptures, if they be not much preferred before them:

1. For their Antiquity, as being before any Scripture was written; and therefore as first born must have the preheminance of primogeniture.

2. Hereupon in point of necessity: as though the Church had more /283/ need of Tradition then of the Scriptures, and accordingly *Bellarmino* in that chapter (whose title is *Ostenditur Necessitas Traditionum*) in which he should prove traditions to be necessary, doth take a great deal of more

pains to prove that the Scriptures are not necessary.

3. In point of authority: which they say the Scripture hath onely from the Tradition of the Church, without which some of them are not afraid to say it would be of no more authority then *Aesops* Fables: and the same *Pighius* who durst call it a note of wax, when over shoos over boots, and therefore durst go on and say, *hac Scripta non praesse nostra religioni sed subesse*; and as *Caranza* adds, that the Scripture is to be regula- by the Church, and not the Church by the Scripture.

4. In point of extent. Traditions according to them containing much more of the word and will of God, then the Scriptures: for although *Andradius* be so modest (and that is a wonder, for he is not usually wont /284/ to be found in that fault) as to grant that *maxima pars*, the greatest part of Gods revealed will is contained in Scripture. yet others of his Fellows cannot but account him herein to have been over liberal; for on the quite contrary *Hosius* saith, that *multo maxima pars*, that the greatest part of it by far is contained in *Traditions*, and others of them say that *minima particula*, it is the very least part of all that is contained in Scripture, whilst *Traditio omnem veritatem in se habet*, containeth all the mysteries of faith and Religion, if you will believe *Coster*.

5. For point of continuance. The same Author would have you beleeve that this unwritten word is more safely kept in their hearts, and not to be rased out of the Popes, their high Priests breast-plate, whilst moths and worms may soon consume these written papers and parchments.

6. And so also in point of incorrupted certainty: whilst the written word is but a dumb letter, speaks not its own sense, is a *nose of* /285/ *wax* and leaden rule, which every heretick may bend to his purpose: on the contrary their *Musti*, is a live Judge, and the Tradition of the Church is safely locked up in his breast; he gives the true authentic sense of it; and so preventeth both the Catholicks error, and

the Hereticks depravation.

7. In point of transcendent worth and usefulness, the unwritten word is *of more moment*, say some of them, and *multis partibus superat Scripturas*, saith *Coster*; as much as the *fleshly tables* of Beleevers hearts (in which no doubt their Traditions are written) exceed the *Tables of stone*, or papers or parchments in which the Old and New Testament are written.

And for use, *Corn. a Lapide* from those words of the Covenant of Gods *writing his Law in our hearts*, *Jer. 31.33.* would make such weak men, and silly Novices as we are beleeve, that Traditions are more proper for the N.T. then the Scriptures. *Hoc si animadverterent /286/ Heretici magis proprias osse N. Testamento Traditiones, quam Scripturas intelligerent. Euge Jesuita! en pietatem Romanam!* In this his bold and blasphemous expression, we hear the voice of the Beast, and see the whores brasen forehead, that blusheth not to prefer their own dreams before the visions of God, and their lying *Cabala* before that /GREEK/ the *Scripture of truth*, which alone is able to make us wise to *Salvation*, *2 Tim. 3.15.*

8. In particular, *Canus* and most of them hold and say, that although things of more common nature and concernment were written by *Moses* and other Penmen in *Scripture*, yet the *Arcana Imperii* thei higher mysteries, those holy things were not to be cast to dogs (for so they speak) when they mean these rarities of theirs should not be exposed to publick view, as it ws with Heathen with their *Abdita in Adytis* and as *Pythagoras*, and some other Philosophers, and the *Dryades* would not have their Dictates /287/ written for all, but onely communicated to their Scholars, such *mysteria* to their *Mysta*. So Christ and his Apostles besides their /GREEK/, their more ordinary and common doctrine which they either spake or wrote to all, had their /GREEK/ their more secret mysteries of more high and abstruse nature, which were onely delivered by word of mouth to their greater

Intimates and Confidants. To which purpose *Canus* feareth not blasphemously to apply that, 1 *Cor.* 2.2. but *I determined to know* (or make known) *nothing but Christ Jesus and him crucified, i.e.* to you vulgar and ordinary hearers, *howbeit we speak wisdom amongst them that are perfect:* No doubt their high-flown perfectionists. Profane Blasphemer! as though *Christ crucified*, whom in the foregoing Chapter, *v.* 23, he had said *was the wisdom of God, and the power of God*, were but his ordinary and course every day doctrine, which he preached to the meaner & vulgar, but /288/ that he had higher speculations which he imparted to those of an higher Form, or (as our new minted word is) *dispensation and attainment*, which our *Enthusiasts* boast of in their Revelations, and the *Papists* (as it seemeth) promise us in their Traditions.

9. And therefore accordingly in their practice, as the *Jews* (if you will believe *Bellarmino*) made more use of Traditions than of the Scripture; so the *Papists* plainly shew that they set more by them, than they do by the written Word of God, whilst they plead more earnestly for them, and are more sedulous and copious in this controversie than in most, do most rigorously presse them, and more severely punish the neglect and transgression of them, than of the expresse commands of God in Scripture, as the profaning (as they call it) one of their Traditionary *Saints* dayes, much more heavily, than of the *Lords* own Day; and a Priests marrying, then the committing of fornication or adultery: in this imitating not the true *Israelites* /299/ *indeed*, but the degenerate *Jews who made the word of God of none effect through their Traditions:* But those who have been savingly taught, *as the truth is in Jesus*, abhor such blasphemies, and by all their sweet words cannot be brought to relish their Traditions, which (as *Irenaeus* and other of the Ancients plainly shew) have been all along the subterfuge of Hereticks, and of which, for many of them, it is uncertain from whom in particular they first sprang; and for all of them it is most certain that coming from men, at

best, they are but fallible, and that in continuance of time they may be much altered from what they were at first; nor can *Bellarmines* sour preservatives be able so to keep them in pickle, as to prevent it. And therefore although the Truth of God was delivered from hand to hand before *Moses* first writ the Law, and that Christ delivered to his Apostles, and they to others the Doctrine of the Gospel, before the signing of the Canon of the New Testament which /300/ we grant, and although the *Apostle 2 Thes. 2.15.* (a place which the *Papists* much triumph in) commandeth his *Thessalonians to stand fast, and to hold the Traditions which they had been taught, whether by word or his Epistle*, yet for all that, they must give us leave to hold fast to the Scripture, till they shall be able fully and clearly to prove,

1. That there is the same use and need of Traditions now, that the Canon of the Scripture is perfected, as there was before.

2. That there are now as immediate and infallible inspirations, and manifestations of Gods will as there was to the *faithfull* before the writing of the Old Testament, and to the *Apostles* before the writing of the New. *viz.* Infallibly to direct about these Traditions, and to correct, in case there should be any failure or corruption. Such extraordinary Manifestations, we, for our parts, do not pretend to, and that we cannot think that they are made to the /301/ *Romish Antichrist*, it is not from want of charity, but of ground of faith to believe it, and indeed from sense and evident experience to the contrary.

3. That for the substantial of faith and life (for of eternall circumstantial I now speak not) there be any such Divine or Apostolicall Traditions which the Apostles *viva voce* preached and delivered from hand to hand, which were not for substance written in the Old Testament before, *Acts 26.22.* or not in the New Testament afterwards. Many indeed of their Traditions which they obtrude, are not, as holding

forth not Apostolical divine Truth, but partly such errors and superstitions, and partly such ridiculous fooleries, as are not fit to be much lesse in the sacred writings, much lesse in the sacred Writ. But for what ever is necessary to be known or practised in order to salvation, we must believe *Irenaeus*, saying, *Quod tunc praeconiaverunt, postea per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt*, till they /302/ be able to prove the contrary; and mean while we are confident, that this expression of *Irenaeus*, *in Scripturu nobis tradiderunt*, and yet more evidently that place to the *Thessalonians*, which they so much urge, where they are exhorted *to hold the Traditions which they had been taught, whether by word or Epistles* fully evinceth, that what is written in Scripture may be, and is there called *Tradition*. Such *traditions*, and so written we allow to be within the compasse of this *Form of sound words*; but not (*first*) Humane unwritten, or Popish forged Traditions.

Nor (*2dly*) The *Enthusiasts* feigned and Divine Revelations. These the *Papists* decry as loud as we, *Non enim novis revelationibus nunc regitur Ecclesia*, saith *Bellarmino*: though, by their favour, they cannot so easily wash their hands of them, whilst according to their Doctrine, the last resolution of matters of faith is to be made into the determination of the *Pope*, and that as infallibly directed by Divine Revelation as his /303/ Sycophants would flatter him: So that thereby he is made the prime and greatest *Enthusiast*. An artifice with seducers in all ages have made use of to conciliate the more credit to their delusions, by intituling them to *Divine Revelation*. I do not here speak of *Numa's Aegeria*, or *Mahomet's Dove*, or the practises of other Heathen Founders of Commonwealths, who out of craft and policy to gain more reverence and obedience to their lawes and government have deluded their silly people into a belief of their being appointed by divine inspirations: But even in the Church of *God*, the *Apostles* in their times gave warning of such as pretended the Spirit, 2 *Thess.* 2.2. As also charge and

direction how to try them, 1 *Tim.* 4.1. 1 *John* 4.1, 2, 3, 6. The *Nicholaitans* of old, *Swenckfield* and the *Familists of Germany* in the former age, and their spawn both in Old and New *England* in this age, have been all for immediate Revelations: with a supine, nay a most scornfull neglect, not onely of other studies /304/ and learning, but even of the holy Scriptures also, which to them is but a *dead letter*, a *Covenant of works*: &c. And before their *new lights*, such shadows must fly away: They are but *History* to their *mystery*, and as the *Papists*, in their way, and *Castellio* in his, so these in theirs make account that the *Spirit* revealeth to them higher and more hidden mysteries than the Scriptures teach or contain, such indeed as are not onely besides, and (as they think) above it, but sometimes, nay oftentimes quite contrary to it: a most proud and dangerous delusion, and therefore *Austins* watchword in regard of such is, *Caveamus tales tentationes superbissimus & periculosissimus*; the direct inlet of all corruption into the *Church*, and confusion into the *Commonwealth*, as other places have felt, and the *Lord* grant, that we who in this kind have already found so much, may not yet feel much more. Purest Primitive times have been defiled with them.

The darkest and *blindest* times have /305/ talked much of such *visions*. In the times of in-breaking light and Reformation, still a great noise of Revelation. But for our better settling in the Truth, know, that *Revelation* we acknowledge and humbly blesse *God* for, if rightly understood.

1. It was a most happy revelation of God to the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, when he made known to them his will, and directed them to write the Scriptures, one of the Books whereof bears the name of the *Revelation*. But I pray know too, that these Revelations were on purpose vouchsafed to give us a standard of Scripture, by which we might discover the impostures of those other feigned Revelations.

2. The Scripture also calleth it a *spirit of wisdom and revelation*, *Ephes.* 1.17, 18. that shews and seals to us our

Interest in Christ, and the riches of the glory of the Inheritance of the Saints in light: But now this Spirit is a *spirit of promise*, *v. 13.* which onely sealeth that, which the /306/ Scripture writeth.

3. I deny not, but that sometimes possibly there may be some more then ordinary intimation of *Gods* will to some of his servants; *For their persons*, holy, humble, faithfull, and Orthodox.

For the things declared, it may be they may be helped to apply some generall word in Scripture to a particular case.

But never thereby put upon others either to believe or do any thing above, much lesse contrary to the Scripture, in all which our chief pretenders to Revelations are notoriously exorbitant; but the Scripture remaineth the square, and standing rule still; which the more others slight, and neglect, and blaspheme, the more let us honour, and study, and stick to. And therefore take care that your otherwise well-furnished Libraries want not a Bible, as it hath been with some; that none of our *Doctors* may have cause with shame to confesse, as some of the *Popish School-Doctors* have done, that when they were 50 years old, they /307/ had never read any of the Scripture, but what onely they met with in *Hierom* and the *Canon-law*: And as *Carlostadius* acknowledgeth that it was seven years after he was *Doctor*; that he began to read the *Bible*. Nay, *post galeros & insulas*, after some have been *Bishops* and *Cardinals*ll (*Canus* complaineth) *Non Prophetas, non Apostolos, non Evangelistas, sed Ciceronis, Platones, &c.* You should see in their hands not the *Bible* but *Tully*, or *Plato*, or *Aristotle*. *Quibus Averroes Paulus est; Alexander Aphrodiseus, Petrus; Aristoteles, Christus; Plato non Divinus, sed Deus:* to whom *Averroes* is their *Paul*, *Aphrodiseus* their *Peter*, *Aristotle* insread of *Christ*, and *Plato* no longer onely *Divine*, but a *Deity*; In all whose books some now adayes become so learned, that although they cannot finde *Christ* in them, yet they think they can spell salvation out of them. Sure I am,

that *Paul* could not in them finde this *Form of Sound Words* in the Text, for that *Timothy* had heard /308/ from him; and so it was *Apostolicall*, not *Philosophicall*, and was in *faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*.

Which words contain the 4th particular in the Text, which several Interpreters refer several wayes;

Some to *Pauls preaching*, viz. That he had preached them out of a principle of *Faith*, and out of that *love* which he bare to him in *Christ Jesus*.

Others to *Timothy receiving*: As telling him, that if he would *hold them fast* (as in the first words he exhorted him) it must be by *faith and love* which is in *Christ Jesus*.

I (as at first I said) with most and best Interpreters rather refer this clause to the subject matter which these *Sound Words* hold forth. It's *faith and love*, and that in *Christ Jesus*: *for quae circa alia sunt sane non sunt*, as *Espencaeus* expresseth it.

Faith and love.

1. A most lovely paire, most loving sister Twins, *Egregia biga*, /309/ in *ga*, /GREEK/ and therefore are usually met going hand in hand together up and down in our Apostles writings;

Love with Faith, *Eph.* 6.28.

And Faith with Love, 1 *Tim.* 1.14. 6.11. 1 *Thess.* 3.6.

And Faith working by love, *Gal.* 5.6.

The work of Faith, and labour of Love, 1 *Thess.* 1.3.

And what in Scripture are so joynd together, let them notin our hearts or lives be put asunder; *All will prove Nothing* if they be, 1 *Cor.* 13.1, 2.

2. Of very large extent: And therefore from this very Text, made the two main parts of Divinity, which is, /GREEK/ , so *Theophylast.* /GREEK/ So *Oecumenius* paraphraseth the Text, containing *Credenda*, *Agenda*, all things both concentering Doctrine and Conversation.

3. Especially and most expressly containing the

substantials of godliness; whence (to omit many things which I might observe) /310/ I desire to hint to you, what of all sound words, we are to hold fasteth: Let *Jet* catch straws, but let the *Loadstone* draw Iron; let wanton stomachs be greedy of trash, but let more healthfull constitutions feed on more solid meat: Let *Nominals and Rationals dispute*, but let *Reals believe and love*; let light heads and vain hearts busie their brains with Notions and Niceties, (the onely oyle which feeds the blaze of many of our Saints zeal, but eateth out of them all the power of godliness) but let *Faith and Love* be the exercise of every solid and serious Christian. Oh had we more *faith* grounded on the word, we should have less error founded for the most part on our own phansy; and had we more *love*, either we should have fewer breaches, or they would be sooner healed and made up.

But we must be sure then that this *Faith and Love* be in *Christ Jesus*, which words contain the 5th particular of the Text, and which some refer only to Love. /311/ *In love which is in Christ Jesus*; others to both Faith and Love and so In *Christ Jesus*, is *For Christ*. So some,

Which Christ hath taught and expressed, so *Erasmus: sicut Christus instituit*, so *Lombard, /GREEK/*, so *Oecumenius*.

But yet so as that most conceive this clause to adde a restriction, telling us, that it is not every kinde of faith and love, that is to be held so fast, as here is prescribed, and so close stuck to; for we have now adays a great variety of Creeds, Religions, and unshapen bodies of Divinity, and of *Families of love*.

As in the *Apostles* times severall combinations of *Hereticks*, as there were Sects and Fraternities enough of Heathen Philosophers and their followers, whose books and disputes were often better then themselves, and yet both by some now adays, thought so good, that their charity concludes for their Salvation, and for every honest moral mans in every Religion, or of /312/ whatever perswasion.

But shall we wrong *God*, to gratify men? or be so charitable to them, as to be injurious to Christ? by thinking that he would needlessly and lavishly shed his blood to purchase that Salvation which they could compass without him, or at best, only to set open a more convenient passage to life, which they were able (though something about) to come to another way. For certain, many of the Primitive Fathers were of an other perswasion, else so many of them would never have so much disputed against them, and *Justin Martyr* must be judged too prodigal of his life in provoking *Crescens* the Philosopher to be a means of taking it away, by calling them *Theeves and deceivers*: and he said therein no more, then what *Christ* himself had before said of others like them, *that all that came before him were theeves and robbers, and that the sheep did not bear them*, *John* 10.7. 8, 9. I wish we did not too much, and so come to want that /313/ Eare-mark, that either we would not read them so much, or the Scrtures more, and so prove either *less Philosophers*, or *more Christians*, I mean more spiritual, and then this Heathenish morality would appear, at least comparatively, a flat dull thing, were we more acquainted with *Christ*, so as experimentally to know what that /GREEK/, that super-excellent knowledge of him meant all other knowledge, and things then would be nothing *but loss and dung* to us, *Phil.* 3.7, 8. But it is because some want children, that they so play with Puppets, and they who could not obtain *Penelope* herself, took up with her Maids. But let divine sparks fly upward and we that are so studious of truth, let us above all study the *truth of the Gospel*, *Gal.* 2.5. *the truth as it is in Jesus*, *Ephes.* 4.21. *hold fast the faith which is in Christ Jesus*, as it is in the Text.

And if it be that, Then be sure to hold it fast, which is the last particular in the Text, which is our /314/ duty to be pressed upon us as the Application of the whole, and as *Christ* said to the Church of *Thyatira*, unto you *and as many as have not this doctrine* (viz. *of the Prophetess Jezabel*) *and which have*

not known the depths of Satan, I will put upon you none other burden, but that which you have already, hold fast till I come.

So all that I have at present in Commission from the Text for you, is onely to call upon you carefully, and with an awakened heart to remember the Apostles watch-word in it: /GREEK/ be sure that we hold fast, take heed that we be not juggled out of it, but that we be sure that we *Have it*; which is the first signification of the word, and that we *hold* it, as the word, is often taken, *Revel.* 6.9. and many other places /GREEK/nay /GREEK/ *Tit.* 1.9. hold we it so fast against all opposition that no strength of man or divel may force us from it, but that we may maintain it against all.

1. It is Heavens pledge *v.* 14. with which *God* hath entrusted us, /315/ as our souls are our pledge, *v.* 12. which we trust God with, be we as carefull of his pledge, as we could have him be of ours: and although we should prove careless of ours, be sure we shall be called to an account for his: How sad will our doom be if our case prove like his, *1 King.* 20.39, 40.

2. It is our godly forefathers bequest which they have conveyed to us their posterity; should not our care be alike to transmit it to ours? *Psal.* 78.3, 4.

3. The martyrs have sealed it with their blood, which we shall prove guilty of through our unfaithfulness, as they are *accounted to tread underfoot the son of God, and to account his blood an unholy thing* who desert his truth, and *despited the spirit of his grace,* *Heb.* 10.29.

4. It will be the best part of our childrens inheritance: as the Law was *Jacobs,* *Deut.* 33.4. Look to it therefore, that at our last reckoning our forefathers be not ashamed of us, and our posterity at the Resurrection do no not rise /316/ up, and, I say not, call us *blessed,* as *Prov.* 31.28. but curse us for betraying *Gods* truth, and our trust, and their and our own souls all together.

5. And remember from this word /GREEK/hold fast,

that it is not the catching at what we have not, but onely the holding fast what through *Gods* mercy we yet have, and therefore as *Christ* saith to the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Hold fast what thou hast, let no man take away thy crown.* It hath been the Crown of our *English Church*, if that in any measure *have fallen from our head*, now *woe to us that we have so sinned*, and if we have any whit loosned our hand, it is now time to lay on faster hold then ever: If with those lovely Churches of *Smyrna* and *Philadelphia*, our proper Cue for the present be not to hold *fast what we have*, having lost so much, yet at least with the decayed Churches of *Ephesus* and *Sardis*, let us /317/ *Remember from whence we are fallen, and how we have once received and heard, and hold fast and repent.* Repent that in any measure our hand-hold hath been loosned, and now the Second time take faster hold on that *faith* and truth, *once delivered to the Saints: Hold Fast*, is given in charge to many of those Churches, *Revel.* 2. and 3. both best and worst, *but to him that overcometh, &c.* is said to all. This *holding fast* may cost us tugging and contending; and this *overcoming* many and soar conflicts, but be we faithfull in the conflict, and then we may be sure of the Conquest, *Magna est veritas & praevalabit.* For these things saith he that is holy and true, him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall goe no more out, but I will write upon him the name of my God; and the name of the City of my God. /318/

He that an eare, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches. *Amen.*

Tibi Domine Jesu, qui via es & veritas & vita:

FINIS

